

# Mama Bear's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY402948  
**Inspection date** 01/07/2010  
**Inspector** Linda Janet Witts

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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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*.

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## Description of the setting

Mama Bears Day Nursery opened in 2010. It is one of a number of local nurseries operated by the same family-run company. The nursery is registered to care for up to 64 children in the early years age group and is registered on the Early Years Register. It runs as a baby and toddler unit for children under three who then transfer to a neighbouring pre-school unit run by the same company. There are currently 63 children on roll.

The nursery operates from a self contained, single storey premises, set back from the road in a residential area of Downend, South Gloucestershire. Children have access to outdoor play areas at the setting and use is also made of the garden at the pre-school unit. On site parking for drop-off and pick-up is available and the building is accessible to those with limited mobility. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks a year, from 7.30am to 6pm with an additional hour from 6-7pm where needed.

A team of 17 members of staff is employed. All staff are either qualified or working towards qualifications in childcare. Qualifications at level 3 and above are held by eight members of staff and five have level 2 qualifications.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The nursery owners and manager have successfully ensured a smooth transition for young children from their Downfield Nursery into this separate baby and toddler unit. The young children are generally well-settled and happy, and overall make progress in their learning and development. Systems for the safe and efficient management of the nursery are well thought out but staff do not always implement them as expected. As a result there are times when children's welfare is potentially compromised. The risk assessment record lacks detail. Strong partnerships with parents and others involved in children's care are established. The management team have identified some aspects for improvement of the provision and demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure that the record of risk assessment identifies all aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, with particular regards to sleep arrangements (Suitable Premises) 16/07/2010

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

- ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the implementation of actions identified to minimise risks to children's safety
- ensure that all practitioners support children's learning; so that children are comforted, fully included and have enjoyable learning experiences that help them to gain skills for the future
- improve organisation so as to minimise the length of time children have to wait between activities and meal times

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Practitioners mostly safeguard the welfare of children successfully. They have a designated person for child protection, who is suitably trained and the nursery has a clear procedure to follow in the event of any concerns. The nursery also has robust systems for recruitment and vetting and to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff. There is a high level of security in place and risk assessments are completed by the nursery manager. However, on occasion practitioners fail to implement the action identified to minimise risks and this compromises children's safety. The record of risk assessment does not clearly document the hazards associated with sleep arrangements. Other required records are appropriately maintained. Good hygiene practice takes place to minimise the risk of cross infection and children are helped to learn personal hygiene routines from a young age. The nursery cook prepares nutritionally balanced meals that children enjoy; catering for the children's various dietary needs and parents' wishes. Practitioners are vigilant in their serving of meals to protect those that have food allergies, with relevant dietary information detailed on children's individual placemats.

The nursery building is well maintained and resources are of good quality. The key person for each child makes regular observations of the children in their care, identifies next steps for their learning and uses this information to inform planning. Themes are also used when planning in the different children's groups. Whilst this results in the provision of a suitable range of activities that cover most aspects of children's learning successfully there are times when some practitioners do not support children effectively. On such occasions not all children are fully included and supported in activities. Most of the nursery day runs smoothly and incorporates time for children to be active, but also to enjoy quieter activities and sleep, as required. At times however, there are unnecessary periods of waiting for children while staff are engaged in organisational tasks. There are small on-site outdoor areas available for use but these are not used to their full potential. The babies and toddlers do have opportunities to be taken out for walks when possible and this sometimes includes trips to the Downend nursery to use the larger garden there.

A strong partnership with parents is already established. Parents spoken to and feedback supplied to the nursery reports that parents feel well informed about the nursery provision. They receive informative induction packs and then regular newsletters and verbal communication ensures that parents know about staffing, what their children are doing in the nursery and how well they are progressing in

their learning and development. Support for children with special educational needs is good and children with English as an additional language are supported adequately. Good links are forged with others involved in children's care and careful consideration, together with parent consultation, takes place to prepare children as they move into different age groups and prepare to transfer to the other nursery as they get older.

Self-evaluation is largely undertaken by senior management, although staff are invited to give their input. It identifies most strengths and weaknesses and action taken has a beneficial impact upon children's welfare, learning and development. The nursery directors and manager communicate ambition and a drive for the nursery's future improvement.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Most children have positive experiences at the nursery. They detach from their parents/carers with confidence and have good relationships with the nursery practitioners. Most practitioners are sensitive to children's individual needs and show them warmth and affection. Sometimes those children that find it harder to settle are overlooked and are not actively encouraged to join in activities or given reassurance to help them to feel safe and secure.

The children are becoming familiar with the nursery routine and join in freely-chosen and adult-led group activities mostly with enthusiasm. A varied range of activities is set out for children in each of the nursery groups. Some additional resources are stored so that children can access them independently. Babies explore the floor area and stage appropriate toys. They roll and stretch using their senses to investigate the toys and objects. Playful interaction from practitioners extends their interest and enjoyment. For example, a practitioner rolls a caterpillar toy across the floor; the baby crawls at speed to retrieve it and then returns the toy to the awaiting adult who happily repeats the activity to the delight of the baby. Babies practise their early walking skills using equipment or adults for support. Toddlers enjoy opportunities to explore shaving foam, paint and playdough and recently had great fun creating a large scale group 'body' painting. They also develop physical skills and enjoy the sensory experience of sand and water play. They also explore different textures and materials.

Children develop suitable skills for the future. They learn to play happily alongside others, and practitioners, who have completed behaviour management training, help them to learn to share, take turns and be kind to one another. They are also encouraged to gain independence. For example, they learn to wash their hands at the low level sinks, dry them and throw the used paper towels away. They put on their sun hats and when they go out for walks older toddlers try to put on high visibility vests for themselves. Many can do so but staff are on hand to offer assistance as required.

Most practitioners support children's language communication but some are more skilled than others in asking questions to promote children's language and

thinking. Children are not always given sufficient time to answer any questions asked and not all adults are responsive to children's non-verbal communications. Makaton signing is used in one group and staff and children quickly grasp simple signs. This helps all children in this group including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Methods to aid communication in other groups are not so effective.

Books are readily available for use across the nursery and children like to snuggle up with the practitioners to look at books and listen to stories. There are some simple push button toys that children can operate and cameras designed for children's use are available for staff to use in their groups. This introduces the young children to technology. Role play resources are available and also small world toys for children to use imaginatively. Children go outdoors daily for short periods but the garden areas cannot be freely accessed and the learning potential these areas offer is not fully utilised.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b> | 3 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement                                     | 3 |

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>                          | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement         | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources   | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity                             | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding  | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships  | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers                                | 2 |

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

|  |   |
|--|---|
| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|--|---|
| <b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b> | 3 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning    | 3 |
| The extent to which children feel safe                           | 3 |
| The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles            | 2 |
| The extent to which children make a positive contribution        | 3 |
| The extent to which children develop skills for the future       | 3 |

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