

Busy Bees Pre-school (South Oxhey) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY408604
Inspection date	13/07/2011
Inspector	Hilary Preece

Setting address	Woodhall Junior Middle Infant & Nursery School, Woodhall Lane, WATFORD, WD19 6QX
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

Busy Bees Pre-school (South Oxhey) Ltd was registered as a limited company in 2010, having previously been a committee run pre-school for many years. It operates from purpose built premises within Woodhall Junior Middle Infant & Nursery School, Watford. Children have access to one large room, toilets and an enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 32 children from two to under five years may attend at any one time.

The pre-school opens during term time only between the hours of 9am to 12noon and 12.15pm to 3.15pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and 9am to 12noon on Wednesdays and Fridays. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. It provides funded early education for two, three-and four-year-olds. There are currently 60 children on roll within the early years age range. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff, six of whom hold early years qualifications to at least level 2. The supervisor and deputy hold a Level 4 foundation degree in Childcare and Early Years. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and has strong links with Woodhall School and South Oxhey Children's Centre.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Exceptionally well-developed knowledge of each child and close attention to their individual needs enables staff to plan relevant and motivating opportunities. As a result, children make excellent progress in their learning and development, given their starting points. A significant factor in ensuring the needs of all children are met is the highly effective partnership between the setting, parents and carers, the local community and external agencies. Dynamic leadership, high expectations for children's safety and well-being and a culture of reflective practice means that self-evaluation is extremely effective in sustaining improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- making sure that the next steps in a child's developmental progress are clearly identified in their learning records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Rigorous procedures exist to ensure that children are safeguarded. The setting works closely with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and external agencies and promptly implements the safeguarding policy in order to protect children's welfare. All staff members attend regular training in safeguarding in order to remain vigilant and understand their roles in protecting children. As a result, they are confident in knowing what to do. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are followed to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. They are fully equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and ongoing support from management in order to work effectively, supervise children well and keep them safe from harm. The environment and particularly the outdoor area, is extremely well used and resources are of very high quality. Systems to check that they remain safe and in good order are managed well overall.

There is great emphasis on professional staff development which results in a strong, happy and valued staff team. They all share the same vision and are fully involved in planning, sharing good practice and introducing new ideas in order to bring about continuous improvement. Rigorous self-evaluation and reflective practice throughout the setting means that priorities for development are identified and acted upon. Taking part in a quality assurance scheme enables the staff team to monitor the effectiveness of what it does against robust and challenging criteria. The setting, thus, has a strong capacity to maintain continuous improvement. For example, feedback from parents provided in questionnaires is closely analysed and clear action plans drawn up as to how improvements can be made. One suggestion led to the setting producing a song book for parents so that they could help their children learn the words and support their developing literacy skills.

Exceptional levels of communication with parents ensure that the needs of all children are met. Parents are provided with a wealth of high quality information about the setting including information on the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are actively encouraged to share what they know about their children and their background. This enables staff to understand children's needs and put in place any additional support that might be needed. This is particularly useful for those children and families where English is an additional language. An example of this is providing children with ABC Books, which are made by the staff, showing common objects with the word in English and the child's home language. These benefit both children and their parents as they are taken home and used together. In addition, the setting is highly effective in putting in place support for those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff go that extra mile to find out what they can do to help understand their needs by visiting experts in the field and providing resources or adapting the environment to enable new children to settle in more easily.

There are also extremely positive links with all the local nurseries and schools that children move onto and with the local children's centre. Regular visits from children's new teachers and a series of visits to their new setting has proven to be highly beneficial in preparing children for transition and for sharing information to

ensure children's needs are understood. In addition, children develop a really positive attitude to moving on because they have lots of discussions about what to expect. Photographic books are used so that, for example, children can visualise their new classroom, where they will eat their lunch and what uniform they will wear.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are effectively helped to learn and develop because all staff know the children very well and have an in-depth knowledge of how to promote children's learning through play. The observation, assessment and planning system works very well in tracking children's progress towards the early learning goals and evidence shows children make excellent progress given their starting points. Regular planning meetings help staff to reflect on their observations of children and identify clear learning priorities so that all receive challenging experiences relevant to their own needs. However, these are not always clearly shown in children's learning records or in plans. Parents and children regularly see and contribute to their children's learning records which help key workers have an even greater understanding of the child's interests and achievements at home.

Indoor and outdoor areas are welcoming, inclusive and extremely well equipped to support children's learning. Children select what they want to do from the wide variety of stimulating resources to which they continually have access, thus, encouraging them to become independent decision makers. They show high levels of confidence and self-motivation as they move freely between indoors and outdoors, often choosing to explore the huge array of opportunities on offer in the garden. They learn to share and play constructively with others, such as helping each other to fill containers when playing in the water tray or taking turns during a number game. Their interest in the natural world is developed as they enthusiastically hunt for bugs and snails, examine them under the magnifying glass and compare them to the Giant African Snail that they keep inside in a tank.

Children's progress in developing good communication, language and literacy skills is supported exceptionally well. The use of signing to illustrate songs and rhymes has had a positive impact on helping some children to build confidence in communicating. Furthermore, training in speech and language has highlighted to staff how they can best encourage and support children's developing language. Children show a mature and confident knowledge of phonics as they recognise letters and sounds that appear in their names. This is because activities that develop their awareness of text and its meaning are incorporated throughout the sessions. They are able to practise mark making in a variety of different ways, for example, by using their fingers in sand, using large brushes to paint the shed with water, using pencils and paper to experiment with drawing and early writing and printing and painting. Children always have access to a suite of computers where they develop mouse control and keyboard skills. They use lots of number and mathematical resources to develop understanding of problem solving and numeracy.

Children play a dynamic role in their own learning. Their views are routinely gathered during circle time and included in the next week's planning so that activities remain meaningful and of interest to the children attending rather than by being chosen by adults. This successfully develops their ability to think, express their views and make decisions. This has led to making a model volcano, exploring concepts, such as floating and sinking and observing changes that occur when making jelly. Children have been instrumental in deciding to change the role play area into a hospital. The setting arranged for a nurse from the hospital to visit and provide medical resources for children to use in acting out hospital play, thus, helping them to understand aspects of the world around them. They have gained further insight from visits from the police, fire service, a cook and a hairdresser and explored their local community by visiting the garden centre.

Children are fully supported to lead healthy lifestyles and show a mature understanding of what keeps them healthy. For example, they know it is good for their health to 'eat salad and fruit, wash their hands and do stretching and star jumps.' They learn about the benefits of certain foods on their health and are encouraged to try different food tastes at snack time. They are also able to make the link between what they eat and where their food comes from because they help to grow, harvest and cook a selection of vegetables. Children enthusiastically hunt for mangetout to pick and help to make fresh courgette soup. Efficient systems, such as personalised place mats identifying any foods a child cannot eat ensure that individual health and dietary needs are met. Children understand the benefits of physical play on their bodies and changes that happen when they exercise. Access to the covered outdoor classroom allows children to be active outside in the fresh air regardless of the weather. Children have even helped develop their own exercise scheme called 'Funky Monkeys' which encourages them to explore body movement and control.

Children build very secure relationships and feel safe because there are many opportunities to discuss their feelings and to tell an adult if they feel upset. They understand expectations for their behaviour, such as keeping loud voices for outdoor play and they respond quickly when reminded of rules. They show high levels of independence in selecting their own snack, pouring drinks and clearing away cups and bowls. The calm atmosphere and relaxed structure to the sessions, together with the emphasis on child-initiated play, is a significant factor in ensuring that children behave very well and thoroughly enjoy their play and learning.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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