

Brock House Nursery School

6 Lemsford Road, ST. ALBANS, Hertfordshire, AL1 3PB

Inspection date	02/01/2013
Previous inspection date	23/05/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children are active and keen learners. The thoughtfully laid out playrooms provide resources and space for children's developing skills to be promoted to a good level. Children are confident and well prepared for school.
- Staff know the children well and provide activities they enjoy. They interact with the children to support their developing language. They are encouraged to explore their environment and make independent choices about their play.
- Children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle is well supported. Good personal care routines are in place; they have a varied and nutritious diet and take part in regular exercise in the well-resourced outside play areas.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Not all parents are sufficiently encouraged to share information about their children's learning and interests at home to enable the nursery to provide a consistent approach to each child's progress.
- Planning for the children's next steps in their learning is not consistently linked to their interests and individual needs.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the three playrooms currently being used as well as the refurbished outside areas.
- The inspector looked at the children's profiles, planning, the self-evaluation form and other documents relating to the safe management of the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with the children, staff and management team at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector sought the views of parents as they came into to the nursery.

Inspector

Tina Kelly

Full Report

Information about the setting

Brock House Nursery School is privately owned and was established in 1992. It operates from a large three-storey building in the centre of St Albans, Hertfordshire. It is within walking distance to the city centre and railway station. Access to the nursery school is via steps to the front door. Children aged between two and three years are cared for in the 'Rainbow' room, pre-school children in the 'Bouncy Badgers' room. The baby unit consists of the 'Butterfly and Caterpillar' rooms; they have a separate sleep and changing area. This unit has a separate entrance and is located on the lower ground floor of the building.

There is a secure outside play area with a sensory garden, lawns and planted areas used by all the children.

The nursery school is open weekdays from 7.30am to 6.45pm for 51 weeks of the year. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register; there are currently 62 children on roll.

The nursery school employs 15 staff who care for the children as well as a chef and administrator. The Principle and Deputy hold level 4 and Early Years Professional Status, 12 members of staff hold early years' qualifications, one member of staff is on an apprenticeship scheme. The nursery works with the local authority Early Years Advisor to monitor ongoing improvements. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nursery Association and is currently working towards completing the Quality Counts accreditation scheme.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- provide regular opportunities for all parents to be part of a two-way sharing of information in relation to their children's learning and development
- ensure the planning for the children's next steps is based on the children's individual skills and interests in order for them to benefit fully from the learning opportunities provided.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are keen and active learners, they are making good progress relative to their starting points because they are supported by staff who have a comprehensive understanding of how children learn through play. The planning throughout the nursery is based on the 'Development Matters in the Early Years' Foundation Stage' guidance and reflects the many varied experiences that are provided to develop the children's skills. The observations and assessments in the children's 'learning profiles' reflect their achievements and ongoing progress. However, some of the notes for the 'next steps' do not always reflect the children's individual interests.

All the playrooms are well-resourced and set out with age-appropriate furniture and toys

which promote free play for children of all ages. Low-level storage and designated play areas for the seven areas of learning enable children to move freely and make decisions about their own play. The older children in the 'Bouncy Badger' room know the routines well. They are confident in expressing themselves at group time, when they take responsibility for the activities to be set out for the morning or afternoon session. Staff ask the children what they would like to do and talk about what the children have enjoyed previously. Staff make suggestions but ask the children to select from the storage around the room. The creative areas are available at all times with a varied selection of craft materials for collage and craft. Children show good concentration skills. They focus on activities as they are well supported by staff who sit with them for board games and matching coloured pattern 'grids'. Children are beginning to use mathematical and critical thinking to resolve problems. Story time is well managed; children listen and sit attentively as the member of staff elaborates and extends the story to include the children's comments and experiences. Children are confident and keen to join in; their language and comprehension is developing to a good level.

The 'Rainbow' room caters well for the younger children. Staff know the children well and support their developing language and social skills with planning that reflects the prime areas of learning. Activities are introduced that promote all areas of their development. This is shown in the records kept in relation to the progress check at aged two years, which reflect the children's achievements and focuses on aspects of their development that needs further support. A selection of dinosaurs is set up on a table top so the children can walk around and access each side with ease. They show great concentration and delight as they move the creatures around the landscaped play mat with mountains and 'grass' edging. The play is well-resourced; it promotes children's co-ordination, co-operation and their physical skills.

The babies in the recently refurbished 'Butterfly' room benefit from space to practise their recently acquired crawling and walking skills in a clean and bright environment. There is a separate sleep room so children can have uninterrupted rest in line with their individual needs and routines. The young children clearly enjoy sitting with a member of staff to explore the 'treasure baskets' that contain different textured items. These give children opportunities to reach, touch, grasp and handle articles which promote their smaller muscle skills. Staff show great care as they sit with the children and pass items to them; they chat and extend the children's abilities by showing them how to put small shapes in a box. Children are delighted with the game and try to open the lid. Their social and early physical abilities are developing well.

