

Building Blocks Nursery Ltd.

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY280115
Inspection date	13 November 2007
Inspector	Shirley Delaney
Setting Address	Cherry Orchard Primary School Site, Cherry Orchard Road, Birmingham, West Midlands, B20 2LB
Telephone number	0121 523 0999
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Registered person	Building Blocks Nursery Limited
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Building Blocks Nursery registered in 2004 and is one of three nurseries run by Building Blocks Nursery Limited. It is situated on the first floor of the reception class building of Cherry Orchard Primary school. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery serves the local community. It operates from Monday to Friday all year round and opens between the hours of 07.30 to 18.00. All children share access to an outdoor play area.

In the nursery there are currently 120 children on roll, of whom 2 are in receipt of nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery has procedures in place to support children who speak English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are 20 members of staff are employed to work in the nursery. Of these 16 hold relevant childcare qualifications. The nursery are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally safeguarded through the setting's policies, procedures which are easily accessible and generally well-organised. For example accident and medication procedures are in place and followed appropriately. The majority of the staff have undertaken training in first aid for children and infants, which ensures that children have access to appropriate care in the event of accident or injury. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection as staff keep areas used by the children clean. Children follow routines to promote their understanding of personal care and older children developing an awareness of why they need to follow hand washing routines to protect their health.

There is an outdoor play space which is equipped with a well-balanced range of toys and equipment to promote the development of children's physical skills. However, the children do not always have frequent opportunities to play outdoors. Children have regular opportunities to experience exercise and practice large physical skills indoors. Young children make routine use of a range of low-level climbing equipment and older children have planned opportunities to participate in circle games and movement to music.

Children's nutritional needs are accommodated and the staff work in partnership with parents to ensure that children's dietary needs are met appropriately. A range of meals are provided depending on children's times of attendance. Hot nutritional balanced meals are provided at lunchtime; and fruit and vegetables are provided on a daily basis. The main meal is prepared at another premises and transferred to the nursery daily. Babies are provided with meals and feeds according to their own routine. At mealtimes older children are provided with drinks. However, water is not freely available to children at all times; this does not allow children to keep themselves well hydrated throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery is organised to allow the children to participate in the full range of activities offered and children are able to freely select toys and equipment. The environment is clean, well-maintained and creatively organised to meet children's needs for stimulation, play and relaxation. Furniture and facilities are largely in place to support the children's needs. However, the toilet arrangements in place for older children do not provide them with privacy and dignity at all times.

The children participate in fire evacuations which promotes their awareness of procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. The staff remind children about safe practises. For example, they talk to children about carrying chairs and scissors safely, and discuss with children the possible consequences of running around the room. The staff have some awareness of possible risks to children's safety. Routine risk assessments are completed and staff have taken some steps to remove hazards in the setting. However, all risks are not identified, consequently children's safety is not vigorously promoted.

Children's protection from abuse and neglect is largely promoted through the staff's appropriate knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse and reporting procedures. Staff knowledge of

policies and procedures are reviewed as their awareness is tested by re-visiting procedures at staff meetings.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children are able to engage in a stimulating and well-balanced range of activities. Staff are able to access training through which they can update their knowledge and this supports the play and learning environment they make available to children. The Birth to three matters framework is effectively used to support young children's development and help them to achieve.

Babies benefit from supportive interaction from their carers, who provide children with comfort, hug and cuddles when they require reassurance. As a consequence they form close and trusting relationships and the babies are settled and secure. Play is planned to provide babies with a range of opportunities to experience different textures and appeal to all their senses. Young children benefit from activities that are planned to stimulate their imagination and exploratory skills. Staff effectively support children as they play. They encourage the development of young children's language skills by encouraging them to join in singing sessions and to verbally express their wishes. Staff are encouraging and listen carefully to children's responses, which develops their confidence and self-esteem. Children express enjoyment and delight when joining in familiar songs and their social skills are developed as they are supported to join in group activities along-side their peers and to take turns and share. The accessibility of toys and resources allow the children to make decisions about play experiences they wish to be involved in and explore the environment, enhancing their curiosity and imagination.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning for nursery education is good. Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. Senior staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation stage and other staff working with the pre-school children are increasingly knowledgeable as they are actively involved in the planning process. Activities planned are evaluated to determine their effectiveness, however whilst staff demonstrate some awareness of the children's individual needs they do not always adapt activities to enable all children to benefit fully. In addition some large group activities do not adequately meet the needs of older more able children. This means that some children do not always receive sufficient challenge in their play and learning. Organisation of resources, materials and staff interaction in children's play and learning opportunities; inspires children to explore and investigate their surroundings and join in activities. Children's thinking skills are enthusiastically promoted through general conversation and the frequent questions asked of them by the staff.

The children are given many opportunities to explore shape, colour, form and space during creative activities. They enjoy sensory experiences such as playing in the sand and joining in cooking activities. Children routinely access musical instruments that they utilise to tap out familiar tunes and have organised opportunities to move rhythmically to music. Children join in singing sessions with enthusiasm and demonstrate their security and confidence as they face the group and sing songs with gusto such as 'Spider Man' and 'You Are My Sunshine'. The children demonstrate a real fondness for imaginative play. They particularly enjoy role play and eagerly include their peers. They fuel one another's imagination with complex story lines and also demonstrate skills in negotiation when determining who will take on which role. Role play is spontaneous throughout the day and children skilfully act out the role of parent, family

member, shop keeper, train driver, passenger and ticket collector. They use props such as toys and furniture to aid their play. For example, children select dolls; carefully dressing them before taking them on an outing to Old McDonald's Farm and independently gather chairs from around the room to make a train.

