

Woodpeckers Day Nursery - Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136120
Inspection date	22 March 2007
Inspector	Valerie Anne Curotto
Setting Address	The Gatehouse, Ministry of Defence (PE), Abbey Wood, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8JH
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Registered person	Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd.
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Woodpeckers Day Nursery is a workplace nursery based at the Ministry of Defence site at Abbey Wood, South Gloucestershire. It is run by Bright Horizons Family Solutions, a national company that manages a number of workplace nurseries. The nursery operates from a purpose-built building which includes self-contained units for different age groups and a central family room. Children have access to an outdoor courtyard and small gardens, enclosed within the grounds. The setting is registered to care for up to 117 children under five years of age. There are currently 172 children, aged from nine months to four years, on roll. This includes 73 children receiving funded education. The nursery opens five days a week, all year round, from 07.30 until 18.00 hours. The setting employs 25 nursery staff, the majority of whom hold suitable early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have regular access to outdoor areas which promotes their health and physical development. They all benefit from fresh air and exercise daily, using a variety of outdoor equipment. For example, two year olds manoeuvre sit and ride toys in the courtyard and develop scrambling skills on the climbing frame. In addition, older children enjoy music and movement indoors and babies clamber over soft play equipment in the base rooms. Young children have opportunities to rest in comfortable surroundings and individual sleep routines for babies are maintained well. Appropriate, balanced meals are provided at lunch times and children enjoy healthy snacks, such as fruit, at other times of the day. Drinking stations, available in each base room, enable children to access water independently, to promote their own health. This includes the baby unit where cups are individualised with photographs. However, this is not sufficiently monitored by staff to promote hygiene as young children access one another's cups.

Areas used by children are clean and generally well maintained as daily routines promote children's health. Written checklists are available to support staff in domestic tasks and the monitoring of temperatures within the setting. Older children develop everyday routines to protect their own health, such as handwashing and toilet flushing, although these are not sufficiently reinforced by staff. Younger children's bedding is separated effectively as children have individual baskets for storage. Relevant information is shared with parents about infectious diseases and exclusion periods for sickness. This promotes the health of all children by limiting cross infection. Suitable formats for accident and medication records are in place to promote the exchange of information with parents and safeguard children's health. However, there are some inconsistencies in practice and some aspects, such as injuries thought to have occurred at home, are not effectively followed through.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are safeguarded as the premises are secure and entry is monitored well by staff. For example, visitors, such as contractors, are escorted appropriately around the building. Sleeping children are monitored effectively, as a buzzer system alerts staff to complete and record checks every 10 minutes. Sufficient staff are deployed around the nursery with core staff in each area to promote consistency of care. However, there is insufficient awareness at times of effective adult to child ratios. As a result, staff are not organised sufficiently to provide effective supervision for children. At other times, potential hazards, such as open safety gates and materials used in activities, are not monitored sufficiently to minimise risks to younger children. The child protection coordinator has an appropriate understanding of her role and has attended relevant training. However, induction and training for other staff is not effectively monitored to further safeguard children.

The setting is generally well resourced and older children have independent access to a wide range of materials. While organisation of equipment for two year olds is less effective, sufficient craft and other activities are laid out attractively for children each day. Available space is used well as children benefit from their use of different environments throughout the day. This provides variety and enables younger children's activities to be separated safely, from those of older children. Young children enjoy investigating plants and sensory equipment in a small, enclosed garden. They use supportive furnishings, such as chairs and screens as they become

mobile, to move safely round the base room. Children's safety is promoted by age appropriate furnishings, such as tables and chairs, in each area of the nursery. Space is organised effectively within each unit, for children to have access to a combination of table top and floor activities. Comfortable furnishings, such as armchairs in the baby unit, provide opportunities for children to relax and listen to stories.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a range of different activities throughout the day. A suitable planning framework ensures children of all ages experience a balance of activities, including outdoor play, craft, group time and free play. Written observations are used to inform planning on a short term basis, taking into account individual children's interests. However, planning within groups is not consistent and the use of assessment varies, which affects the quality of children's experiences. For example, not all staff are confident in linking the learning outcomes to children's activities, which limits their ability to support children. Children have good access to sensory materials and have opportunities to explore a range of textures, sounds and smells during regularly planned activities. Babies particularly experience different sensations, as sheets of material gently waft over their heads and they explore the texture of cooked spaghetti. Young children interact with different materials as they paint logs with water, hit pans and plastic bottles with wooden spoons and observe movement as a bicycle wheel spins round.

Children are familiar with the routine and independence is fostered throughout the setting. Two year olds confidently put on aprons for craft activities and begin to serve their own snacks out. Children's creativity is fostered well as they enjoy imaginary play in their castle and dress up as princesses. They benefit from access to a wide range of craft activities each day, including dough and paints. Children enjoy access to sand and water regularly and build a castle during large scale construction. However, group size during free play activities is not monitored sufficiently to ensure activities are purposeful and that resources and staff are sufficient to support children's activities. As a result, children do not fully engage in activities and some equipment is underused.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Planning for nursery education follows the same format for other areas of the nursery and links appropriately to the Foundation Stage. Children benefit from varied, child led activities which are themed according to children's interests, such as the solar system. Specific areas within the preschool room are set up with resources to support children in particular areas of learning, such as mark making and numeracy. Children show an interest in number as they count the legs on a spider and share out dominoes. Children learn to recognise their name using name cards as part of the daily routine to indicate activities they wish to do. Resources are available to support children across all six areas of the curriculum and these are rotated to provide interest. However, as in other areas of the nursery, staff interaction is not effective in consistently supporting children to make links in their learning. As a result, children lack support to develop additional literacy skills and extend their understanding of mathematical concepts during free play.

