

The Bees Knees Day Nursery

Cambrian Way, Highfield, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 5TD



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

19 February 2015

29 June 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The quality of teaching varies between the different age groups. Staff in pre-school do not effectively plan and adapt activities so that they are challenging but achievable. Staff are not well deployed to support children to make good progress.
- Staff do not organise the daily routines well enough. Staff in the baby unit focus on the preparation of food and the cleaning. Staff in pre-school do not always encourage older children to develop their independence.
- Staff do not help children to listen and concentrate as they use noisy cleaners and move furniture while children are trying to take part in a music and movement session and at some story times.
- The quality of teaching varies because the monitoring of staff practice lacks rigour.

It has the following strengths

- Staff provide role-play gym equipment indoors so children can exercise vigorously while the garden is temporarily unavailable during improvement work.
- Staff encourage a close working relationship with the parents. Parents report that they and their children are very happy at the nursery.
- Staff are sensitive to the needs of children with special educational needs and/ or disabilities. They work closely with other professionals in order to narrow any gaps in children's learning.
- All staff have valid paediatric first-aid qualifications and minimise the risks within the environment to promote children's safety.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the quality of teaching in pre-school by planning practical and stimulating learning experiences that capture children's interest and that are challenging but achievable for all children
- improve the deployment of staff in the baby room and pre-school room so that they can focus on children's learning and development, for example by helping babies benefit from social interactions and conversations during mealtimes and by helping pre-school children develop their independence.

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

- monitor the learning environment to maximise opportunities for children to develop the characteristics of effective learning, for example, by reducing background noise during story and music times
- improve the monitoring of staff's practice to focus on teaching and learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the playrooms and talked with the staff and children.
- The inspector held discussions with the registered provider and the senior management team.
- The inspector looked at a sample of children's assessment records and the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plans.
- The inspector and manager undertook some joint observations.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and a selection of completed parental questionnaires.

Inspector

Sheila Harrison

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Staff provide a broad range of activities to promote children's learning and development across the seven areas of learning. Staff in the toddler room encourage toddlers to sing and join in with action rhymes. They enjoy an entertaining story time where they can join in with the chorus. Staff regularly observe and assess children's progress and use this information to ensure gaps in their learning are closing. However, some teaching strategies, such as the adult-led colouring and writing activity in pre-school, do not interest children. The activity is too difficult and not sufficiently adapted for the different ages and abilities of the children. Staff are not sitting with children to supply relevant resources or to support their engagement and help them succeed. This limits children's otherwise positive attitude to learning and their readiness for school. Children's attention and listening skills are not supported as staff use noisy cleaning machinery and move tables during story time and a music and movement session. This does not consistently support an effective learning environment to help children develop essential skills for future learning.

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

Staff greet children and parents individually and they exchange information to help staff take account of children's temperament and current routine at home. Staff in the baby room give close attention to upset children, especially when they first start at the setting. This helps children form close relationships with them. However, too many staff prioritise routines, such as food preparation and cleaning, rather than spending time with the children. This leaves the remaining staff moving around rather than sitting with children while they are eating, to support their learning and well-being. There are many photographs displayed of the children at play and staff make good use of a visual timetable to help children make some choices in their play. Staff do not always encourage older children's independence, as they hand out the food and resources during a food tasting activity. In addition, meals are served for the children and staff clear the plates.

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

The management team and staff demonstrate an appropriate understanding of safeguarding children. The provider has appropriate systems to check that staff are suitable to work with children. Safeguarding procedures are clear and regular training ensures that staff understand child protection procedures. The management team has a general overview of children's progress, however, occasionally the monitoring of the quality of teaching lacks precision. The provider and staff are in the process of improving the outdoor area and purchasing new sensory play equipment, in order to support all children to extend their learning inside and outdoors. Management support staff to gain qualifications and additional skills. Staff attend regular team meetings and feed back information gained on outside training course and training sessions.

Setting details

Unique reference number	129334
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	854192
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	130
Name of provider	Kathryn Hay
Date of previous inspection	29 June 2009
Telephone number	01442 393341

The Bees Knees Day Nursery was registered in 1996. The nursery employs 24 members of childcare staff. Of these, 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, one at level 5 and a consultant holds Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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