

Busy Bees Day Nursery at Stevenage.

North Herts College, London Road, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire, SG1 1GG

Inspection date	12/08/2014
Previous inspection date	27/10/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- Staff use effective teaching and a programme of literacy and mathematical activities to help older children acquire the skills and attitudes for the next stage in their learning.
- Staff make accurate observations and assessments of children in order to plan relevant and useful experiences to enhance children's learning and development.
- Staff meet children's health needs very well. They are vigilant in following guidance and they receive specific training in order to equip them with specialist knowledge.
- The management team is strong and well respected. Staff take pride in their work and have high expectations. This contributes to the continuous improvement of the nursery.
- All staff understand their role and responsibility in safeguarding children because the management team provides regular opportunities for training and updating knowledge.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not consistently optimise children's capacity for thinking and using language because occasionally they speak too fast and do not give children enough time to respond to open-ended questions.
- There is scope to enhance the range of resources and opportunities for learning outdoors to complement the recently refurbished garden play spaces.

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

- The inspector observed activities in all the rooms and gardens.
- The inspector looked at a selection of policies, procedures, plans and children's learning records.
- The inspector spoke with the the assistant manager, area manager, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of all adults working on the premises.
- The inspector spoke to some parents during the inspection and took account of their written comments.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the assistant manager of an adult-led activity in the pre-school room.

Inspector

Hilary Preece

Full report

Information about the setting

Busy Bees Nursery at Stevenage was registered in 2004 on the Early Years Register. It is located in the centre of Stevenage, Hertfordshire and is managed by Busy Bees Day Nurseries Limited. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from purpose-built premises and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round, from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 111 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery employs 36 members of childcare staff. Of these, 25 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the teaching practice through the programme of monitoring and professional development, to equip staff with consistently effective questioning strategies for developing children's thinking, language and learning
- enrich the range of resources and opportunities available in the well-designed outdoor learning environments, to further support all areas of learning and development.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make frequent observations of their key children and take account of parents' observations from home. This means that they develop a thorough understanding of children's interests and plan learning experiences tailored to their needs and identified next steps. Staff actively encourage parents to contribute to children's learning records. They provide them with useful summative assessments showing the progress that children make in their learning, including a progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. The nursery works very closely with parents and any other professionals that are involved in supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It invites professionals to work with them in the setting to advise staff on how they can best support children's needs. As a result, children benefit from a consistent approach to their learning and development. The staff consistently provide opportunities for children who speak English as an additional language to use their home language in the nursery. This is

essential for building a secure foundation for learning English. They work closely with parents to find out key words and their pronunciation, so that these can be spoken to children and used to make family language books. Consequently, all children receive the individual support they need to make good progress in communication and language.

Children achieve well because the quality of teaching is good and staff understand how to promote children's learning. Children acquire high levels of independence and are motivated to participate in activities. Staff encourage babies and younger children to explore independently by providing a variety of interesting play areas, both inside and outside. The recently refurbished gardens for each room offer some appealing age-appropriate apparatus and equipment that children thoroughly enjoy using. However, there is scope to enrich the outdoor learning experiences. For example, by providing additional resources that are readily accessible to children as part of the continuous provision planning. Staff respond to children's interests by interacting with them in children's self-chosen play. For example, they help children to count beads on a giant abacus and at the water tray demonstrate how to use jugs and scoops for pouring. Staff describe how this scooping action helps young children to manipulate a spoon for self-feeding, thus developing independence. Babies are encouraged to explore and become mobile because there is equipment to help them stand. They pull themselves up on a low wall bar and toddle around the edge of purpose-made apparatus in the garden. Staff provide plenty of opportunities for children to make marks using a range of media, such as, sand, paint, corn flour gloop, pencils, chinks and interactive white board technology. This builds children's confidence and skills in early writing.

Older children participate well in a programme of small group literacy activities that staff plan into the daily routine. They demonstrate the ability to sit cross-legged on the floor and to sustain concentration. Staff encourage children to listen and respond to instructions during a game to identify animal sounds. They give children clues to help them match the animal sound to a picture. When children correctly identify the animal, staff extend their knowledge further by talking about how particular animals make their sounds. Children explore this newly found knowledge by attempting to rub their legs together to see if they make a sound like a cricket. Similarly, staff plan daily activities to help children develop confident mathematical skills. While searching for 'big' and 'small' items in the sand tray the staff model the language of size and position and set children the task of comparing items and ordering them by size. They consolidate children's understanding of number by encouraging children to count the items and solve simple addition and subtraction problems. Some children respond well to the challenge and show high levels of skill in doing so. Overall, these adult-led activities equip them well for the next stage in their learning as they prepare to move on to school. However, staff do not consistently use the most effective strategies to fully encourage children's capacity for thinking. On occasions during adult-led activities and child initiated play they speak a little too quickly, use closed questions and do not give children enough time to respond. Therefore, there is scope to strengthen the quality of interactions and conversations to optimise children's learning.