Children develop independence within the daily routine as they serve lunch and choose their own activities. The organisation of resources and toilet facilities, promotes children's independent access. During the Spring term four year olds practise useful skills for starting school during a different 'school day' routine, once a week. These include undressing for physical education

and taking home a reading book. Children come together at different parts of the day for stories, songs and observations on the weather. However, the large group size does not effectively engage children and some children become frustrated or restless as they do not receive appropriate recognition. Children enjoy a range of creative activities. They confidently mix colours and share ideas with others. They demonstrate a range of movement as they slowly float and drift round 'space'. They comment on changes to their bodies as they exercise, bending and stretching to reach their toes. Children's assessments are based on regular observations which are linked appropriately to the six areas of learning. However, at present, these are not maintained sufficiently to provide a meaningful record of children's progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children contribute to wall displays and have individual pegs and baskets, which fosters their sense of belonging. Each age group has an identified base area where children appear secure in the familiar environment. They settle well on arrival and a settling in procedure supports children and their families during introductory visits. Individual routines are maintained well in the baby unit and relevant information is gathered from parents to support these. All children have laminated place mats, including their photographs, which clearly identify individual dietary needs and ensure they are given appropriate meals and drinks.

Children generally behave well, despite some restlessness when not fully engaged in activities. Staff use appropriate strategies to manage their behaviour, such as positive reinforcement and written guidance is provided to promote consistency, in each base room. Children learn to take responsibility for themselves through the daily routine, as they help to clear away toys and feed themselves at lunch time. Children develop an awareness of diversity through opportunities to learn European languages and craft activities related to festivals, such as Divali and Chinese New Year. Children with additional needs receive appropriate support. The special needs coordinator has a good understanding of her role and liaises effectively with outside agencies, such as the local authority. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are provided with a corporate prospectus and regular newsletter from the company. This contains general information on children's learning including the Foundation Stage. While this is not specific to the setting, noticeboard displays in each area contain information about themes and daily planning for each age group. However, there are some inconsistencies in information provided to parents. For example, activity plans are not consistently detailed in all areas of the nursery and some general information, such as staff roles, is not up to date. However, parent conferences provide useful opportunities, twice a year, for discussion with children's keyworkers. Parents are consulted at other times to support the nursery's evaluation of its provision and parents' comments are acknowledged in action plans.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Appropriate recruitment and induction procedures are in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. However, induction packs are not monitored effectively to ensure consistency of practice and ensure new staff have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the operational plan. There is a commitment to ongoing staff training for existing staff and an appraisal system is in place to develop their skills. The setting has adopted a new planning system in the last

year, which all staff, as keyworkers, are actively involved in. While there remains inconsistencies in practice, staff continue to develop confidence in planning and the delivery of activities, throughout the nursery. Documentation is generally well organised and readily available. Systems, such as safety checklists and room registers are in place to support children's care. However, inconsistencies in record keeping reduce their effectiveness throughout the setting.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of staff changes and the new manager is proactive in evaluating the setting's provision for children. Along with the senior staff team she has implemented a range of action plans which demonstrate a good awareness of areas for improvement. Regular team meetings continue to address issues raised and support from other sources, such as the local authority advisory teacher, is used effectively to monitor nursery education. However, the monitoring of staff support for children is not effective and results in inconsistent practice. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The setting has taken appropriate steps to address actions and recommendations made at the last inspection, although some issues remain. Actions regarding the grouping of children under two years and the qualifications of staff working with them have been met in full, to improve outcomes for children. To achieve this, the baby unit has been partitioned with low level screens and children under two are in groups of no more than 12. A new unit supervisor has been appointed and the majority of staff working with babies are suitably qualified. A recommendation to extend the range of sensory toys and resources for babies and young children has been addressed well, developing the range of experiences for children. Two further recommendations, regarding hygiene practices and the availability of registers of staff and children's attendance, have been addressed by the use of written checklists, to promote outcomes for children. However, inconsistencies in record keeping still exist in day to day practice.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. Concern was raised on 30 January 2006 in relation to Standard 4 (Physical Environment), about low temperatures within the setting. An Ofsted inspector made an unannounced visit on 2 February 2006 which led to one action being set. A further monitoring visit took place on 15 February 2006 in order to check on the steps taken by the provision. Following this, no further action was taken as measures were in place to maintain suitable temperatures within the setting. The provider continues to remain qualified for registration. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop consistency in routines for health and safety among staff to further promote children's wellbeing
- further develop planning and support for children's activities, to more consistently engage children in purposeful activities
- ensure information for parents is up to date, accessible and understood by all.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the grouping of three and four year olds is sufficient to engage them in meaningful activity, for example, at circle time
- continue to develop staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to more consistently support children's activities.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk