

Buffer Bear Nursery @ Wimbledon

Inspection report for early years provision

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28/03/2012

Inspector

Linda Close

Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Buffer Bear Day Nursery in Wimbledon originally opened in 1992. It is part of a chain of day nurseries that is owned by The Midcounties Co-operative and it operates from single storey purpose built premises next to the grounds of a train care depot in Wimbledon in the London Borough of Merton. There are five play rooms, children's toilets, a kitchen, an office, a laundry room, a staff room and staff toilets. There is an enclosed play area and garden for outdoor activities which is accessed directly from the playrooms.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 57 children under 8 years at any one time and no more than 30 of these may be under two years of age. There are currently 66 children on roll who range in age from 12 months to under five years and the children attend for a variety of sessions. This includes 14 three and four year olds who are in receipt of funding for their early years education. None of the children currently on roll has learning difficulties. There are several children who speak English as an additional language or hear other languages spoken at home. The nursery opens at 7.30am and closes at 6.30pm every week day throughout the year closing only for Bank Holidays.

There are 16 members of staff in total which includes a chef, the nursery manager and the deputy manager. There are 13 members of staff who work with the children and of these two work part time. All members of staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2, 3 or 4. The manager is currently working towards a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Studies and another senior member of staff is currently studying for a foundation degree. There are ten members of staff who hold current paediatric first aid qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and well settled in the care of a lively staff team. Good organisation and effective safeguarding systems successfully promote children's health and welfare. Staff support children's learning well overall and most children are making good progress in their learning. Parents and carers are aware of the open door policy maintained in the nursery and their views are valued by the nursery staff. The adults share useful information about children's individual needs which promotes continuity of care although the range of activities and resources does not fully reflect the background of all of the children on roll. The manager has met all of the recommendations that were made at the time of the last inspection. Her evaluation of the nursery's provision is accurate overall and she has some very worthwhile plans for further improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend opportunities for play and learning that acknowledge children's particular cultural backgrounds
- further develop the outdoor classroom by planning an environment which is rich in signs, notices and words that take account of the children's different interests
- further develop staff skills in framing open ended questions, such as, 'how can we?' or 'what would happen if?'

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and her staff are well informed and they work together well as a team to safeguard the children in their care. They discuss aspects of safeguarding at staff meetings to maintain their awareness of what signs or symptoms to look out for and what to do if they have concerns for the children's welfare. There are carefully made risk assessments of all areas of the nursery, including the outdoor space, and staff actively promote children's safety in all rooms and outside. They keep one another fully informed about their movements so that the children are always well supervised.

The manager is currently updating the nursery self-evaluation document and she invites all members of staff to take part in related discussions during regular staff meetings. She has made many worthwhile adjustments to the nursery systems since the nursery was taken over by a new provider. She is fully involved in studies to advance her own knowledge and understanding of how children learn in the early years. She actively supports staff in their professional development and she enables them to bring their learning to the nursery to develop and improve the provision for children. She has made exciting plans to secure ongoing improvement which includes an overhaul of the current system of helping children to make the transition from nursery to primary school with the aim of making the move a smooth and happy experience for the children. New initiatives for staff training are in hand and new systems for continuous staff appraisal are currently being adopted.

Children of all abilities, cultures and backgrounds are welcome in the nursery. None of the children currently on roll has learning difficulties or disabilities. However, a member of staff coordinates the care and learning for any child who has need of special support in the future and she has begun to attend a range of worthwhile courses to assist her in her work. The nursery has well established links with local authority specialist support workers. Good systems are in place for partnership working when there is a need. Key workers, specialists and parents meet to devise individual education plans for children when required. Staff are aware that some of the children speak or hear other languages at home and they

offer these children encouragement and appropriate support. However, they do not always do enough to reflect children's cultures and languages in the nursery through display or through planning activities linked to children's home backgrounds.

