

Mama Bear's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY434985
Inspection date 21/02/2012
Inspector Anne-Marie Moyse

Setting address South Devon College, Long Road, PAIGNTON, Devon, TQ4
7EJ
Telephone number 01803540578
Email longroad@mamabear.co.uk
Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Mama Bear's Day Nursery is one of a group of 12 nurseries in the South West, owned and run by the same family. They took over an existing nursery in 2011. The purpose built nursery is in the grounds of South Devon College, on the outskirts of Paignton. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area and use of several college facilities. The nursery provides childcare for students and staff of the college, as well as welcoming children from the wider community.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm, with the flexibility of an extra session operating until 7pm on request. It operates for 51 weeks of the year, closing between Christmas and New Year. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They may care for 62 children under eight years, and all may be in the early years age range. Currently, there are 72 children aged from eight months to under five years on roll. The nursery receives funding for free early education for three and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children learning English as an additional language.

A holiday play-scheme, 'Wild Bears' operates from a room within the college, near to the main sports hall. The holiday club runs during each school holiday from 8am to 6pm each weekday. It is registered to care for 16 children aged from four years to under eight years, with children up to the age of 11 years also attending.

The nursery employs 18 staff, including the manager, an administrator and a cook. Most staff hold a relevant childcare qualification to at least level 3, with two staff working towards their level 3 qualifications. Two staff are on training programmes leading to degrees in Early Childhood studies. The nursery receives support from the owner and an advisor from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Every child is valued and fully included. They have their unique needs conscientiously identified and respected by skilful staff who are motivated and enthusiastic. Excellent systems are in place to develop partnerships with parents, which staff use effectively with rigorous observation and planning processes to support each child's learning and development exceptionally well. Overall, superb resources are innovatively deployed to create a stimulating and enabling learning environment. Dynamic systems for monitoring the quality of the provision are exceptional. This results in the setting being highly successful in implementing many identified plans and striving for excellence in all areas.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- maximising the use of the natural world to provide children with first hand experiences that encourage more exploration, problem solving, and critical thinking.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding children's welfare is highly prioritised with excellent systems in place to promote all aspects of children's wellbeing. Extensive policies and procedures underpin staff's comprehensive knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities in caring for the children. They clearly know what to do if they have any concerns over a child's well-being and supervise children at all times. Robust systems are in place to monitor staff's suitability to work with children, and their continual professional development is encouraged. This results in a highly committed team of staff who are valued for their own unique contribution to driving improvement, through their individual designated roles and responsibilities. The nursery is robustly assessed for risks, with staff involving children in identifying any hazards in the play area. For example, children may use signs to indicate hazards, such as a wet floor.

The premises is extremely well organised to meet the needs of the children attending, with an exceptional range of exciting toys and resources, indoors and outside. Staff reflect and adapt the provision to create stimulating and creative play areas following children's interests and ideas. The highly secure outside area is readily available to all children during the day, and provides an excellent range of toys and equipment to continue their learning in the fresh air. The area has safety flooring throughout to prevent injuries when children fall, but lacks some more natural materials like grass, trees and mud to allow children to explore the natural environment. The high adult ratio and excellent deployment of staff supports children's needs exceptionally well, with staff being able to follow children's interest spontaneously. They make excellent use of the college campus facilities, visiting the horticulture and animal care department to see the pigs, ponies, birds, monkeys and meerkats. The college sensory room is booked each week so children experience using the additional sensory materials, such as lights, textures, sounds and the recent addition of 'smell' cubes.

The partnership with parents is a particular strength of this provision. Excellent information and communication systems are in place to continually share and reflect on the child's needs. This information is used highly effectively for the key person to immediately establish strong bonds with the child and parents, having a clear understanding of the child and family's values and needs. Excellent ongoing contact provides a free-flow of information through daily chats, communication

books and clear guidance between the setting and home over each child's learning and development. Planning and children's targets are clearly on display for parents, with regular newsletters, displays of children work and photographs providing vibrant and informative parental feedback.

Parents can borrow various toys and resources, such as treasure baskets, cooking or gardening resources, so they can extend the range of experiences for their child at home. Parents are invited to share their own skills and experiences with the nursery. For example, parents have brought in original resources and materials to help children celebrate the festival of Chinese New Year. Staff willingly offer help and support to parents in guiding them in any aspect of childcare and development to benefit the whole family. The nursery has worked hard to establish stronger links with other providers that children may attend to promote consistency for the child. Staff make regular contact and visits with other providers in order to share and agree how they can best support the child. Excellent links with other support agencies are in place and with the manager and staff liaising closely to obtain appropriate support for children if required. Transition arrangements for children moving on are sympathetically organised, with staff visiting the new provision or school with children if possible to minimise the distress for the child.

