

The Co-operative Childcare Sutton

Buffer Bear Nursery, 21b Cheam Road, SUTTON, Surrey, SM1 1SN

Inspection date	04/12/2013
Previous inspection date	05/02/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Room leaders lack leadership skills and knowledge and understanding of their safeguarding children responsibilities. As a result children's safety is compromised.
- Assessments are not precise enough to accurately identify what support children need help with next. Staff do not consult parents of children learning English as an additional language enough when completing assessments on children.
- Group music and singing sessions lack structure. Too often these are organised as a stop-gap between other activities when the room is too noisy for children to concentrate.

It has the following strengths

- The nursery is well equipped with good quality play and learning resources.
- Babies are cared for in a tranquil environment.
- Staff provide children with a good range of sensory and imaginative play opportunities.
- Activity planning both indoors and outdoors is improving because the quality development leader is providing high levels of support; good quality mentoring, coaching and in-house whole team training for improving teaching practice.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- This inspection was carried out by one inspector over two separate days.
- The inspector observed children's play and staff interactions with children in all play rooms and in the nursery garden.
- The inspector carried out numerous joint observations with the organisations Quality Development Leader.
- The inspector held meetings with members of the organisations senior management team, the deputy and nursery manager and spoke to parents.
- The inspector sampled a variety of records and documentation including children's assessments, staff suitability and safeguarding.

Inspector

Amanda Tyson

Full report

Information about the setting

The Sutton Nursery is one of a large chain of nurseries run by The Co-operative Childcare group. It opened in 2000 and re-launched under Mid Counties Co-operative in July 2011. It operates from five rooms within the site of Sutton Baptist Church. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is within the heart of a busy commercial and residential area and is open each weekday from 7.15am to 6.30pm for 52 weeks of the year. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 81 children aged from 3 months to under five years on roll. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to 21 children aged three and four years. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition to the manager and four domestic staff 20 staff are employed to work with the children. The manager and 15 staff have a level 3 early years qualification, one has a level 2 qualification and one a BA (Hons) in early years.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- provide all staff with training appropriate to their level of responsibility; to ensure they fully understand and implement the safeguarding policy and procedure, particularly in relation to acting on concerns about colleagues
- ensure that assessments completed on children are consistently accurate and used to identify a targeted approach to support progress
- ensure that staff explore the child's achievements in the development of their home language with parents to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

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

- develop further staffs skills in delivering group activities, such as music and story times
- improve opportunities for children to concentrate, think and engage in conversation by limiting noise levels in playrooms for children age over two, but particularly in the preschool room
- provide room leaders with leadership training to help them deliver mentoring and coaching and deal more effectively with any staff underperformance.

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

Staff understand how to support children's learning and development through play. All children are provided with good opportunities to explore and experiment using their senses and imagination. For example, babies discover weight, shape and texture as they explore the contents of very well stocked treasure baskets. These are filled with real objects and natural resources, such as coconut shells which they realise make interesting sounds. Toddlers make patterns and marks with their hands and fingers in gloop (a mixture of cornflour and water). Preschool boys show how well they can concentrate when provided with shredded paper, spoons and water, for instance they soak the paper to create a soft consistency to make a turtle's nest. Role-play areas in all rooms are well equipped with resources to enable children to act out their real and imaginary experiences. All children are provided with a good range of tools and activities to

encourage their hand control and subsequent writing skills. For example, staff teach children to use tongs and tweezers to pick things up and scissors to cut. Preschool children use pencils to write with a purpose in mind, for instance in role-play and to label their creative work. This helps to prepare them for school. Staff provide children with access to a good range of creative media which enables children to make props, such as a three dimensional rocket, coins and a pirate's treasure chest, to support their self-initiated pretend play.

Children have great fun using the newly installed mud kitchen and experimenting by seeing how fast balls travel down open and tilted guttering. Children show they have good critical thinking skills by their self-initiated ideas. Toddlers have great fun painting the outdoor wall, experimenting as they go by mixing colours to create differences. Staff encourage children's critical thinking and speech and language skills as they playfully refer to their splattering's as 'like fireworks that go 'whoosh' into the air. This gives children ideas and they proceed to extend their own play and learning. However, when staff fail to set up the garden for outdoor play, opportunities for children to engage in dynamic play and learning are limited.

