

Bucknell Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 224056 |
| Inspection date | 27 February 2008 |
| Inspector | Janette Elizabeth Owen |
| Setting Address | Bucknell Primary School, Bucknell, Shropshire, SY7 0AA |
| Telephone number | 01547 530264 |
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| Registered person | Bucknell Play Group |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Sessional 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Bucknell Playgroup opened in 1986. It operates from the school hall within Bucknell Primary School in South Shropshire. A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 09.00 until 12.45 during term-time. Children can access a variety of sessions. Children have access to an outside play area.

There are currently eight children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, six children receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs two members of staff. Both staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow satisfactory procedures in relation to health and hygiene. Children learn about personal hygiene through daily routines such as toileting and hand washing. The areas used by children are maintained in a satisfactory condition and appropriate measures are taken to ensure toys and equipment are cleaned regularly. This reduces any risk of cross-infection to children. Staff follow appropriate accident and medication procedures to ensure the safety and welfare of the children. Staff hold first aid certificates which enable them to deal with accidents effectively. Appropriate documentation is kept and shared with parents to ensure they are kept informed of any accident their child may have and when medication is administered.

Children are well-nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because they are able to have a hot lunch cooked at the school. Meals are freshly cooked and presented in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of the children. The children collect their own meals from the serving hatch enabling them to choose what food they are served with, helping them to develop their independence in making healthy choices. Healthy snacks of fresh fruit and vegetables are provided and children are able to access drinking water at any time. This ensures they are well nourished and not thirsty. Children are learning about healthy living through a range of planned activities that develop the children's understanding of what foods are good for them. They learn about food during cooking activities, they talk about different types of food and their origins, including culturally different foods such as when making samosas.

Children benefit from regular daily access to fresh air and exercise. A variety of physical activities take place indoors and outside allowing children to develop their physical skills. Children develop their co-ordination and balance as they confidently use the climbing frame indoors. Music and movement sessions enable children to be imaginative and develop their muscles and co-ordination. They run freely around the room moving their arms as if they were birds and planes and hide under tables. This helps them develop their awareness of space and movement. Children have very good opportunities to use the local environment as a learning resource with visits and walks arranged. Children are able to explore the natural environment around them when they go on bug hunts, fish in the river or collect items and natural materials for art and craft work. The setting also is beginning to use the Forest School approach, enabling children to further develop the outside environment for learning. Children are provided with a good range of activities which enable them to develop their dexterity and muscle control when using activities and tools, such as pencils, scissors, construction activities and table games. They are becoming competent in using their cutlery at mealtimes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's welfare and safety is not adequately protected. Procedures for ensuring all persons with unsupervised access to children continue to be suitable are not effective. There are no systems in place to ensure information is up-to-date and available to the registered person and manager. This compromises children welfare and safety.

Children are generally safe and well cared for in premises that are suitable for their purpose. The hall is large and spacious providing sufficient space for children to move around freely.

Activities are set out in readiness for arrival of the children and they quickly settle to play with the good range provided. Children and their parents and carers are made welcome as they arrive at the provision, staff are available to talk to parents and carers. Children always use a wide range of equipment and participate in activities which are suitable and safe and used effectively to support the children's learning. Children are able to access activities with ease, helping them to develop their independence and ability to make choices.

Children are generally safe and well cared for because the setting has satisfactory processes in place to keep children safe and limit risks to children. Daily checks are carried out to ensure that the space, resources and equipment are well-maintained and suitable for children to use and outings away from the setting are assessed for safety and suitability. However, staff do not make effective use of risk assessments to identify some potential hazards and take positive steps to minimise all risks to children indoors and outside. The systems for monitoring access to the hall and ensuring the outside area is secure are not managed effectively. This potentially compromises children's safety. There are clearly defined procedures for emergency evacuation of the building and children are learning how to keep themselves safe as they participate in the regular fire drills.

