

Bunnytots Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY349931
Inspection date	22 May 2008
Inspector	Susan Sykes
Setting Address	Winyates Primary School, Winyates, Orton Goldhay, PETERBOROUGH, PE2 5RF
Telephone number	01733 394364
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Registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
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 good. 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?

Bunnytots Pre-school has been operating for many years and opened under its present management in 2007. It operates from a purpose-built room in Winyates Primary school, Peterborough. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:00 to 15:00 term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. Children attend from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs six members of staff of whom four hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are healthy due to the good practice followed by members of staff. They teach children the importance of personal hygiene through daily routines, such as washing hands after using

the toilet or before eating, and provide all the equipment they need to wash their hands independently. Adults remain alert to reinforce good practice as necessary to give children a thorough understanding of good hygiene through constant supervision, for example, as they attend the toilet. A firm ethos of encouraging sick children to stay at home reflects the written policy, ensures their well-being and protects the other children from cross-infection. Half of the staff hold appropriate first aid certificates and a well-stocked first aid box ensures they can respond to minor injuries. Permission to take children to hospital in the event of an emergency is in place, however this does not meet current permission requirements in the event of, for example, needing emergency treatment or advice.

Children increase their understanding about a healthy lifestyle. They grow fruit and vegetables such as strawberries, carrots, lettuce and peas which they later enjoy for their snacks. However, snacks offered on a daily basis do not always support children's nutritional needs. For example, some days children do not receive a choice of snacks and only dry biscuits are available. Adults are vigilant to ensure they take into account children's dietary needs such as allergies to particular foods to ensure their well-being. Children develop their social skills through eating their snacks and packed lunches together at the table. Children can access drinks whenever they need to, which helps them recognise and respond to their body's needs.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health, both indoors and out. They participate enthusiastically in group exercise activities indoors which build their large physical skills. Children move around the premises safely avoiding hazards. Children have good opportunities to use small scale equipment safely to develop their finer manipulative skills, for example, writing, completing jigsaw puzzles and using scissors. Large scale equipment outdoors develops their large physical skills as they use, for example, the swings and bikes and scooters with confidence. This helps children to develop a good attitude to exercise and keeping fit. Children are keen to try and gain new skills as the adults have a good understanding of appropriate activities and the level of support individuals require, such as holding children's hands if needed as they balance along the low-level balancing beam, and the children are enthusiastic to share their success as their self-confidence grows.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children receive a very warm welcome from staff who ensure the environment is ready for them when they arrive. The activities and resources provided are clean, safe and appropriate for the children's age and ability. Resources and activities are displayed in an exciting and interesting way throughout the pre-school where children safely access them on their own. Children are beginning to develop their understanding about taking responsibility and keeping themselves safe, for example, promoting road safety when out on walks around the vicinity. There are clear boundaries within the setting to promote their safety such as when riding the bikes they must not bump into each other.

Children are secure. Indoor and outdoor space is organised to enable children to explore and take risks while being appropriately supervised. A good adult-to-child ratio is met ensuring children experience consistent high levels of support and their risk of injury is minimised due to staff's vigilance. Daily visual and written risk assessments relating to indoors and outdoors are undertaken although on occasions these do not always identify potential hazards to children, for example, carrier bags are left within children's reach in the nappy changing area. Access to the premises is monitored by staff who man the entrance at the beginning and end of each session and ensure that it is locked at all other times. Staff take extra care to protect children's

safety by ensuring that all persons collecting children are authorised to do so. A visitors' book is used to establish a record of who is on the premises at any one time, safeguarding the children's welfare.

Children are protected from harm. Staff have a thorough understanding of child protection issues and their responsibilities in this area. There are clear procedures based on the national guidelines for safeguarding children and these are fully implemented in the setting. Children's safety and well-being is fully promoted as staff remain vigilant to existing injuries that children have from outside of the setting and record and use this information appropriately and confidentially. Clear procedures if an allegation is made against a member of staff are in place and understood thus children are always cared for by suitable persons.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well and separate from their parents and carers confidently or are supported sensitively by staff to do so. Children spend their time playing together in small and large groups with staff interacting and supporting them well in their play. Staff are caring and value individual children's contributions to help them develop pride in their own achievements, for example, responding enthusiastically when children proudly show their painting when completed. At times of transition, such as at the beginning of the day, staff greet and say 'hello' to all children and their parents. This helps to develop secure and trusting three-way relationships.