The quality of teaching practice, particularly in completing assessments on children and leading small group story and music times, is variable between staff and rooms. Children sometimes become distracted by noise levels and staff do not always ensure the full inclusion of all children. Some staff complete accurate assessments on children based on secure observations. Gaps in achievement are mostly identified and targeted to secure additional support for children in readiness for school. However, sometimes there is a delay in gathering information from parents and children's previous early years provider to complete an assessment of children's ability on entry. This is particularly worrying for older children who join the nursery who will shortly be attending school. Some assessments on children are made too hastily by staff to ensure they are accurate. There is not enough consultation with parents of children learning English as an additional language to determine if children have a speech and language delay. When children speak to their parents in their first language they appear to have well developed speech and language, but assessments on their ability highlight underachievement because staff are basing this on their ability in English. The progress of children who may have special educational needs and/ or disabilities is monitored by the setting's designated special educational needs coordinators. However, although fairly promptly identified and rectified by management, timescales for updating and reviewing individual educational plans for these children are missed. Overall, although provision for children's learning and development requires improvement, the outcomes for children have improved significantly since the last inspection. Children are reasonably well prepared for school.

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

Children's well-being and safety is compromised by management's failure to ensure staff fully understand and carry out their safeguarding responsibilities. Most children behave well throughout the day. Sometimes groups of older boys become a bit over excited, for instance during mealtimes. In the absence of experienced staff, when this happens noise

levels become high. This spoils the potential for children to engage in sociable conversations. However, staff are making more use of positive behaviour techniques learned from recent training. For instance, children's efforts and achievements are celebrated with WOW stickers and 'don't run' has been replaced with 'show me your walking feet'. Management make clear their expectations of staff to use positive techniques to manage any unwanted behaviour. Any staff underperformance in relation to this, which is not a common feature, is appropriately dealt with by senior management. Some staff are very skilled in the way they analyse children's behaviour. They talk to children and successfully divert unwanted behaviour to positive behaviour.

The effectiveness of the key-person system is steadily improving. For example, staff sit with their key children for lunch and engage them in conversation about home experiences. Babies are fed their bottles and have their nappy changed by their main or second key-person. Nappy changes are recorded and the information is passed on to parents at the end of the day. This enables children to build healthy attachments with one special person. They show a strong sense of belonging as they crawl happily around exploring play resources. Babies sleep very comfortably in baby pods at times consistent with their home routines and parental wishes. Staff create a tranquil environment by playing soothing music. Staff carry out regular checks on sleeping children and they are always within sight and hearing. Children are helped to settle-in to nursery through a well-established gradual parent leaving process. This helps to minimise the anxiety some parents and children experience when separating from each other for the first time. Initially parents bring children in for play sessions and stay with them. Staff then use this time to find out as much about children's individual needs as possible through discussion with parents. Children are effectively supported by staff to prepare for change. For example, staff take their key children to visit the room they are due to transfer to for numerous play sessions before they move permanently.

The nursery is well equipped with good quality play and learning resources and the building is generally well maintained. Staff vigilantly ensure that visitors to the baby rooms adhere to the 'no outdoor shoe' policy to minimise the spread of germs. Children's dietary needs are well met. Children enjoy the home-cooked food and the opportunity to exert their independence, for example by serving themselves portions and helping to clear away tables with staff. Staff cleverly encourage 'fussy eaters' to try new foods, for instance by telling them they need energy for building a house later on. Every child has a colour coded plate to indicate if they eat everything, have allergies or dietary restrictions. Children are helped to understand about health and safety as they navigate the computer mouse around the screen collecting a thermometer, bandage and medicine to make a person better. Older children are challenged by the new climbing apparatus and toddlers by the new trikes without pedals that encourage their balancing skills. Staff explain to children why it is important not to put knives in their mouth. Children take it in turns to help carry out the daily risk assessment with staff who help them to identify potential hazards, such as those that may cause someone to trip over.

