

Blackberry Bush Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	223194
Inspection date	28 August 2007
Inspector	Sally Elizabeth Lee
Setting Address	The Old School House, Leicester Road, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire, LE8 5QU
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Registered person	Bush Babies Children's Nurseries Ltd
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Blackberry Bush Day Nursery was registered in 1999 and is one of five nurseries in the Bush Babies group. It operates from a renovated school building in the village of Countesthorpe in Leicestershire and children attend from the village and surrounding area. The nursery consists of four child care rooms with toilet, kitchen and laundry facilities. There are two enclosed outdoor areas attached to the nursery.

There are currently 90 children from birth to five years on roll, of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. There are no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or children who have English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07:45 until 18:00. Children can attend a variety of sessions.

There are 14 members of staff working with the children, 13 of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification and one who is working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the local authority and has received the National Day Nursery Association Quality Counts Award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy and are protected from infection because they are cared for by staff who carefully follow the good, clear procedures in place. Children are encouraged to learn about personal hygiene and older children will confidently explain that you 'don't wee on the floor or drop paper', you 'flush the toilet and only use one squirt of soap'. Children's personal independence is encouraged. The majority of the staff are first aid trained and there are good procedures in place to record any accidents or medication administered and parents always sign these records to ensure they are kept well informed of these aspects of their child's care. Children are kept safe in the sun by the appropriate use of sun hats and suncream.

Children are well nourished by the home cooked meals provided by the nursery. Children thoroughly enjoy their meals and eagerly ask for seconds. They ask staff what they are going to have for lunch, smelling the good food smells coming from the nursery kitchen and trying to guess what it is today. The menu includes plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables in the meals and snacks provided throughout the day. Any special dietary needs that children may have are carefully recorded before care begins and then transferred to lists in the kitchen and their individual care rooms to ensure those needs are met. Staff are very careful to ensure any treats provided by children can be safely eaten by all of the children in their care. Drinking water is available freely for older children to access and named cups are topped up regularly for younger children and babies to ensure they are well hydrated.

Children very much enjoy the outdoor play areas. They have plenty of time each day to develop their physical skills, both indoors and out. They can climb and balance on the large equipment and develop co-ordination and skill with the wheeled toys and bats and balls. Physical play is planned every day for all age groups to ensure their development in this area is fostered appropriately and they can benefit from being outdoors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises which are clean, warm and well maintained. The nursery is a welcoming setting for both parents and children. There are bright displays of the children's own work at child height and photographs on walls and in albums which they can look through to nurture a feeling of belonging. Throughout the nursery there are notices for parents to ensure they are well informed of all aspects of their child's care, for example, daily menus and activities, information about safe sleeping and car transport.

The nursery is well equipped with a wide range of inviting, good quality resources. There is comfortable seating in the baby and toddler units to ensure staff can sit comfortably while they feed and cuddle the children and young children will eagerly gather around a member of staff, sitting on laps and cuddling up while they listen to a story. There is a large secure garage to store outdoor play equipment. All resources meet the appropriate safety standard and are checked regularly for safety and hygiene.

Very clear and regularly updated risk assessments, together with vigilant staff, help children to stay safe within the setting. All the appropriate policies and procedures are in place and these are followed carefully. Older children learn how to keep themselves safe from the topic

work they do on road safety when they go out within the local area to develop an understanding of how to cross roads safely. In addition, they practise the fire evacuation procedure regularly.

Children are further protected by the safeguarding children policy which is in place. All staff have undertaken training in child protection procedures and have a good knowledge and understanding in this area. However, the child protection policy does not include a comprehensive procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and this has the potential to put children at risk.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at nursery and settle well there. They achieve and make progress because staff are highly skilled and experienced and use their strong understanding of early years guidance to plan and provide good, positive experiences for children of all ages.

Babies and very young children make progress because they have made good relationships with their key staff which develops their self-confidence. They are encouraged to use all of their senses, listening to the buses and tractors as they pass by and asking to be picked up to see them. They experiment with different media, for example, shaving foam, pasta, paint, sand and water. Young babies lie on the floor and feel the textured cushions and mats attached to the wall, and watch themselves in the mirrors. Care tasks are performed sensitively and staff talk to and play with the babies as they change their nappies and feed them. Staff clearly enjoy the company of the babies who respond well to this.

