The inspection of educational provision for children before compulsory school age

Nursery report on:
Busy Bees
St David’s Park Day Nursery

Registered Nursery Education Inspector: Mary Dyas
Date of inspection: 26th and 27th May 2010
Contract number: T/114/09N
Report on the inspection of nursery settings in the non-maintained sector

Name of nursery: Busy Bees St David’s Park Day Nursery

Address: St David’s Park
Ewloe
Flintshire

Post code: CH5 3XN

Telephone: 01244 537787

Person responsible for day-to-day management: Vicky Peers

Position: Manager

About the inspection

This inspection took place as part of a national programme of inspections of the educational provision for children before compulsory school age in Wales. It was commissioned by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales.

The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings so that providers can improve the quality of education offered and help children achieve their full potential. Another purpose is to inform parents and the public about the quality of nursery education. A copy of the inspection report must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the nursery and should be available on request to other people.

Inspectors have used a five-point scale to record all judgements. Grade definitions are:

Grade 1 good with outstanding features
Grade 2 good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3 good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4 some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5 many important shortcomings
1.0  Context of the setting

Context of the nursery setting
St David’s Park Day Nursery is a privately owned nursery and part of the national Busy Bees Day Nursery company which operates mainly in England. St David’s Park is a large setting and the preschool section, called Shooting Stars is able to accommodate a total of 45 three and four year olds based in three interconnecting rooms with easily accessed toilets for the children’s use. There are currently 52 children on roll in Shooting Stars of whom 27 three year olds are in receipt of educational funding. Almost all four year olds in the setting attend morning or afternoon nursery classes in local schools and many of these are delivered and/or collected by staff in one of the three mini busses owned by the nursery.

Children come to the nursery from a very wide area, in many cases because the nursery is close to their parent’s place of work. The children come from mainly advantaged homes and currently 98% of the children in Shooting Stars speak English as their main home language. While there are no children with special needs attending the preschool group at present, the nursery’s stated policy is that all children have a right to a broad and balanced Early Years curriculum and wherever possible welcomes all children whatever their individual needs. Positive arrangements are in place to enable children to settle easily into the nursery environment both when entering the nursery and when transferring between areas.

The pre-school room is large and brightly decorated with examples of children’s work and is well laid out with different areas of learning. Toilets are close by and are freely accessed by the children. The room opens out onto the nursery garden which is an outstanding feature of this setting. It has been developed over a number of years and provides a fully resourced and exciting outdoor play space for the children which incorporates all the areas of learning of the Foundation Phase and which is used throughout the year in all weathers.

The nursery was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in August 2009 and this is the first time it has been inspected by Estyn.

2.0  Main findings of the report

2.1 The overall quality and standards of educational provision and whether or not the provision successfully promotes the goals for children’s learning

The quality and standards of educational provision, taken overall, are appropriate and successfully promote the Foundation Phase Outcomes for children’s learning.
2.2 Standards achieved by children in the seven areas of learning

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2.3 Inspection judgement on the quality of education provided by the setting

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3.0 The standards achieved by children in the seven areas of learning

Standards achieved by 3-4 year-olds

3.1 Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity

| Children’s standards in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity are good with outstanding features |

**Outstanding features**
All children in the pre-school group are relaxed and happy in the setting. They come into the nursery happily and immediately settle to a quiet activity at the beginning of the morning before they gather together for the register. Most children show high levels of self-confidence as they explore and experiment with the activities which have been set out for them. They make suggestions about things that they might do within a topic and ask for favourite activities to be repeated.

All children are making very good progress in their personal and social development. Through well-planned activities and opportunities for them to follow their own interests, children are motivated to learn.

Children know they are Welsh and are developing an awareness of the cultural heritage of Wales. Relationships between children are excellent; they relate well to each other and demonstrate sensitivity, respect, care and affection. They play happily alone and alongside others, displaying very good behaviour and self-control. Children are confident in the company of adults and enjoy helping them clear away activities.

**Good features**
All children are developing independence. They use the toilet independently and know that it is important to wash their hands afterwards, before they do cooking and also before they have something to eat. When going outdoors all children put on and take off coats and try to fasten them according to their stage of development. Individually and in small group situations, they concentrate independently of adults for lengthening periods.
All children are making good progress using the recently acquired computers in the setting and are developing appropriate levels of control of a mouse to select objects on the screen.