Children's welfare is adequately protected because staff have a sound understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. They follow child protection procedures in line with Local Safeguarding Children Boards guidelines in order to protect children from harm. Staff have submitted to checks to ascertain their suitability to care for children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the caring relationships that are evident within the setting. There are good interactions between staff and children; the children are settled, happy and secure. Attentive staff help and support children in activities offering encouragement and using questions well to help children acquire new skills and understanding. This positive interaction helps children to develop a sense of belonging with familiar and trusted adults from an early age. Staff gain information about children's care needs and preferences from parents, this enables them to know the children very well. All children participate in the same range of activities, they are encouraged to play together and develop friendships. Children are happily engaged in playing with the stimulating array of Early Years toys which encourages their active participation. This enables all children to benefit from a wide range of age-appropriate activities that promotes their progress across all areas of the curriculum. They join in with the activities on offer such as imaginative play in the home corner, explorative play using sand and water or work on more adult directed tasks such as completing their work books or music and movement sessions. Very good use is made of the surrounding area to enable children to explore and investigate, to go on walks and to be active. They are developing a good understanding of the natural world around them. Staff are aware of young children's developmental needs, have a wealth of knowledge and experience of child development and the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Although there are no clearly defined links to the 'Birth to three matters' framework, the needs of the younger children are taken into consideration when activities and learning experiences are planned. This enables all children to benefit from a wide range of age-appropriate activities that promote their progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of their development. Children receive a good level of support from staff who have a good understanding of how children develop and learn. Their good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum is used effectively to enable them to plan and deliver a well balanced curriculum which covers all six areas of learning. Particularly strong areas are knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Children have lots of opportunities to explore and investigate their local environment and the natural world. They are able to go on walks, make observations and gather materials for activities which take place within the setting. Children are able to reinforce activities again at a later date such as using magnifying glasses to observe plastic insects as well as going on a bug hunt outdoors. Science activities are regularly included in the sessions. They are taught with enthusiasm, which captures the children's interest and enables them to learn new information. The children are able to begin to learn about air during an experiment; finding out that they could not see air but it was around them. The children watched the experiment and soon understood that if they placed an upturned beaker, with a paper towel in the bottom, upside down in the water, the air would prevent it getting wet.

Staff use good teaching methods and questioning techniques which enable children to offer their own ideas and to think about what they do and see happening. Children using the water tray were able to use their understanding of colour to try and predict what would happen when food colouring was added to the water. The staff interact appropriately with the children, are good role models and encourage them to develop their play opportunities which help them make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children benefit from the well-resourced learning environment and the small number of children in the group which allows staff to offer one-to-one support for some activities.

Children are provided with a good range of activities and play opportunities which enable them to develop their skills. Activities are well-resourced and organised so that children can make choices about what they want to play with each day. Children are able to move freely from inside to outside using both areas for activities. The indoor space is used well to enable children to participate in physical activities such as music and movement, drama and physical exercise both structured and free. The children are able to develop their physical skills as they act out the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' using physical equipment to balance and climb. They are able to express themselves through their movements during music and movement sessions. Although children have good opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles and healthy eating, staff do not make good use of the wealth of physical activities to enable children to observe the effects of activity on their bodies.

Children are motivated to learn, interested in what is happening around them and are becoming confident to ask questions and make choices about what they want to do. Good relationships are formed with staff and other children because the staff get to know each child well and encourage children to play together, to learn to share and behave well. They use their knowledge of the children to ensure that activities are stimulating and offer sufficient challenge for each child. Children are happy to play in small groups such as playing table games or joining in with art and craft activities. They play imaginatively together in the role play area; cooking dinners in the home corner or serving in the shop. Children are developing their skills in conversation as they talk to each other during play. They are learning to negotiate and to share experiences. More structured activities such as completing their work books, circle time and focus activities enable staff to work on specific areas of learning. For example, children are developing their communication, language and literacy skills through learning about phonics, using stories and rhymes to increase their understanding of letter sounds and vocabulary. Topic work is used to

introduce concepts such as numbers. Children use their growing understanding of mathematics to count, recognise and use shapes and patterns in their play.

The planning and assessment system works efficiently and allows staff to focus on children's individual learning needs. Staff carry out observations and make assessments of children's progress and identify what steps are needed to be taken next to support the child's progress further. These are called 'living stories' observations. Information on children's progress is shared with parents, keeping them informed of the progress their child is making.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing good relationships with adults and other children because staff have a good understanding of the needs of each child and work well with parents and carers to ensure their individual needs are met. Children are encouraged to be part of the group, to develop friendships and be actively engaged in the activities and learning experiences offered. Children are generally well behaved, they are helpful and polite. They respond well to the calm manner of the staff and the good role models that they provide. There are good interactions between staff and children and the children are settled, happy and confident to ask for help when needed. Praise and encouragement is given to promote children's self-esteem. Children know the daily routine well and are quick to follow instructions to change activities, to help tidy away and get ready for snacks and meals.

