

Mama Bear's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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 Nursery is one of a group of 10 nurseries in the South West owned and run by the same family. It registered in 2010 and is situated in a purpose built building with enclosed outdoor areas suitable for children's use. The setting is in the grounds of Somerset College, Taunton, however, childcare provision is open to the all members of the community.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 53 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 30 children aged from aged three months to five years of age attending at different times. The setting receives funding from the local authority for early years education for three and four-year-olds. The setting is open from 7.30 a.m. to 7.00 p.m for 51 weeks of the year. There are 11 members of staff working directly with children, nine of which hold relevant early years qualifications. They are supported by a cook. Any additional staffing that may be needed to cover staff absence is provided from within the Mama Bears group of nurseries.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are met extremely well. Immensely successful processes of self-evaluation result in very good action plans for the future that are well focused on achieving and sustaining high-quality outcomes for children. Staff use their excellent observations of children most effectively to develop individual learning plans for each child. As a result, children of all ages are making consistently excellent progress towards the early learning and development goals, relative to their starting points.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- Consider how the links between the indoor and outdoor learning environments can be developed further so that all children have the same opportunities to move spontaneously between them.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Excellent leadership and management within the setting has resulted in an enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff team who show high levels of commitment to promoting children's welfare, learning and development. Children are protected

from harm because the staff team demonstrate an excellent understanding of safeguarding procedures. The setting is experienced in working in partnership with other safeguarding agencies in order to protect children, where circumstances indicate they may be particularly vulnerable. Safeguarding policies and procedures are detailed and provide good quality guidance for staff. These are given to parents to ensure they understand that the setting has a duty to safeguard children. Employment procedures are robust and ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so. Extremely thorough induction processes for new staff ensure they have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Children are safe and secure within the setting. Access to the premises is strictly monitored, visitors are asked to provide suitable identification and their presence is recorded. Risk assessments are excellent; they are extremely detailed and cover all aspects of the provision, activities and resources used by children, and all outings and excursions. Risk assessments are reviewed frequently, and these are supported by extremely thorough daily health and safety checks. All documentation that supports children's safety and well-being is in place and is very well maintained. For example, any accidents or incidents involving children are recorded in detail, and there is a monthly audit of these to identify whether there are any common factors that need to be addressed in order to enhance children's safety. Registers of attendance and staff rotas confirm that children benefit from high adult ratios. Staff are conscientious in recording when they enter or leave children's base rooms to ensure that it can be seen that ratios are maintained at all times.

Managers within the setting have most successfully promoted a culture of reflective practice amongst the staff team. As a result, staff at all levels take an active role in evaluating the effectiveness of the provision for children. Parent's views are respected and sought in different ways in order to include these in the ongoing systems of self-evaluation, such as feedback questionnaires, suggestion boxes, and individual discussions with key workers. Staff demonstrate that children's views are given a very high priority and are valued. For example, extremely effective use is made of a 'children's voice' board, where staff record and display children's opinions and ideas in their own words, and these are included in the self-evaluation process. Action plans for the future are extremely good, they clearly identify areas for potential development, and any actions taken in order to achieve improvements. These are then reviewed in order to evaluate how improvements have had a positive impact on outcomes for children. For example, in order to develop a sense of identity and community for children in the preschool age group, T-shirts with the settings' logo were introduced. These have proved to be successful with children, who show pride in identifying themselves with 'their nursery'. There is an excellent commitment to inclusive practice at all levels within the setting. For example, when introducing uniform T-shirts for the older age group, it was decided that these would be provided free of charge in order that no child or groups of children would be disadvantaged because of additional costs to parents. Children for whom English is an additional language, or who are bilingual, are supported extremely well because staff take positive steps to show that each child's language is valued. For example, labelling within the setting is regularly updated to reflect the languages of each child currently attending; where staff have found difficulty in accessing dual language resources, they have been proactive in working with parents to make their own. Children's cultural

traditions are recognised and respected. For example, some children attending have specific dietary needs related to religious observance. Staff ensure they have detailed information from parents regarding what children can eat, and how food should be prepared and served in order to meet these requirements. Inclusion underpins all aspects of the self-evaluation process. For example, overall, all children within the setting benefit from excellent opportunities to enjoy the extended learning environment, being able to choose whether to play indoors or outside. The base rooms for children under two years old, and for three to five-year-olds, have direct access onto outdoor play areas and children in these groups move freely and spontaneously between indoors and outside. The base room for two to three-year-old children does not have direct access to outside. Staff have identified this as an area for improvement, and are currently reviewing how they can achieve the same free access to outdoors for all children. However, excellent organisation ensures that this has little impact on children's everyday experience.