Innovative and comprehensive systems drive the settings ability to maintain ongoing improvements. Staff are motivated and take pride in their nursery, with excellent leadership and management providing a fully inclusive and inspiring team. Parents, children and all staff are involved in the development of the nursery with their views listened to and acted on. Parents are given clear feedback on how the setting is acting on their suggestions, with well targeted action plans in place that are managed precisely. All staff review and reflect on their practice with enthusiastic support provided by the manager for staff to implement changes and enhance the provision for children.

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

Children thrive in this happy and stimulating environment. They are confident and self-motivated to explore the various activities on offer or set up their own play resources according to their interests. Children form very secure relationships, and are keen to share their achievements with the staff, confidently engaging adults in their play. They enthusiastically look at their own learning journals, asking staff to read the positive comments made by their parents, boosting their self-esteem. They show high levels of pride as they talk to visitors about the displays of their creative works of art, which are amazing. Children develop their own signs and recording systems, using their emerging writing skills to annotate and label the displays, and frequently recognise their names through routine activities. They use a variety of tools and equipment, such as scissors and role-play road safety resources, with increasing control and understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Monthly evacuation drills prepare children exceptionally well for what to do in a real emergency, when they remain calm and confident to safely leave the

building. They behave impeccably and take responsibility for helping to put away resources once they have finished with them. The 'feelings den' is a popular area where children talk about different emotions, using puppets and stories to extend their emotional development. As a result, they are fully developing their skills for future learning.

Children play in a very well organised and clean environment where they follow excellent hygiene routines and promote their independence. Staff are on hand to offer support when needed, but generally all resources are very accessible including the outdoor environment. Children dress according to the weather conditions, and spend much of their time playing and learning in the fresh air. They play robustly with the scooters and tricycles, negotiating others well to avoid collisions, and parking them safely in the numbered parking bays. Children make marks and read books outside. A 'hairdressers' provides role play materials to develop their imagination and creativity. Children cooperate with each other well, taking turns to squirt the water and measure the distance it travels, recording their results on the paper laid out. They compare and discuss the direction of the water, with squeals of delight as one jet hits the canopy. Others watch intently as the cars slide down the guttering, repeating the action and moving the angle to see what happens. A small area with bark chips, logs and a bale of straw creates a den area, with camping resources for children to explore. Posters and signs around the area extend children's understanding of diversity, cultures and literacy skills, with pictorial examples of sign language placed throughout the nursery. Signing is in use with all children, with a recent open day/workshop for parents successfully involving families in developing this communication system. Reference materials with common signs are available and the nursery is producing DVD's with well-known songs and rhymes, showing the signs for these familiar tunes to promote consistency between the home and nursery.

Safe areas are available for the youngest children to play outside. Children benefit from being able to play with siblings and others during the day, developing a clear understanding of children's differing needs. Non-mobile babies are taken out each day, at times sleeping in the fresh air. Children have excellent opportunities to be active and also have their individual sleep routines supported. Staff sit with the children as they sleep, monitoring their safety and welfare. On waking, children are given a warm and affectionate cuddle from their familiar key person until they are ready to play with the stimulating resources, such as treasure baskets, set up at their level. Singing, using puppets and other props, develops rhythm and emerging communication skills of babies as they join in with the familiar action songs.

Children enthusiastically enjoy freshly prepared nutritious meals, and the recent change to the menu has proved very popular. They learn to serve themselves, sitting socially with their friends chatting and learning excellent social skills. Staff sit with the children to support and extend children's learning. Together, they discuss where the food comes from, using examples of the ingredients placed on the table as prompts. Bowls of fresh fruits are on offer in each room and in the entrance porch so children can have a healthy snack at any time, including as they go home. Children drink freely to quench their thirsts. Their interest in food and different cultures is explored through a variety of activities. They visit a local

supermarket and learn how food arrives in the shop. They try new and unusual flavours, such as noodles, fortune cookies and lychees linked to Chinese New Year celebrations. Activities such as messy play with flour and water culminate in making pancakes for Shrove Tuesday celebrations.

Children are making excellent progress in their learning and development through the nursery's rigorous observation and planning systems. Staff work closely with parents to identify next steps for children in each area of learning, monitoring their achievements on a daily basis. Activities are quickly adapted to follow children's emerging interests or recent experiences. As a result, children are enthusiastic and motivated learners.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
--	---

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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met