Children have access to a good range of toys, resources of positive images of culture, gender and disability such as musical instruments displayed around the room, dressing up clothes, role play equipment and books. They learn about the wider world and diversity through a good range of activities such as celebrations and religious events. Children have tasted Chinese food as part of Chinese New Year, dressed up as the May Queen and performed a nativity play. This helps children develop their awareness of diversity and to develop positive attitudes. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive a satisfactory level of support. Staff responsible for implementing the Code of Practice (2001) for the Identification and Assessment of Special Education Needs are able to work in partnership with parents and other professionals involved in the child's care to ensure that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. This ensures that children are able to make sound developmental progress.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff promote positive relationships with parents and carers and work in partnership with them to meet children's individual needs by obtaining all relevant details about the children, because of this, children are protected. Parents are in turn provided with information on the provision in the form of newsletters, written policies and procedures. Parents are able to discuss their child's progress with staff or to attend parent's consultation meetings. However, information on the curriculum is not well presented or up-to-date. This means that parents are not kept fully informed about the educational provision. Children benefit from the support parents provide the pre-school. Parents are encouraged to be a part of the management committee and to be parent helpers. This enables the setting and parents to work together to meet the needs of the children.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The organisation of the provision is inadequate. Measures to safeguard children are not effective and regulations are not met. The welfare and safety of the children is compromised because arrangements for notifying Ofsted of changes to the registered body are not effective and the registration system does not show accurate times children arrive and depart. Procedures for ensuring suitability checks on the registered body and persons who have access to the children are ineffective. There is no system in place for monitoring or recording details of suitability checks to ensure information is up-to-date.

In most other aspects, the organisation of the provision ensures that children are generally safe and well cared for because there are well-qualified and suitable staff to meet the needs of the children. The setting has good links with the school in which it is based. The day to day running of the provision is well managed and the staff work well together to ensure children are able to participate in well planned learning opportunities. Training and qualification requirements are met; this contributes to the quality of care and education the children receive. Appropriate admission details and consent forms are obtained from parents prior to their child attending the nursery. Policies and procedures are in place and reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to work in practice. However, up-to-date information on the Addendum to the National Standards 2005 is not available. This means that the management committee and staff responsible for the day to day operation of the provision are not up-to-date with current information.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The day to day management of the provision is the responsibility of the manager who is supported by the management committee. Regular meetings and discussions take place to enable the manager to raise any issues or concerns with the management. At this time, the new management committee do not have a sound understanding of the requirements of the National Standards or curriculum for the Foundation Stage to be able to monitor the quality of the provision. However, the manager does have a wealth of experience to be able to deliver a well planned curriculum for children in receipt of funding for early education, which enables them to make good progress towards the early learning goals. The setting has a generally good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and have made good progress in addressing issues raised at the last inspection, in relation to nursery education and satisfactory progress in addressing the care issues.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting was required to improve the organisation of story time so that older three and four year olds can concentrate and have time to listen and respond; to update policies and procedures so that they are comprehensive, specific to the setting and in line with current legislation. Good progress has been made in addressing the issues raised. Story time is able to be reorganised so that younger children can be taken to a separate area of the room for activities. This means that the older three and four year olds are able to concentrate and have time to listen and respond without disruption. The written policies and procedures within the operational plan have been reviewed and updated, in line with current legislation. For example, the complaints procedure includes the name and address of the regulator; the illness policy gives details of what would happen if a child became ill while at the setting; the lost and uncollected child policy has been updated to ensure it is specific to the setting. This

means that children's health and safety is protected and parents are kept fully informed and able to make informed decisions about their child's care.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve procedures for ensuring that adults having unsupervised access to children are suitable to do so
- improve systems for registering children's and staff attendance on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters such as informing Ofsted of changes to the registered person.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- make more effective use of opportunities for children to observe the effects of activity on their bodies
- continue to develop ways of keeping parents fully informed about the curriculum.

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