

Busy Bees at Hatfield Road

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY233068
Inspection date	16/09/2008
Inspector	Karen Molloy / Anneliese Fox-Jones
Setting address	601a Hatfield Road, Smallford, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4 0HL
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Busy Bees Day Nursery Ltd registered in 2001. It is one in a chain of day nurseries and is situated in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. It operates from seven rooms organised over two floors. Children have shared access to a secure, enclosed outside area. There is easy access to the ground floor part of the building via a small step. Busy Bees serves the local community and surrounding areas. A maximum of 65 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:45 to 18:15, throughout the year and children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 103 children on roll who are all within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The nursery is registered to receive nursery education funding. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are 22 staff working with the children. Of these, 13 staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The nursery provides effectively for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children generally enjoy good access to a variety of resources and activities which enables them to become active learners. The staff create a safe and welcoming environment where all children are included and supported. The partnership with parents is a key strength and contributes to ensuring that children's needs are met well and they receive any additional support they need. This means that children make good progress given their age, ability and starting points. The manager is very aware of the strengths and areas for improvement within the setting, and working with the staff, constantly strives to improve the experiences of the children who attend the nursery.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop outdoor play opportunities to enable children to move more freely between indoors and plan activities that offer physical challenges
- develop planning further to provide experiences and sufficient resources which are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure all children have regular access to a range of media and materials that they can explore freely, to promote their creative development.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is led and managed by the manager and a deputy, who are good role models and support staff well. They have a clear understanding of safeguarding children. An effective recruitment and induction programme as well as robust vetting procedures, ensure that all adults working with the children are suitable to do so. Regular appraisals, supervision and staff meetings ensure that staff development is ongoing, with any specific training needs identified. Training mentors help to oversee and organise this process. This results in a staff team who are well equipped to support and include all children.

The setting works very well in partnership with parents and has begun to forge good links with local schools and other agencies involved in the children's progress. Information is shared effectively with parents through a variety of ways; regular newsletters, parents' evenings to discuss children's progress, day charts are shared at the end of each day and an informative notice board is attractively displayed. Parents' views are actively sought via questionnaires and 'customer satisfaction' surveys and they comment positively on the service provided. A parents' guide (and CD ROM) to the EYFS is available to ensure they are fully informed of the new framework. The nursery are both sensitive and effective in supporting children with additional needs and children who have English as an additional language. They work well with parents, the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and the teacher to ensure that all children are fully included. A pre-school evening provides the opportunity for local primary school teachers to visit and meet nursery staff, parents and children, prior to them starting at their new school. This is a useful introduction and the setting clearly demonstrates how they value working in partnership, to support children's learning and development.

The nursery is very positive about the self evaluation process and has begun to use this as a tool to highlight areas of good practice, as well as to identify areas for development. Currently, managers take on this responsibility, although input from staff and parents will be used too. Managers from other nurseries within the company meet regularly to discuss practice and this contributes to the monitoring and evaluation of their service. The setting has made good progress in relation to addressing the recommendations from the last inspection, which in turn have improved the outcomes for children. All the required records, policies and procedures are in place to support the safe and efficient management of the EYFS and to ensure that the needs of all children are met.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make good progress in their learning because they are supported by staff who have a sound knowledge of the early learning goals. Information regarding children's achievements, interests and needs is used to help them, to take the next step in their learning and development. Regular observations are used to gather information about children's progress and planning is then led by children's interests and needs. In addition, the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works well with parents to support children that have learning difficulties

and/or disabilities. Staff have developed a language box with useful resources and they obtain key words in children's first language from parents, which encourages children's communication. The organisation of rooms and any necessary additional equipment is taken into consideration when planning, to ensure each child is fully included.

Staff generally provide stimulating and age-appropriate activities and opportunities for all children. However, younger children (18 to 24 months) do not always have regular and easy access to a range of media and materials, such as paint, water and sand and other resources are limited in this age range. This means children are not always engaged and impacts on the range of opportunities available to promote their development. Staff support children well and they are on hand to assist when needed. They ask challenging questions, listen well to children and respond positively to their requests. In turn, children are confident to approach staff, share their stories and ask questions. Children benefit from a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Key workers have begun to plan for their key group and this is working well, enabling them to meet the needs and interests of each child more effectively.

Children in the pre-school room are particularly well challenged and benefit from staff who have an excellent knowledge and understanding of how children learn and develop. They participate in planned and purposeful play, are engaged and show an enthusiastic attitude to learning, encouraged by enthusiastic staff. The nursery provides a bright and welcoming environment for children of all ages. This enables them to settle well, develop a sense of belonging and become confident learners. Generally good organisation means children are able to independently access a variety of resources and activities, stored at low-level and easily accessible. However, opportunities to play outdoors are generally time-tabled and do not enable children to move freely between the indoors and outside environment. In addition, outdoor play lacks challenge for older and/or more able children, which does not fully promote children's physical development.

Children participate in a variety of activities covering the six areas of learning. Their communication, language and literacy skills are encouraged as they listen with enjoyment to stories and respond with relevant actions, they grasp the concept of 'reading' left to right and learn about the author when reading. Children show curiosity about numbers, they use them in play, experimenting with the need for more or less than, they write numbers and place the correct number of cars on a sheet. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through everyday activities as well as planned opportunities; they are curious as the nursery telephone rings and ask how it works. Children grow plants in the garden and are encouraged to think about where vegetables come from when eating their lunch. Children enjoy making pictures and constructing sentences of a familiar story and sequencing them to make a class book. As a result, children learn the importance of putting marks on paper, work collaboratively and appreciate the value of their combined work. Children also have access to a range of extra curricular activities, such as 'Mad Science', 'French' and 'Stretch and Grow' to enhance their learning.

Children are provided with a well-balanced and nutritious selection of snacks and

meals. Dietary requirements are discussed and clearly recorded, with each child having a mat for mealtimes, with their photograph and any dietary requirements detailed. Information regarding children's food is recorded and shared with parents daily, which ensures everyone works together to meet their health and dietary needs. Children are kept safe through appropriate procedures; risk assessments and daily checks are carried out by staff and fire drills are held regularly. Children learn about their own safety, for example, they are reminded not to put knives in their mouths when eating and they talk about why they need sun cream to help keep their bodies safe. Children's self-esteem is promoted through praise and encouragement. Their behaviour is good and well managed as they are busy, interested and keen to learn.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.