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

This inspection was brought forward by Ofsted as a result of concerns relating to the safeguarding policy and practice, general suitability matters and behaviour management. These concerns arose from three notifications of incidents that have occurred at the nursery since September 2013. The first incident relates to supervision of children at all times. Management has sufficiently strengthened procedures to minimise the possibility of this occurring again. The second incident relates to an incident that occurred between a child and parent. Staff witnessed this and took action, but were unable to prevent the incident from occurring. This inspection found that staff generally deploy themselves sufficiently to enable them to step in to protect children. However, sometimes although they are nearby, for instance supervising the climbing frame, they are not necessarily within immediate reach of all children. Management have taken appropriate steps to ensure children's future safety. The third concern relates to an individual member of staffs inappropriate behaviour management strategies. This inspection found that the nursery manager and deputy have a clear understanding of the requirements for reporting allegations against staff. However, room leaders fail to follow basic safeguarding procedures. In this instance while one room leader observed inappropriate staff behaviour towards a child and reprimanded them, this was not reported to the manager. An additional allegation was made against the same member of staff. This leader failed to notify the manager until the following day. The manager and deputy complete child protection training designed for designated safeguarding officers, but room leaders only have access to the online training. This is not designed for those with leadership responsibilities. The provider therefore fails to ensure that room leaders are sufficiently trained to deal with staff misconduct and to follow appropriate reporting procedures. This results in a breach of a specific legal requirement. In relation to behaviour management, although this incident did occur it was isolated to one member of staff who no longer works at the nursery. The majority of staff have completed training on using positive behavioural techniques. This inspection found that the behaviour management strategies adopted by staff are at least satisfactory and in many cases good. Senior management consistently ensure that Ofsted and the Local Area Designated Officer for safeguarding are notified of any concerns or incidents. Management have clear and well-established procedures in place for dealing with staff underperformance and misconduct.

Staff recruitment procedures are sufficiently rigorous. All staff, students and volunteers are fully vetted by the Disclosure and Barring Service before they start work. Staff identity is verified and qualifications and references checked. Management and staff carry out regular risk assessments on the premises and for places they take children to. Procedures, such as for getting fire detection and control equipment and portable appliances checked by qualified engineers are implemented by management. The nursery chef keeps the kitchen hygienically clean and management are monitoring the effectiveness of domestic staff following a recent 'deep clean' of the building.

The previous inspection was recent which means that the team have not had time to meet in full all the actions and recommendations set. However, there is a rigorous action plan in place which is closely monitored by the management team under the guidance of the quality development leader assigned to the nursery. A new manager and area manager has very recently been appointed. The organisation have also created divisional manager posts to strengthen their quality assurance procedures. Procedures are now in place for

ensuring staff have a yearly appraisal, professional development plan and regular one to one review meetings with management. The quality and development leader and deputy have worked tirelessly to develop staffs skills in planning activities. The Quality Development Leader provides a weekly summary report outlining areas to focus on and the achievements and progress made. This ensures continuous improvement. Staff have received mentoring, coaching and training to improve the quality of their planning. The success of this is demonstrated by the improvement in children's behaviour when activities are linked to their interests and provide sufficient challenge. However, although staff have increased the frequency of assessments carried out on children these are not always reliably informed and therefore not accurate. This is most noticeable in relation to communication and language and those completed on children learning English as an additional language.

Parents say that children are well supported to settle-in to the nursery and quickly make new friends. They believe that their allocated key member of staff keeps them well informed about children's progress and works in partnership with them to support children's wellbeing needs. Parents receive regular newsletters which keep them updated on special activities and operational matters, such as changes to staff. Parents were due to attend a 'meet and greet the team' event on the evening of the inspection. There are clear plans in place to strengthen partnership working. The nursery has established links with some local schools children transfer to and local agencies who provide external support to children.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. 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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	139904
Local authority	Sutton
Inspection number	939337
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	66
Number of children on roll	81
Name of provider	Buffer Bear Limited
Date of previous inspection	05/02/2013
Telephone number	020 86435278

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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