Parents and carers are extremely well informed about all aspects of the provision. Display boards and newsletters are used most effectively to provide information about which members of staff are present each day, the activities that children have been enjoying, and to update parents about forthcoming outings and excursions. Policies and procedures are displayed for easy reference, and parents are given their own copies of these. Documentation relating to children's welfare is also available to parents in languages other than English. Staff work extremely closely with parents to ensure they have a very good understanding of each child's individual requirements. Regular opportunities are provided for parents to meet with children's key workers and to be involved in evaluating and setting learning objectives for their child. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children's learning and development at home. For example, staff suggest that children of all ages will enjoy using vegetables to print with, for example potatoes or carrots, and relate this to the current theme being explored with children which is different types of food. Some children attend other settings that provide the Early Years Foundation Stage, and staff are extremely proactive in contacting other providers in order to share information that supports individual learning and development. They have been very successful in making links with some settings. This has benefited children because key workers in both settings work together to set consistent aims and objectives in their individual learning plans. In some instances, staff have not been successful in making meaningful links with other settings; however, they are persistent in continuing to establish professional relationships.

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

Children's welfare, learning and development is promoted extremely well. Excellent health and safety practice within the setting ensures that children are kept safe from harm, and protects them from the risk of illness and cross infection. Children develop a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They enjoy frequent outings into their local community, such as to local shops and markets, and staff ensure they review safety practice with children prior to each outing. For

example, practising road safety routines such as walking together and stopping when told to do so, and reminding children about using crossings appropriately. The excellent organisation of practices of emergency evacuation procedures ensures children have frequent opportunities to take part in fire drills. This results in children having a good understanding of how to keep safe if there is a fire or similar emergency. Children demonstrate a very good awareness of how to use equipment safely. For example, children of all ages thoroughly enjoy using the mini trampoline in the garden. They understand that it is not safe for more than one child at a time to use this; before beginning to bounce, they check to ensure that safety nets are closed so they are not at risk of falling. Health promotion with children is very good. Children have an extremely good understanding of the importance of eating healthy foods because this is promoted by staff in varied and interesting activities. For example, a story about a hungry caterpillar is used very well to encourage discussions about healthy foods that help children 'grow big and strong'. This is followed up most effectively with a creative activity where children draw, or cut and stick, healthy foods onto paper plates to make up segments of the caterpillar as it eats and grows bigger. Children enjoy an extremely well-balanced and nutritious diet. All meals are freshly prepared, include a very good variety of fruit and vegetables, and introduce children to a wide range of tastes and textures. At main meal times, children are presented with serving dishes and encouraged to help themselves, enabling them to make their own choices about what they eat, and how much. Staff have monitored this well to ensure that children continue to have a balanced diet when they serve themselves. Snacks are robust, including items such as crumpets and rice cakes along with a selection of fruit. Children take part in regular cookery activities, and where possible they enjoy eating what they have made as part of their snack time, for instance soup and rolls. In addition, bowls of fruit are available for children to help themselves at any time. Children enjoy physical activity that encourages them to move and coordinate their bodies. They make good use of outdoor apparatus to climb and balance. For instance babies and very young children thoroughly enjoy being supported by staff as they go down the slide, they energetically move backwards and forwards on rocking horses and similar resources, and learn to use their arms and legs in coordination as they propel themselves forward on wheeled toys. Older children have a wonderful time dancing to different types of music, including disco, reggae, and country and western. They move their bodies energetically as they learn to keep in time with the different rhythms and to coordinate how they move their arms and legs to the music.

Children of all ages make excellent progress towards the early learning and development goals, relative to their starting points. This is because staff make extremely effective use of their very good observations of children in developing well targeted individual learning plans for each child. Children's progress in each area of learning is monitored extremely well. Staff ensure that each child's individual records of achievement are well maintained and kept up-to-date in order to reflect their current stages of development, and to identify their next steps in learning. Photographs of children engaged in activities, and examples of their work such as mark making and artwork, are used very well to illustrate the progress children make towards each of the early learning goals. Children enjoy an excellent balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Staff use their observations very well to plan activities that promote specific aspects of learning and skills

development for individuals and groups of children. For example, they have noted that several children have similar learning objectives, such as developing small motor skills and confidence in using tools and equipment such as scissors. They extend the story of the hungry caterpillar to include the cutting and sticking activity, and observe individual children to identify where they need help. For example, providing children with the opportunities to use left or right handed scissors to assess whether they have a preference for one hand or the other.

Children of all ages are happy and content. Babies and very young children demonstrate their emotional security in the affectionate relationships they develop with staff. For example, they confidently come to adults for a cuddle when they are tired; staff are warm and affectionate in their response to children, ensuring that they have their special comforters and settling each child according to their needs. Older children demonstrate very high levels of confidence and self-esteem. They communicate extremely well and are keen to share their thoughts and ideas because they are confident that these are listened to and respected. Children are extremely well-behaved and show care and concern for each other. For example, children benefit from regular opportunities to spend time with other age groups within the setting, enabling older children to become positive role models for their younger friends. As a result, children are kind and helpful to each other. Children are extremely eager and enthusiastic learners who are keen to explore activities and resources. Children use their critical thinking and problem solving skills extremely well in a variety of different contexts. For example, children work together with a member of staff to set up a 'domino effect' experiment using wooden figures. They have to accurately place each figure the same distance apart so that when the effect is set in motion, each piece knocks over the one in front; they are absolutely delighted when their experiment works. Children make very good use of computer programs to enhance their learning in different areas. For example, children thoroughly enjoy an interactive activity that encourages them to identify words that start with the same initial sound, such as 'angry' and 'ant'.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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