Children enjoy listening to stories and are able to discuss aspects of familiar books. The children are able to choose books independently and sit comfortably whilst 'reading' them. They handle books with care and often seek out adults to share a book with. However, additional opportunities for children to see and use print in the environment are limited. This does not fully support children's awareness that print carries meaning and can be used as a method of recording and communicating.

Children develop skills in communication through regular involvement in circle time and most children demonstrate active listening and confident talking skills. During circle time children have the opportunities to discuss aspects of their own lives and identify features within their local environment. They share information about family events and experiences and are beginning to understand the concept of time when they talk about what happened over the weekend, what they have planned to do when they go home and what they will be doing tomorrow. Children have good access to information technology, demonstrating confidence when using computer equipment and skilful use of the mouse. They enjoy using the interactive white board which displays their computer skills and with the addition of a pressure mat can also be used to enhance their movement to music.

Children develop a good awareness of numbers; they count to ten and above and many children recognise numbers. Their interest in numbers is sustained as they are incorporated into routine events such as counting the number of children at registration time and how many children are allowed to play in the sand at one time.

Fine physical skills are developed by children who have good access to a range of fine and manipulative resources and equipment. For example, children display well practised skills when using scissors, treading cotton reels, building small blocks to form constructions, manipulating the mouse of the computer and using pencils and brushes. However the opportunities for children to practise large physical skills are restricted due to the infrequent use of outdoor facilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from having their differing needs met, as the staff value and respect each child's individuality. Children's experience of diversity within society is positively promoted by effective planning to incorporate celebrating a range of religious and cultural festivals across the year. The children also have access to a good range of resources reflecting positive images of race, gender and disability to promote their understanding of others. Staff demonstrate a proactive and sensitive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The children behave well. Staff use effective strategies to promote positive behaviour which are adapted depending on children's maturity and understanding. The staff support young children in developing social skills, such as sharing and taking turns. Older children demonstrate an awareness of the expectations and boundaries in place. They are developing skills in negotiation and with adult support are beginning to value the benefits of using positive

strategies when making their needs known in their interaction with others. The children's self-esteem and confidence are fostered well as they take on responsibilities within the daily routine such as helping to tidy away toys. Their understanding of right and wrong is supported by the use and display of a reward chart which highlights the value placed on good, kind and helpful behaviour displayed by the children. The children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit as a result of the partnership staff build with parents. Arrangements for settling children in are flexible and support the emotional needs of the child and family. Parents are welcomed into the setting and information is shared with them on a daily basis through daily diary sheets. Parent's involvement is extended through information supplied to them about the provision and having the opportunity to make comments through attendance at parent's evenings. Staff make sure that parents know how their child is progressing and developing. Parents also have the opportunity to be a parent representative on the parent's board where they can discuss the nursery provision and make suggestions.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education is good. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. For example, they are able to work in partnership and facilitate their child's learning by assisting their child to complete home work activities. Examples of home work completed by children with their parents are displayed within the nursery where they are valued. Parents are well informed about their child's progress through various means; for example, staff provide parents with informal information about their child's progress on an ongoing basis and information and planning displayed on notice boards. Parents are also given recorded information detailing of the early learning goals staff are focusing upon on a regular basis and this document also makes suggestions about how parents can promote this learning at home. There is a formal system of sharing children's progress towards the early learning goals through information shared at parents' evenings.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The children are able to explore and investigate in the available space, which is generally organised to meet their needs and enhance and develop their curiosity. The children benefit from a well-qualified staff team and the maintenance of required adult to child ratio's, which supports their access to an appropriate level of care and attention. Staff are inducted into the provision, and their understanding of policies and procedures are re-visited and tested at regular staff meetings. However, procedures in place to demonstrate that all staff have been in receipt of vigilant checks to determine their suitability are not thorough. In addition, records of staff and children's attendance are not always accurately recorded. As a consequence children's welfare and safety are not fully supported.

The quality of leadership and management of nursery education is good. The larger organisational management and the nursery management team support staff in their role through evaluation and guidance. The staff team's professional development is supported by an effective programme of access to training. The management team regularly observes and reviews the provision for funded children, who benefit as a result of the improvements they strive to implement. The provision receives support from a teacher who has a proportional period of her time allocated to work in the nursery as part of the children's centre initiative. The management team demonstrate a commitment to the promotion of quality education for young children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provision was asked to ensure children in the Tweenie's room can access toys and play equipment easily. Since the last inspection additional low-level storage has been obtained and resources are within children's reach. This enables the children to make choices and affords them more independence whilst they explore the environment.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 Ofsted has received one complaint which required the provider to take action to meet the National standards. On 06/10/2004 Concerns were raised about the nappy changing procedure and frequency of staff changes. These concerns relate to National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 6: Safety, National Standard 7: Hygiene and National Standard 12: Partnership with parents. Ofsted investigated this concern by carrying out an unannounced visit. As a result of the visit two actions were set relating to National standard 7: Health and Hygiene and National standard 12: Partnership with parents and carers. A satisfactory response to these actions was received, and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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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):

- provide children with access to drinking water at all times
- increase children's access to outdoor play
- improve risk assessments to ensure that hazards are identified and risks are minimised for children
- ensure older children have privacy when using the toilet
- improve systems in place for recording children and staff attendance
- improve the system in place for completing checks with regard to staff suitability.

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):

- provide increased opportunities for older more able children to extend their learning

- provide more opportunities for children to see written words in the environment to foster children's understanding that print carries meaning and can be used as a method of recording and communicating.

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