

The Co-operative Childcare Watford Junction

Watford Junction Station, Station Road, WATFORD, WD17 1AB

Inspection date	04/09/2014
Previous inspection date	22/02/2011

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

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Staff use appropriate teaching methods to motivate children to learn through enjoyable play activities, both indoors and outside.
- Staff demonstrate a suitable understanding of how to safeguard children. They are clear about how to respond should they be concerned about the welfare of a child in their care.
- The management team are suitably motivated and keen to make continuous improvements.

It is not yet good because

- The key-person system is not fully effective in sharing information about the children and tailoring activities to children's needs, as they prepare to move to the next room within the nursery.
- Staff do not fully support opportunities, or provide resources, for children to hear their home language in play and learning. This means that, sometimes, their home languages are not as highly valued as possible.
- Staff do not always organise the story time and mealtime routine sufficiently well, to ensure that younger children eat in a calm, relaxed atmosphere and are actively involved in their learning.

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 the four playrooms and outside learning environment, and talked to the staff and children.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager and held meetings with the manager of the provision and the area manager.
- The inspector looked at a sample of children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and from information included in the setting's own parental survey.

Inspector

Sheila Harrison

Full report

Information about the setting

The Co-operative Childcare Watford Junction registered in 1994 and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated at the back of Watford Junction train station, near the town centre. The nursery premises run from a purpose built, single-storey building. Each of the playrooms has free-flow access to the secure garden. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 79 children in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English is an additional language. There are currently 24 staff working directly with the children. Of these, one member of staff is qualified to level 5, one is qualified at level 4, 15 other members of staff are qualified at level 3 and five staff are qualified at level 2.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure a key person is identified, and planning is in place, for each child's move to their next playroom, before the process starts, to enable every child to make a smooth transition and continual progress in all areas of learning
- provide regular opportunities for children who speak English as an additional language to use their home language within their play and learning.

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

- maximise opportunities for children to develop their concentration, to be fully involved in purposeful play, and to eat in a calm and relaxed atmosphere by monitoring and minimising time sat waiting during some story and mealtimes.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall, staff have a secure understanding of the learning and development requirements. They plan interesting activities that cover all the areas of learning to help children make suitable progress. Staff undertake regular observations and precise assessments of the children's abilities. They generally use this information well to tailor individual planning for children. This helps most children make suitable progress within the expected age range, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the lack of

planning when children move rooms means that learning and development needs are not promptly shared with new key persons. Consequently, children's progress is not supported to the maximum.

Children have some chances to develop their communication skills, as staff encourage them to contribute to story time by asking them to suggest what they think is going to happen next. However, some of the younger children are less engaged, as staff are tidying up as part of the lunch-time routine, and they have to wait for staff to come and support them to be involved. This does not consistently encourage children to build their concentration skills or to be active learners. Staff generally help bi-lingual children and those who speak English as an additional language, by asking parents to provide a few words in their child's home language. Some staff also use their own home language with the children. However, this is not fully embedded throughout the nursery and, therefore, not all children are using their home languages within play and learning. Therefore, staff do not support children consistently or help them to make the best possible progress to close the gaps in their learning. Staff can describe children's individual interests and their friendship groups. They respond to, and follow, the emerging interests of most children well. For example, staff use appropriate teaching methods to extend children's awareness of changes in colour. They introduce painting activities that examines the effects of mixing colours. Children thoroughly enjoy this activity, covering the paper completely with paint. Staff broaden children's learning as they count the handprints. This helps children to be excited and eager to learn. Staff prepare children for school as older ones have more challenge in recognising their own names, without their photographs, on their pegs. They find and put away their own work in their own drawers.

Partnerships with parents are strong and make a good contribution to meeting all children's needs. Staff gather a good range of information at the start of the placement about the children's achievements and development. Staff, subsequently, use this information to aid initial assessment processes. Parents receive regular updates on children's progress and are encouraged to report on their child's development at home. This enables an effective two-way flow of information about children's learning in the setting and at home.