Play provision in the garden is organised and well-resourced. The hard standing and two grassed areas provide children of all ages with a wide range of interesting activities which promotes all aspects of their physical skills. Prior to the children using the garden, staff set out tea sets in the play house and soft mats and books so children have a choice in their play. There are additional learning opportunities set around the grounds, such as large threading ribbons, a chalk board, and an area for digging. There is a planted garden area prepared for children to grow vegetables in the spring. Children are able to follow the winding path in the sensory garden which provides an interesting nature walk. They can sit in a calm area of the garden and refer to the laminated cards hanging from the bushes

to help them to recognise the different plants, insects and birds and develop an understanding of the wider environment.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children have developed secure emotional attachments to their carers. They are confident as they come into the setting, taking off their coats and shoes and happily going into the playrooms as they are welcomed by staff who help them to settle to their chosen activity. The key person system works well across the nursery. Children's individual needs are well met as the staff work closely with parents at the initial settling-in period and during transitions to new rooms within the nursery. There are effective links with other early years settings and schools in the local area. Teachers are invited to the nursery to meet the children before they move on. The nursery may also take children for visits to their new schools. The transition period is well managed with a written summary of the children's achievements to help with the settling-in at new provisions.

Children are learning about a healthy lifestyle with every day routines across the nursery. The site is well-maintained and provides a clean environment that is further enhanced as all the children have slippers or indoor shoes. They show a growing independence as they change their shoes on a regular basis and are beginning to understand how this keeps the floors where they play, clean. Staff support these early social and personal care skills with good interaction at cloakroom times, reminding children to use tissues to wipe their noses and then using hygienic wipes or washing their hands to 'get rid of the germs'. The older children are very competent and show a growing understanding of the importance of good manners. Staff provide gentle reminders to reinforce the simple rules that are in place for the safety of the children in the nursery, such as no running in the playrooms. Children are beginning to understand their actions may have an impact on other children playing nearby. Good behaviour is promoted with praise, encouragement and the use of discussion about how children have been kind and helpful. For example, during the pre-school age group time, the children earn tokens that give them opportunities to decide on activities later in the week. Staff are good role models, they sit with the children at meal times and help to ensure they use cutlery properly and do not talk with food in their mouths. Individual dietary needs are well met with the staff liaising closely with the nursery chef to ensure children have an interesting and nutritious diet. They have opportunities every day for outside play; the playrooms can be adapted for large physical group games in really poor weather.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The management team has high expectations of the quality of care that is offered to children and their families. They have established an effective process to evaluate the overall practice in the nursery taking into account the staff and parent's comments. A development plan in place for each of the rooms, is used to set targets and to maintain a good level of care and learning for all children. The use of the online Ofsted self-evaluation process shows how the actions and recommendations made at the last inspection have been met in full, to the credit of the management and staff team. The

improvements around the nursery and outside play areas show action plans are effective and make a positive difference to every day practice and the experiences for the children. The core members of staff have been in place for several years. They have support from the senior staff team with regular appraisals and team meetings to identify future training. There is a robust recruitment and induction process in place to ensure staff have the skills to promote children's learning and are suitable to work with the children. Those unqualified staff who are employed by the nursery are put on apprenticeship schemes so they have on-site opportunities to learn and establish their practice. There are three designated staff who manage safeguarding issues. They have attended advanced training so are able to identify areas of concern and seek advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Information and posters on display around the nursery shows a strong commitment to providing a safe environment for all children.

There are strong partnerships with parents who are kept well-informed about their children's developing skills and day-to-day personal care routines. Regular newsletters and a diary of events planned for throughout the year ensure parents are involved in the social side of the nursery including outings, open days and 'discos' for the children. Information is given to parents and is on display around the nursery to ensure they are familiar with the revised 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'. However, there are limited opportunities for parents to make comments in their children's 'learning profiles' about experiences from home in order to extend and support their learning. There is not a consistent two-way flow of information that incorporates parent's comments in the children's records to enable staff to build on the life experiences the children have taken part in. Parents say their children love to come into the nursery; this is evident as young children take off their coat and shoes and go into the playroom eagerly, without a look back at their parent. Parents are very confident in the skills of the staff team and their children's key person. Many use the nursery for siblings and have recommended the service to other families. The nursery has effective links with supporting agencies, such as the local children's centre and children, schools and families team to enable them to support families and children, especially those with additional needs.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement

and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.

Met	The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met	The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY234600
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	819625
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	63
Number of children on roll	62
Name of provider	Brock House Nursery School Ltd
Date of previous inspection	23/05/2011
Telephone number	01727 830469(Admin)/867500(Nursery)/855330(Baby Unit)

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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