Children develop trusting relationships with the staff and develop friendships with each other. Children's confidence is nurtured in a supportive environment where they are able to develop and learn at their own pace. Children develop good self-esteem as they carry out activities successfully as they are age-appropriate and the children are given lots of praise and encouragement for the things they do. A key-worker system helps to ensure that children feel secure. Children of all ages and stages of development enjoy their time at the pre-school as they enjoy the suitable range of activities that are offered such as puzzles, books, role play, construction, sand and water activities. Many other resources are available for self-selection which encourages independence and self-confidence. Younger children have their needs met as activities are adapted to ensure they can participate. Sessions are well balanced to allow children time to pursue their own interests interspersed with whole group activities. Children are involved and motivated throughout the session, they have a positive approach to learning and are eager to take part in new activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a clear knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this to plan a range of activities and experiences to help children make progress towards the early learning goals. Planning covers the six areas of learning with learning intentions which link to the early learning goals. A key-worker system is in place and staff use observations to record children's developmental progress. However, these are often sporadic, not dated and not linked to stepping stones or early learning goals thus making it difficult to track children's progress. Furthermore, although systems are in place to use observations undertaken to inform future planning or plan each child's next steps, these are not used efficiently to offer ongoing appropriate challenge to each child. This results in children being hindered in their progress to the early learning goals.

Staff work alongside the children supporting and guiding their development and learning whilst introducing them to new ideas. The children are becoming confident speakers as staff take time to listen to them and give them opportunities to speak in front of a group of peers, for example, as they sing their favourite songs to a group of children. They have opportunities to further develop their language skills as they participate in role play in which, for example, they become hairdressers. This also helps them to develop their thinking and listening skills as they interact with each other. Children enjoy singing rhymes and listening to stories which further promotes their language development and forms the basis of later reading and writing skills. Children have regular access to books and they handle them appropriately. Staff make stories interesting as they hold the book so that children can see the pictures. The clear labelling throughout the room helps children to understand that print carries meaning.

Children's personal, social and emotional skills are being well developed in the setting as they make independent choices from a choice of easily accessible resources or sit together at snack time. Children play together well, for example, as they negotiate scenarios in the home corner, re-enacting everyday life and making sense of the world around them. Their self-esteem is effectively encouraged as staff praise their efforts, for example, as they applaud children's achievements when they have stood in front of the group and sing aloud independently. Children demonstrate they are confident to include adults and visitors in their play. During the inspection, children gave the inspector a guided tour of the setting and were eager to show resources and activities without intervention from staff demonstrating their self-confidence and feeling of ease in the pre-school.

Children gain an understanding of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy through counting activities as well as singing number rhymes. Cooking, water and sand activities develop children's sense of size, weight and capacity. They build train tracks, fit together jigsaws or build elaborate towers with building blocks developing the children's thinking and methods of problem solving. Staff introduce basic mathematical learning such as size and shape through practical activities, for example, construction and dough. Children can count confidently to ten, show an understanding of counting principles and recognise digits. Staff support children to count and introduce simple calculation in their everyday play such as when they play with the small sorting figures.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed through resources and activities that explore cultures and celebrate festivals such as Diwali or Christmas in a meaningful way. They begin to comprehend a sense of time as they watch the flowers and vegetables they have planted grow and undertake projects such as making and melting ice cubes to look at changes in state which will underpin later science subjects in school. The computer is easily accessible, building their understanding of information technology and other resources such as programmable toys further consolidate this learning.

Children's creativity is encouraged in the pre-school through a variety of mediums. They participate in art and craft activities and staff ensure children are able to explore their own ideas, for example, as finger painting becomes hand painting and children play with the paint in their hands, exploring its texture and mixing colours. Children have opportunities to engage in role play, for example, as they become nurses and adapt resources to make props, such as building blocks representing medicine bottles. This encourages children's creative thinking and supports their concentration skills as they take their ideas forward and extend their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed and feel a sense of belonging as they take part in the routines of the setting such as placing their packed lunches into the refrigerator. Practitioners listen to children, respect their ideas and often support them in carrying out the ideas in role play and other activities. Staff are proactive in ensuring that appropriate action is taken to identify and support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensuring they have equal access to all the setting has to offer. Children with English as an additional language are supported as the staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure they can be fully included in the day-to-day routines of the setting. For example, staff learn key words from parents in the child's home language. Children become aware of their own and other cultures through resources such as books and toys and activities.