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

Children make secure emotional attachments to their carers because the key-person system is effective. The key person works closely with parents to settle children on starting and to gather comprehensive information about personal care routines. The key person, or buddy key person, takes responsibility for changing and settling children. Staff encourage children to use their comforters from home at times when they need reassurance. This helps children to feel safe and secure. As children grow, staff help them to manage their behaviour and feelings through reinforcing the nursery's 'positive values.' Low-level interactive display boards enable children to see visual images of positive behaviour, which staff consistently reinforce throughout play. As a result, even very young children begin to recognise the need to share belongings and understand when they may cause upset to others.

Staff encourage children to keep safe and well throughout daily routines and play. They remind children how to play safely when using apparatus and playing with others. Easy access to the gardens mean that children have the choice to play inside or outside, with many preferring to be outside. This means they benefit from regular fresh air and exercise. Children learn good hygiene practices because staff are positive role models. Staff help babies and young children to wipe their faces and hands before and after eating and older children independently wash their hands and safely dispose of used towels. Staff protect children in hot weather by applying sun cream to children and ensuring they wear sun hats and keep well hydrated. The nursery provides colour-coded, labelled drinking bottles or beakers positioned where they are easily accessible. This enables children to independently take a drink with minimal risk of cross-infection. Children eat healthy, nutritious and freshly cooked meals. Menus give careful consideration to correct portion size in relation to children's age so that they do not over eat. They learn about the origin of food and its benefits on their health through planned activities and discussions with staff during meal times. Children know, for example, that milk comes from cows and can be turned into yogurt.

Staff work closely with parents to prepare children for moving on to the next room. They discuss children's needs and share detailed reports and assessments with the new key person. Children make a series of reassuring visits to get used to the new environment. Staff incorporate suitable activities into the daily routines to help children cope with new expectations. Prior to moving to the next room, babies begin to sleep on mats on the floor rather than in cots and children moving to the pre-school room begin to use a fork instead of a spoon for feeding. The nursery has well-established arrangements for helping children to be emotionally ready for school. They invite teachers to visit the nursery to get to know children and hold information meetings for parents to set out clear expectations. Staff focus on developing children's independence in pre-school, particularly in dressing, managing their personal belongings and clearing away their plates after meal times. They provide opportunities for children to work cooperatively in groups. Therefore, children are largely confident and emotionally ready to move on.

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

The management team demonstrates a rigorous understanding of safeguarding arrangements and implement procedures effectively. Staff know how to recognise, respond and report any concerns through the appropriate channels. They attend training and have regular opportunities to refresh their knowledge. The nursery follows safe recruitment practices and keeps thorough records. This means that all those working with children are suitable to do so because they have been vetted and have relevant qualifications and/or experience. The premises is safe and secure. Staff follow effective security arrangements to ensure that unauthorised persons cannot gain entry and only those authorised to do so can collect children. They carry out risk assessments reliably each day to keep the environment safe to use. They understand their roles in keeping children safe in an emergency and in administering first aid.

Staff benefit from the nursery's strong leadership and monitoring. The management team has successfully built a reliable and consistent staff team, which provides valuable continuity for children and their parents. It sets high expectations and strives to strengthen the confidence and skills of the staff through a well-established programme of performance management. This includes access to training courses relevant to staff's professional development needs and the needs of children attending. Following the management's monitoring of the effectiveness of the education programmes, it identified that staff would benefit from training focused on the learning needs of boys. Other staff have attended training to support individual children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff cascade what they learn to others so that all staff benefit. Effective self-evaluation is embedded throughout the nursery. Staff make a positive contribution to this by using room improvement plans to continuously reflect on and review the effectiveness of their environments. The nursery benefits from internal advisory visits and quality audits. This contributes well to sustained improvement.

The management team works very effectively in partnership with parents, professionals and external agencies in order to share information and agree common strategies for supporting individual children. There are good relationships with the local children's centre. This gives parents easy access to valuable information and services. The nursery keeps parents well informed about general matters through noticeboards, newsletters and emails. In addition, it holds information evenings on specific topics, such as preparing children for school. Parents have opportunities to make comments and suggestions for improvement, to which the nursery swiftly responds. Consequently, parents are very satisfied with the service because it meets their needs. They comment that they are delighted with the nursery and really appreciate the consistent staff team.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY289906
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	861354
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	98
Number of children on roll	111
Name of provider	Busy Bees Day Nurseries Limited
Date of previous inspection	27/10/2008
Telephone number	01438 722563

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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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