

Busy Bees at Rothamsted Lodge

Rothamsted Lodge, Hatching Green, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 2JS

Inspection date	04/11/2013
Previous inspection date	17/04/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Teaching is good because practitioners have a thorough understanding of how children learn. They make efficient use of assessments of children in order to plan pertinent activities that support children in making good progress in all areas of learning.
- Children become absorbed in activities as these are securely informed by their current interests. They are, therefore, motivated and eager to participate and so develop positive attitudes to play and learning.
- Practitioners work well with parents and take time to get to know each child as an individual. This means that children settle well, are secure and develop good relationships with their key person and other practitioners.
- Practitioners and managers work well together, exchanging information and reviewing practice. This means that children's care is consistent and all areas of their safety, well-being and development are well considered.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Outdoor areas are not always used to the optimum as children are not consistently able to access an extended range of resources that enable them to develop their play further.
- Practitioners do not always make use of all opportunities to encourage children under two to think further as they play. As a result, children's ability to solve problems and find new ways of doing things is not promoted to the maximum.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all main rooms and in the outside areas.
- The inspector held meetings with the nursery manager, the practitioner with Qualified Teacher Status and Busy Bees Childcare and Curriculum Adviser.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector talked with children present.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation form and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and through their written feedback to the setting.

Inspector

Kelly Eyre

Full report

Information about the setting

Busy Bees at Rothamsted Lodge opened in 1993 and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated in a converted building in Hatching Green, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, and is managed by Busy Bees Nurseries Limited. The nursery serves the local and neighbouring area and is accessible to all children. It operates from two main rooms on the ground floor and two rooms on the first floor. There are three enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 1 staff member has teacher status, the Manager holds a level 4 qualification, 8 staff members hold a Level 3 qualification, 3 staff members hold a level 2 qualification, 1 staff member who is a Modern Apprentice and an unqualified member of staff.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.15am to 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 87 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- extend the access to resources in the outdoor area so that children are able to make further independent choices and extend their play

- enhance the opportunities for children under two years old to think further and begin to solve problems as part of their daily play.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are offered well-tailored support because practitioners pay attention to understanding each individual child. This contributes to children feeling secure and being animated and positive about their play. Children make good progress in relation to their starting points because teaching techniques are strong. Practitioners have a confident knowledge of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They support children well in developing the skills they need in order to learn effectively and to achieve. Practitioners confidently adapt the planning according to children's responses, thereby providing additional opportunities for children to explore and develop their particular

interests. For example, when children in the two- to three-year-olds' room show an interest in painting, practitioners adapt the plans so that they can extend this. The children become thoroughly engrossed as they feel the texture of the paint and make hand prints on the paper. They are encouraged to compare the sizes of the prints and are excited when they note how the colours change when they mix them. Practitioners then extend the activity further by placing toy cars next to the paints. The children eagerly experiment by rolling the cars through the paint and show great pleasure when they realise that they can make car track patterns.

Good use is made of children's interests in order to extend their learning. An example of this is the 'super hero' play opportunities. Children dress up as their favourite character and then choose a 'mission card'. These have been created by practitioners and extend older children's problem-solving skills as they work out how to save the cat stuck in the tree or stop the runaway train. They also enjoy using the 'super hero counting cards' made by practitioners, carefully arranging these in the correct sequence. Creative use is also made of ongoing learning opportunities to extend children's knowledge. For example, children talk about autumn and then enjoy making leaf crowns, collecting conkers and grouping them according to size and going for 'listening walks' to see if they can identify the different sounds of the season.

Children are encouraged to share their ideas and views, thereby developing their language and communication skills. For example, children engaged in role play are encouraged to explain the details of the scenario they have created. Children who use English as an additional language are supported well in developing their language skills. Practitioners work closely with parents to learn key words in the child's home language, using these as part of the daily routine. They also assess children's development in their home language before planning the most appropriate support to help them develop their use of English. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also supported well. Practitioners carefully plan the support for each child, based on the information they have gathered from parents and other professionals. This enables them to plan and adapt activities and daily routines so that children actively participate in these and make good progress in their learning.

Good procedures to gather a wide range of initial information from parents mean that children's starting points are assessed well. Key persons use this information to inform the planning and to monitor children's progress. Good communication with parents means that they have many opportunities to share updates about their children. For example, they complete simple home observations, which are then used to inform children's assessments. Parents are also supported well in extending their child's learning. For example, key persons provide individual information about activities to do at home. Practitioners' good interaction with children encourages them to think further. For example, older children making fruit salad are encouraged to name the different fruits, describe the smell and texture and to talk about cutting the fruit into halves and quarters. However, this good interaction is not always consistent in order to encourage children under two to extend their skills in problem solving and creative thinking to the maximum. For example, during a painting activity young children enjoy using the 'paint dabbers' but are not encouraged to explore by making different patterns or to find out what happens when they combine the colours.