Overall, children's behaviour is good. This is influenced by the staff's calm approach and constant praise and encouragement, for example, as children respond to experiences by singing and dancing spontaneously staff join in and applaud them. Any issues that do arise are dealt with quietly and without humiliation to the children. Children are taught the consequences of their actions on others, which helps them in learning to play together and share.

Children benefit from the working partnership between their parents, carers and staff to provide effective care, for example, information regarding children's individual needs, such as allergies, is collated and respected. This contributes towards maintaining their well-being and safety. Parents receive information about the setting in the regular newsletter or the information board in the reception area. Children's records and assessments are always available for parents to view upon request. Parents speak positively of the service the setting provides and of the staff in the setting. Children see positive relationships between staff and parents, supporting their sense of emotional security.

Children are encouraged to share, play together and respect each other. They are given opportunities to appreciate other cultures and express themselves through a variety of mediums. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is being fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. The provision obtains some information from parents at the start of the early years education curriculum. However, parents' contribution to their child's initial developmental assessment is limited. Information obtained mostly concerns physical and care needs. Furthermore, assessment systems are not fully effective to include parent's accounts of their child's progress and some parents are unaware of the stepping stones and early learning goals that their children are progressing through. This lack of involvement limits the role of parents as educators. Parents are provided with an informative booklet that contains guidance on the six areas of learning and the Foundation Stage curriculum is always available for perusal. A lending library has been introduced by the pre-school whereby children choose a book to take home for parents to read with them. Parents are kept informed about what their children have been doing during the sessions through informal discussions at the end of the session and a good relationship exists between parents and the staff. This assists in helping children feel secure. The records of progress contain many photographs which support parents who have English as an additional language or no English language to understand their children's learning and achievements in the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There is a good level of qualified staff who work with the children and the adult-to-child ratio is well met. Children are happy in the setting and their needs are met appropriately. Staff meetings ensure staff are being suitably made aware of the issues which affect the day to day running of the setting thus impact on the children. Training needs of staff is recognised through annual appraisals and regular dialogue. Staff development is fully supported by the manager making sure children are provided with appropriate care and education. They have an understanding of the group's strengths and weaknesses and have responded well to past recommendations to improve their practice. Good recruitment and induction procedures are in place to ensure that new staff are suitably vetted before working with children and therefore children's safety is maintained. The comprehensive policies are implemented and promote the outcomes for children. The organisation of the environment is good and staff are well deployed in order to ensure children receive appropriate levels of support at activities. The staff work well as a team and the session runs smoothly. The required documentation is maintained to a high standard and is presented in a professional manner.

Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The manager and staff are fully committed and professional in their approach to providing children with positive early years play and learning experiences. They work closely together to ensure the day-to-day running of the pre-school goes smoothly and provide an environment for children to be happy and flourish. Good staffing ratios are maintained throughout the session ensuring children are well supervised and supported during play activities. However, the monitoring systems in place are not fully effective in identifying the weaknesses in nursery education, for example, recording children's progress can be sporadic and planning and activities do not always offer suitable challenges to individual children. Furthermore, on occasions there is limited time for staff to undertake these tasks effectively. This can hinder children's progress to the early learning goals. The manager has worked with the local authority in the past to develop the quality of nursery education and has a positive attitude in implementing strategies to enhance their practice which benefits the children's care and learning.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- introduce a consistent programme of healthy eating into children's daily snack times.

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):

- use observations effectively to monitor and evaluate the children's progress towards the early learning goals and ensure that they are used consistently to inform the planning of children's future learning to provide sufficient challenges
- develop the procedures for obtaining information from parents about their child's learning at the start of the placement and ensure a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise is implemented
- develop and implement a system to assess the strengths and weaknesses in the education provision to ensure gaps are highlighted and actioned.

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