**Shortcomings**
No shortcomings were identified.
3.2 Language, literacy and communication skills

Children’s standards in language, literacy and communication skills have good features with no important shortcomings

**Good features**

Children develop good language skills as they grow up through the nursery groups. Most three and four year olds are happy to speak within a small group and all listen attentively to one another as they take turns to speak. Almost all children speak confidently to one another and to adults. They are able to express themselves clearly when explaining what they want and when talking about things they have done.

All children listen with great enjoyment to stories read to them in a group or individually, following the story carefully and eagerly filling in the next part. Many children enjoy looking at books during the course of their play. They handle them correctly and identify elements of the story from the pictures. Most children are beginning to understand that words convey meaning and many three year olds make meaningful marks on their work to represent their name.

**Shortcomings**

No important shortcomings were identified.

3.3 Mathematical development

Children’s standards in mathematical development have good features with no important shortcomings

**Good features**

Through many rich learning opportunities to explore both the indoor and outdoor environments, children are making good progress in their mathematical development. All children are developing a very good understanding of number. All can join in counting by rote numbers to ten and many are able to identify and name written numbers. Through first hand experiences using everyday objects and materials, children are learning to sort, compare, contrast, order, match and sequence.

Most children use mathematical language in a wide range of relevant contexts, for example talking about empty or nearly full containers during water play and discussing how heavy some of the bikes are when they need to guide out of a tight space.

Almost all these children are developing an appropriate awareness of the passage of time through the order of their daily routines. All children are becoming familiar with the money and it’s use through role play situations such as the garden centre and cafe, and also other more structured opportunities to sort and count change.

**Shortcomings**

No important shortcomings were identified.
3.4 Welsh language development

Children’s standards in Welsh language development have good features that outweigh shortcomings.

**Good features**
All children respond to the register in Welsh by replying ‘bore da’ and if any children are not present those who are reply either ‘dim yma’ for those who are absent or ‘ysgol’ for those four year olds who are attending a school nursery class.

All children count together to ten in Welsh. Most, when asked, are able to name Welsh colour names and a very few are beginning to use these in everyday conversation.

**Shortcomings**
Children do not yet use Welsh spontaneously in their play activities and many lack the confidence to say new words and phrases.

3.5 Knowledge and understanding of the world

Children’s standards in knowledge and understanding of the world have good features and no important shortcomings.

**Good features**
Most children know the days of the week and a few are able to say what day it is when they know what day it was yesterday. Many discuss the weather and are able to discuss different features of different seasons. The majority of children are developing an understanding of the passing of time through their familiarity with the routines of the nursery and anticipate what is going to happen next.

The children are beginning to understand about different places. Many come from quite far away and talk about places they have been with their families and about their visits to the local shops.

There are many opportunities for the children to explore and to solve problems which they approach with confidence and enthusiasm. Through their topic work the children are beginning to develop an understanding of the environment. Many are able to name and identify different species of minibeasts.

All three year olds know the names of the main external parts of their bodies and faces and are able both to name and to point to them on request.

**Shortcomings**
No important shortcomings were identified.
### 3.6 Physical development

Children’s standards in physical development are good with outstanding features

**Outstanding features**
All children thoroughly enjoy engaging in well-planned vigorous and strenuous play. Outdoors they refine their skills of climbing and balancing and confidently climb over, under, up and down large equipment showing good control and co-ordination. Many children demonstrate outstanding control as they throw, catch and roll balls to one another and ride a variety of wheeled toys around the pathways.

**Good features**
The children’s fine motor skills are promoted using a wide range of activities and resources. For example, cooking, manipulating play dough and fitting jigsaw pieces into place. Most children demonstrate manual dexterity as they use tools to dig in the garden to plant seeds, knives and forks to eat their diner and finer control when they use a range of mark making tools.

**Shortcomings**
No shortcomings were identified

### 3.7 Creative development

Children’s standards in creative development have good features with no important shortcomings

**Good features**
There is a good selection of children’s colourful work on display, showing examples of painting, printing cutting and sticking. Children make clear choices about the colours and effects they want to use when painting the different fruits eaten by the Very Hungry Caterpillar.

Most children make good use of the role play and small world settings and they imaginatively take on different roles and act out situations. The children are encouraged to discuss their play and respond enthusiastically.

Following adults’ instructions, most children are able to use a range of percussion instruments to demonstrate loud, quiet, fast and slow sounds as they play along to their singing. They are beginning to appreciate the work of others as they listen carefully to each other’s performance. Outdoors many enthusiastically play a range of pans and implements to make rhythms of their own.