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

Children benefit from close relationships with the staff, including their initial key person. Staff sensitively show care and affection, they make sure children have their comforters and give close attention to support upset children. For example, they offer additional support as children wait for their comforter to be washed. Staff respect children's views and allow them to make progress at their own pace. For example, they are supportive and understanding when children refuse to visit another room for lunch. This is because staff understand that children need to be emotionally ready for the next stage of their learning. Children are well prepared for their first day at nursery, through a suitable settling-in process. Staff invite parents and children to visit the nursery several times. They meet with their key person and share information on children's development and care routines at home. However, the settling process is not as effective during the transition to another room. The new key person and information about the child, including their home

languages, is not always in place as children move up to the next room. This means that, on occasions, care is not fully tailored to children's needs. Children are encouraged to share and take turns. Staff give appropriate praise when they see examples of children working together, and this helps them to learn to cooperate and make friends in readiness for school. Staff use good manners and encourage the children to say please and thank you.

Children are learning about healthy living. Staff reinforce the importance of hygiene as children independently wash their hands before meals. The nursery offers children nutritious meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables that are new to them. This helps them learn the benefits of healthy eating. Staff effectively encourage the children to develop their self-care skills. Children have support to undress and dress themselves. Young children are urged to put on the painting apron themselves and serve their own lunch. However, the lunch time routine for the toddler children is not well organised. Children are sitting for a prolonged period of time, as staff do not organise the lunch before children sit down. On occasion, this results in them waiting with nothing to do, and they become noisy and unsettled. Consequently, children do not always eat in a calm and relaxed atmosphere. Children thoroughly enjoy playing energetically outside. Staff encourage children to jump and master the use of a skipping rope. Children learn to be safe without being fearful, as they skilfully and successfully negotiate the tyres in playground and tackle the obstacle course that they devise with staff. This helps them to be physically active and healthy.

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

This inspection took place following a notification from the provider that a child was left unaccompanied in the nursery garden for approximately four minutes. The notification means that the provider meets the requirement for keeping Ofsted informed of any significant events. The manager investigated the incident and found that, on this occasion, staff were not sufficiently vigilant in managing children's movements between the indoor and outside environments to keep children safe. This is a breach of the safeguarding and welfare requirement, and children were put at risk. However, the manager and staff took immediate action to remedy any lapses in supervision. They now routinely count children before they leave the playroom and when they come in from the garden. In addition, they check that other staff are aware when they leave the room or garden. This has suitably addressed any concerns of a recurrence and keeps children safe.

Management and staff know the importance of safeguarding children. They are confident to report their concerns, and know how to recognise signs that children may be at risk, so that their welfare is safeguarded. There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures to assess that everyone working with the children is suitable to do so. There are comprehensive, consistently applied risk assessments. A high proportion of staff have a paediatric first-aid qualification, so they can quickly respond to any accident or incident. Staff maintain adequate registers and they are suitably deployed. For example, they move children to other rooms to maintain appropriate ratios in each room. However, this sometimes affects the planning to meet children's needs, as key persons are not always

informed about children's individual learning and development requirements in a timely fashion.

The management team monitor staff performance effectively. Induction programmes support new staff. In-house and other training, alongside regular supervisions and annual appraisals, ensure existing practitioners remain up to date with their roles and responsibilities. This helps to ensure that staff continue to be suitable to work with children. Staff have recently attended training on the key-person system and, subsequently, are implementing a buddy scheme where every child has a substitute key person, when their own key person is not available. Staff report that this has helped them to share information with the parents. Management and staff are committed to self-evaluation and reflective practice. The manager regularly updates the self-evaluation form, based on the views of parents and information from the staff meetings. This clearly targets priorities to drive improvement. Actions made at previous Ofsted visits have been successfully addressed. For example, children cannot leave the premises unaided and staff ensure that there is no unauthorised access. There is an entry phone system, so visitors need to be let in, and the numbers on the keypad entry are frequently changed to increase the security on the doors. Each room has close circuit television, so that staff's interaction with the children can be clearly seen. This protects the security of the children while attending the nursery.

Management and staff have effective systems for monitoring the children's learning and development. Tracking documents, in addition to the successful completion of the progress check for children aged between two and three years, ensures staff suitably monitor children's development. This helps to ensure that children continue to make progress in their learning and early intervention can be sought if necessary. Staff build effective relationships with other professionals. This ensures staff secures appropriate interventions so that children receive the support they need. Staff demonstrate that they can work closely with the other provisions that children attend, to support continuity in their care and learning.

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	130628
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	988238
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	55
Number of children on roll	79
Name of provider	Buffer Bear Limited
Date of previous inspection	22/02/2011
Telephone number	01923 207065

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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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