A recent refurbishment and replenishment exercise has been undertaken at the nursery. The whole building is newly decorated and children's toys and resources are plentiful and well maintained. Information for parents is extensive and accessible to all. Important notices are prominently displayed in the entrance area including security reminders, contact details for Ofsted, information about infectious diseases and menus. All of the children's rooms are well lit, well organised and well ventilated. The nursery staff engage with parents effectively overall. Staff are currently engaged in planning evening events for parents to discuss children's progress with their key workers. Staff speak to parents daily and they display planning information in the playrooms so that parents can support the children's learning at home. Parents say they are more than happy with the care that their children receive at the nursery. Parents who are moving on say they are sorry to leave and they and their children will miss the staff.

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

Children of all ages show a well developed sense of security in the nursery. They are relaxed, happy and busy in their play and they freely explore neighbouring playrooms which shows that they feel confident and safe. They relate very well to the staff and they are willing to share their toys and take turns with favourite things including computers. Babies and toddlers are calm and contented. The staff take the little ones indoors for a rest when they are tired, and not according to any particular time table, which shows that children's individual needs are respected and well met. Children learn to handle items such as scissors with appropriate care. They are reminded not to run indoors to prevent accidents. All children come indoors to watch a big lorry pass through their play area to the train depot once a week and they go out again when the lorry has gone and the gates are safely locked. They take part in regular evacuation practices so that they will know what to do in an emergency situation.

Children's level of achievement and their enjoyment of their learning is good overall. Staff focus their attention on the children at all times. They engage the children in meaningful conversation although sometimes the questions they ask only need a single word answer which can limit the value of discussions. The older children communicate their thoughts and ideas with confidence and with increasing clarity. They are fully engaged in worthwhile activities which include a stimulating adult led game with a Listening Bag. Circle time in the room for older children gives them the chance to relate their news to the group and they are very attentive. They delight in singing songs about the sounds of the letters of the alphabet and they see the alphabet displayed indoors and in their outdoor classroom. Writing materials are available for children of different ages in all rooms and outside. Many examples of words, notices and signs are displayed indoors but

there are very few in the outdoor classroom.

All children are engaged in counting and problem solving at a suitably challenging level for their age and stage of development. Puzzles and games are freely available in all rooms and the older children solve problems using a computer with suitable software. Children are free to use digital cameras to record anything that catches their interest and they delight in looking at their pictures afterwards. Younger children have easy access to working battery operated toys so that they too can explore what happens when buttons are pressed. The resources and activities in the nursery help children of all ages to develop the skills that they need for future learning.

Staff in all play rooms make pertinent observation notes about the children's responses to their activities. Staff record suitable next steps for the children and they use this information to plan for progress. Staff indicate on planning sheets if an activity will be particularly beneficial for individual children which shows that they give consideration to children's individual needs. Due to a few changes in staffing, and changes in record keeping systems, there are a few progress files that have not been completely kept up to date in that the record of the steps and stages that children have achieved have not all been identified. However, in practice, the staff know where each child is up to in their learning and they support the children to help them make good overall progress.

Children in all rooms know the routines and they benefit from knowing what will happen next. The free flow system is very beneficial to the children. Even the youngest children move from indoors to outside with confidence and they are also free to visit other playrooms independently. This means that the transition from room to room in the nursery, as the children grow older, is a step that they can take without fear of the unknown. Children have good opportunities to explore materials which include coloured water, clay and sand. Staff clearly aim to help the children enjoy themselves and they swiftly clear up spills and messes, whisk off and replace wet clothing and dry drowned soft toys with a smile. Their positive attitude is a credit to them and it helps the children to relax and have fun while they are learning.

The nursery chef plans a varied menu of healthy, balanced meals for the children which include vegetarian options. Meals are prepared in a clean, tidy kitchen where good standards of hygiene are carefully maintained. Children wash their hands before meals and they enjoy their food. Staff encourage children of all ages to feed themselves and the children manage very well. As soon as they are able the children help to clear the tables and undress for their afternoon nap. Staff successfully promote helpfulness and good behaviour through warm praise which the children enjoy.

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	3
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	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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