Practitioners frequently evaluate the daily planning to check that children are offered balanced opportunities to play independently and to join in with structured activities. This supports children in playing an active part in their own learning and prepares them well for school. Children are offered a wide variety of opportunities that promote their physical development. For example, they learn to balance and coordinate their movements as they use the child-friendly climbing wall in the outdoor area. Children's participation in discussions and specific activities enables them to gain a meaningful understanding of different ways of life. For example, they learn words in other languages, discuss different customs and look at flags, going on to talk about the different countries these are from.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The nursery makes good use of the key person system to support partnership working with parents. This helps to ensure that practitioners gain a good understanding of each child and offer consistent support. Children are, therefore, secure and develop good bonds with practitioners. They are encouraged to make independent choices and to express their views. For example, babies express their preference by choosing from a range of accessible toys, and older children talk about the activities they have enjoyed and what else they would like to do. Consequently, children are supported in developing a positive outlook on learning and are well-prepared for the move to school. This is further supported as there are thoughtful daily procedures that promote children's self-esteem and confidence. For example, parents provide information about children's recent achievements and practitioners add these to the 'I can' book. Children love looking through this and are not only proud of their own achievements, but learn to appreciate the achievements of others.

New children settle well because practitioners work with parents to find out about their abilities and normal daily routines, ensuring that these are reflected within the daily practice. For example, babies' sleep and feed times closely mirror those at home. Similarly, practitioners take care to make sure that children's moves from one room to another are smooth. To this end, they arrange for children to pay short visits to their new room so that they become familiar with this before they move permanently. Careful consideration has been given to ensuring that indoor areas are interesting and well-equipped, with a wide range of easily accessible resources. Children, therefore, have opportunities to choose their resources and explore further. For example, children choose a construction set to add to their game with cars. However, resources in the outdoor area are not always as readily accessible and so do not make full use of opportunities for children to select their own resources and extend their play.

Practitioners are good role models and show a genuine care and respect for all, thus creating a positive environment. Children respond to this and develop a good awareness of the needs and feelings of others. Practitioners offer children clear explanations, enabling them to appreciate the effects of their behaviour. Activities, such as 'super hero' role play, also enable children to understand appropriate behaviour. For example, they learn to ask other people if they want to join in and to respect the personal space of others. Children are supported well in developing their self-care skills. For example, at

mealtimes they help set the table and clear away afterwards. Children are offered good opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles. For example, their understanding of the importance of exercise is promoted as they participate in the 'Wake and Shake' session, going on to note their raised heart rates and to talk about why they feel warmer. Good ongoing explanations mean that children understand the relevance of good hygiene. For example, older children competently explain why they wear hats and aprons during cooking activities. Discussions and specific activities also support children in gaining a thorough understanding of safety. For example, they learn to use implements, such as scissors and cutlery, safely and effectively.

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

Senior managers set high standards for the setting. They take care to ensure that practitioners are supported in all areas of their work. For example, practitioners have good ongoing supervision and are supported in attending training and developing their professional practice. This has a positive impact on children. For example, as a result of attending further training, practitioners are now more able to utilise assessments to plan for individual children and thereby promote their development further. By acquiring further qualifications, practitioners have also gained a greater understanding of child development and so have taken on additional roles, such as that of special educational needs coordinator. Senior managers and practitioners work well together to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, they use the regular team meetings to review practice and check that they are promoting children's health, welfare and development at all times.

Practitioners maintain an honest approach to self-evaluation. They seek feedback from parents and children and so have a thorough overview of their strengths and weaknesses. Senior managers use this information to develop practical action plans that lead to improvements. For example, recent changes include the redevelopment of the pre-school room in order to offer children further choices about their play. The consistent implementation of thorough safeguarding arrangements means that children's welfare is promoted. All practitioners undergo robust checks to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Safeguarding is a key element of the staff induction process and all practitioners attend annual training to refresh their knowledge. The manager has a thorough understanding of child protection procedures. She ensures that these are always followed and that the nursery works in partnership with all relevant external agencies. There are clear procedures for dealing with allegations against staff members and these are rigorously followed. Any serious concerns are reported immediately to the relevant agency, are meticulously investigated and all procedures are reviewed in order to ensure children's continuing safety and well-being. Comprehensive risk assessments ensure that children's safety is well considered in all areas.

The manager's thorough monitoring means that she can identify any areas where groups or individual children need further support. She is, therefore, able to ensure that all children are supported in making good progress. Practitioners have a good understanding of the roles of other professionals and are experienced in working with them to obtain additional

support for children whenever needed. There are clear procedures for sharing information with others caring for the children. For example, practitioners contact other settings and share assessment information, enabling them to work together to promote children's development. The good partnership working with parents ensures that they are kept well informed of their child's progress. For example, they receive daily diaries for younger children and meet regularly with their child's key person. The nursery also has an active 'Parent Partnership Group'. This offers parents another way of expressing their views and of being involved in making key decisions.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	123606
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	937871
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	70
Number of children on roll	87
Name of provider	Busy Bees Nurseries Limited
Date of previous inspection	17/04/2013
Telephone number	01582 462533

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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