

Busy Bees Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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 Playgroup opened in 1976 and is privately owned. It is located in the market town of Thame, Oxfordshire and serves the town and surrounding rural communities. In 2011 the playgroup moved to new premises within the grounds of Barley Hill Primary School. Accommodation consists of a single storey unit with access to an enclosed outdoor play space. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for a maximum of 26 children in the early years age group, at any one time. There are currently 40 children from two to under five years, on roll. The group is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. Staff support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Support is also offered to children for whom English is an additional language. The playgroup opens on weekdays, during school term times, from 9.10am until 12.10pm. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday an optional lunch club operates until 2.10pm. During the afternoons of Tuesday and Thursday, the playgroup offers sessions from 12.15pm to 2.45pm for younger children. The playgroup employs four members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall, children are making successful progress with their early learning and development. The enthusiastic team of staff promote children's welfare effectively and they offer strong support in meeting children's individual needs. The staff foster encouraging partnerships with parents and with other professionals caring for the children. There is a positive attitude to continually improving outcomes for children as staff develop systems for self-evaluation of their practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- extend the use of self-evaluation to more clearly identify areas for improvement and take into account the views of children and parents
- extend children's learning about the natural world in the outdoor area.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a competent understanding of how to safeguard children. They are clear about the course of action to follow, should they have concerns for a child.

Information about staff, such as suitability checks, are on site and all documentation relating to children remains secure and confidential. Staff conduct thorough risk assessments of areas and activities to keep children safe. They work closely with the primary school to practise regular fire evacuations of the building. Staff organise the indoor areas effectively to provide a colourful and interesting environment for children. They display many stimulating resources at child-height and chose high quality furniture, when setting up the new premises. Staff supervise the children well and they use their initiative to engage themselves in supporting play, when there is a need. Staff maintain consistent levels of good hygiene with well established routines for protecting children's health.

The playgroup is well managed and the team of staff work effectively together. The main focus recently has, understandably been the move to new premises with the development of a welcoming environment. Action plans reflect a commitment to improving outcomes for children, for example by ordering a challenging climbing frame to extend physical skills. Staff are using self-evaluation quite well, though have yet to explore it fully, for example by using more frequent contributions from parents and children. Staff are working successfully with outside agencies to provide good support to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They involve themselves in home visits and meet others, who form part of a care team for individual children. Staff engage well with families attending the playgroup. They display many resources and positive images of the diversity of society, demonstrating their commitment to respecting others. Comments from parents are positive and complementary, referring to the thoughtful support of the staff to their children's early learning. New diaries to share comments between home and playgroup are proving popular and a helpful aid to staff in caring for the children.

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

Children spend an enjoyable time at playgroup in a busy and stimulating atmosphere. They are keen to take part in activities and this is creating a positive attitude to early learning, which helps develop their skills for the future. They are progressing well in all areas of their development since staff focus effectively on their individual needs. The records of children's achievements reveal thoughtful personal accounts of their development, along with examples of photographs and artwork. The staff make good use of the information to bring ideas into the plans for the week and they take into account the children's current interests. Children are making good progress with key areas such as numeracy and early writing. Staff provide effective support to play, for example helping children to understand words like 'half full' and 'full' when filling containers with rice. Children involve themselves in early writing, as they use clipboards to make 'notes' in a well presented area set up as a baby clinic. Children are eager to make up their own stories as they organise a wedding for play figures or use tools for building. Children explore modern technology with a computer and a new programmable toy. They learn that resources, such as bottle tops and large cardboard delivery

boxes can be made into new games.

Children receive positive messages about the benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle. Staff engage in useful conversations at lunch time, for example, about the calcium in the yoghurts they are eating, aiding bone development. Children are familiar with routines in the day, when they take part in exercise time. The whole group enjoy the fun of morning stretches to lively music outdoors, before settling to play. Children develop their confidence and ability when they use stilts or climb over large tyres in the garden. The outdoor area offers children activities to promote other areas of learning too, such as sensory play with water or sand. However, there is less emphasis, currently, on the natural world through planting and growing, for example. Children play sensibly and need little intervention from staff to keep safe. They fetch small road signs in the garden to 'warn' their friends that the path may be a slip hazard due to sand and water. Children settle quickly at the start of the day even though many are new to playgroup. Staff show sensitivity to their individual needs, for example by sharing key words in their home languages or by learning sign language to aid communication. Children's behaviour is good and they respond to the expectations from the staff, who are effective role-models. At group times, the children listen attentively to stories and they enjoy activities based around favourite characters from books. Children develop a strong sense of belonging to the playgroup through clever use by staff of the 'busy bee' theme. Children identify their names on bumblebee shaped cards and talk about the adventures in their homes of the playgroup mascot. This soft toy sometimes accompanies them on first visits to school to offer reassurance in a new situation.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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