Toddlers develop independence as they help themselves to their snack and drink. They choose resources from the carefully labelled boxes and enjoy making marks on paper and card, as well as in the outdoor area with chalk and water. They develop their physical skills as they push and pull wheeled toys and balance and climb on the outdoor equipment. They are learning to take pleasure from books and stories and will eagerly take favourite books to staff, who then sit on the settee surrounded by children enjoying sharing the story.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are happy, active learners. They are very confident and show high levels of independence and curiosity. They have developed good relationships with staff and with other children and will readily introduce their friends. Children show great enjoyment in books and stories. They talk about their favourite books and contribute confidently while they are being read. They are learning to listen to and value each other's contributions at group time. Most children can recognise and write their own names and are learning initial letters. However, writing activities are often adult-led and do not build on children's own enthusiasms and spontaneous activities which inhibits their learning in this area. They understand that print has meaning, for example, looking at a map book they recognise the familiar landmarks of Birmingham airport and the M69 motorway. They fail to find a campsite near to an imagined holiday destination but offer a hotel instead, commenting that 'we can find one of those 'cos they have a bed on'.

Children learn to solve problems and to count, confidently comparing the number of children in each of their families. They learn about volume as they play in the sand and water and use mathematical language well. They explore and investigate as they plant and grow vegetables and flowers in the outdoor area. They work out how to attach the curtains to the climbing

frame to make a den, and follow the 'pirate' map left in the park to find the 'treasure'. They have opportunities to play in the role play area, but this is mostly indoors and limited to a small range of scenarios which does limit the development of their imaginations in this area. However, they enjoy music, dance and movement and will eagerly paint, draw and model using a very wide range of materials.

Staff have developed very good systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and they are then able to plan for the next steps in children's learning, to ensure they are making good progress in all areas. They are eager and confident to take on new initiatives and are keen to develop their practice. Time and resources are managed very well to ensure children have free access to all areas of the curriculum and make the most of their time at the setting. They are skilled in adapting activities to offer support to the younger children but also to challenge older and more able children. They use questioning very well to encourage children to think and work through problems with remarks such as 'what shall we do?' 'what do we need to do that?' and 'how are we going to do it?' This approach helps children to develop confidence and independence in their play and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop a sense of belonging and are able to play a full part in the setting because staff value and respect their individuality. Children's own work is displayed at child height and this, together with photograph albums for children to look through, helps them to feel a sense of identity. Children learn about wider society from the appropriate resources available to them and the sound range of festivals celebrated. They are encouraged to respect and value themselves and each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff have past experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and there are clear processes in place to monitor children's progress and highlight any concerns. All children are offered a high level of support and this ensures all children are included in the life of the setting.

Children behave well. They benefit from the calm and generally consistent way staff manage behaviour. They are encouraged to share and to take turns and in this way they are learning the difference between right and wrong. Older children are encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions and are praised for being kind and helpful. Staff are polite and respectful to the children and provide good role models for the children. Children throughout the nursery are encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you' and management of behaviour is appropriate to the age and stage of the children.

Partnership with parents and carers is good and this contributes significantly to the children's overall well-being and enriches their time at nursery. Parents speak very highly of the setting and value the approachability of the staff and the very good communication systems in place. Babies and toddlers have a diary sheet which records care information such as meals, sleeps and nappy changes and there are excellent displays and noticeboards throughout keeping parents fully informed of what the children are doing during their time at the setting, as well as information of general interest. Regular newsletters and parents evenings keep parents up to date with children's progress and there is good written initial information for new and prospective parents. Carers and parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's

learning through the 'activity at home' sheets which offer ideas on how the current topic in nursery can be developed and enriched at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the commitment of staff to meeting their individual needs. Staff are qualified and experienced and work very well together as a team. They show great sensitivity to the children and make their care and education their first priority. The key worker system, which is in place throughout the nursery, works extremely well in practice especially in the baby unit where key workers are responsible for the day to day care tasks of children within their key group. They take responsibility for 'their' children and are very careful to pass on all relevant information to other staff when they go for their lunch break or at the end of their shift. This ensures children's individual needs are met very well.

Staff are positively encouraged to undertake regular training and see this as beneficial. They receive very good support from the management team and standards throughout the nursery are monitored closely. Staff are encouraged to take responsibility for the planning and assessment systems within their room and to assess their own practice. Staff within the pre-school room work closely with the mentor teacher from the local authority. The quality of the leadership and management of the nursery education is good.

Staff are well organised to ensure the recommended ratios of children and adults are maintained and there are clear procedures in place to record attendance and the recruitment and vetting of new staff. All the documentation which is required and which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is kept and is made accessible to parents and staff. Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to develop systems to enable them to keep abreast of developments in the early years field and to ensure these were carried out in practice. All staff undertake regular training and have, for example, attended training in 'Birth to three matters' and now base the planning and assessment systems for this age group on the training framework which enhances these children's experiences and learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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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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):

- expand the safeguarding children statement to ensure there is a clear procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

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):

- foster children's creative development through the provision of a wide range of role play situations in both the indoor and outdoor classrooms
- ensure a balance between adult-led and child-led activities in the teaching of communication, language and literacy.

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