Most children respond positively to suggestions to move to music in different ways and to move in time to music.

**Shortcomings**
No important shortcomings were identified.
4.0 The quality of educational provision

The quality of educational provision for 3-4 year-olds

4.1 Quality of provision for children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The quality of provision for children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has good features with no important shortcomings

**Good features**

Children are cared for in an inclusive, warm and friendly atmosphere where they are encouraged to be inquisitive and to take responsibility for their own actions. Children know right from wrong and show high levels of self discipline. The policies and routines of the nursery promote positive behaviour successfully and the children are guided through the use of praise and are sensitively guided in learning right from wrong.

The life and work of the nursery reflects positive attitudes and values and promotes respect for the diversity of beliefs, social and cultural traditions within society. For example the culture and traditions of Wales are well promoted on St David’s Day and those of other faiths and cultures are introduced when relevant to the children.

**Shortcomings**

No important shortcomings were identified

4.2 Quality of planning for children’s learning

The quality of planning for children’s learning is good with outstanding features

**Outstanding features**

The room leader involves the other practitioners effectively in developing daily plans. Outstanding procedures are in place to ensure that the practitioners undertaking planning for the week have clear comments and evaluations of the activities from the previous week and of any requirements for planning for individual needs. This ensures that they have a clear understanding of their role in promoting a flow of activities within well established day to day routines.

The planned provision is imaginatively implemented to ensure the children benefit from first hand experiences that build up their confidence and independence, enhance their learning skills and develop their knowledge and understanding. The provision for children’s learning outdoors is another outstanding feature.
**Good features**
The curriculum is well resourced including multicultural toys and books. It effectively promotes equality of access for all children whatever their backgrounds, special or linguistic needs and provides a good balance between child-led and adult-led activities. All focus activities are evaluated in order to inform future planning and these evaluations identify the range of learning and development for the more and less able.

**Shortcomings**
No shortcomings were identified

### 4.3 Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching has good features with no important shortcomings

**Good features**
The room leader is qualified to NVQ level 4 and all other practitioners working within the preschool setting are appropriately qualified. All practitioners demonstrate a sound understanding of the seven areas of learning of the Foundation Phase. They work together positively as a team supporting each other and the children well. All practitioners have good working relationships with one another and with the children. They have high expectations for children’s progress and achievement and encourage them to engage in a wide variety of suitably challenging activities. They engage children in discussions to develop thinking and understanding of their experiences using wide and varied vocabulary, well-focused open questions, praise and encouragement.

There is a good balance between structured learning through child-initiated activities and those directed by adults. Adults have a clear understanding of when it is appropriate to intervene to extend children’s learning and when to allow them to reach conclusions by themselves. The learning environment is efficiently managed and organised; children move confidently between the indoor and outdoor learning environments both of which provide a range of appropriately challenging and differentiated play.

**Shortcomings**
No important shortcomings were identified
### 4.4 Quality of assessment and recording of children's progress and reports for parents and carers

The quality of assessment and recording of children’s progress and reports for parents and carers is good with outstanding features

#### Outstanding features

Assessment is an outstanding feature of this nursery and a positive tool which supports and enhances the children’s learning as a result of the detailed information gathered by each keyworker. At the end of each week the practitioners record whether each child in their keyworker group has or has not attained the targets for that week. If individual children have not achieved the learning objective this is recorded and a suggestion for the next step for that child is noted and included in future planning.

All practitioners routinely make observations on the activities which they are supporting and pass these on to the relevant keyworkers who use the information to update the children’s ‘This is Me’ records provided by Flintshire County Council for all funded pupils. Annotated samples of work are also collected termly and identify the relevant areas of learning.

#### Good features

When children move on to school nursery classes their ‘This is Me’ record is photocopied and the original passed on to the receiving school. The photocopy and child’s assessment file are given to parents.

The setting holds open evenings twice a year to enable parents and carers to meet more formally with their child’s keyworker to discuss their progress and learning needs.

#### Shortcomings

No shortcomings were identified.

### 4.5 Quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community

The quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community has good features and no important shortcomings

#### Good features

The nursery provides a range of information about its provision to parents and carers. This includes a termly newsletter for the whole nursery and regular notes from the different departments. Daily information relating to the activities undertaken in the preschool group is displayed on a whiteboard in the cloakroom area. The nursery’s policies and procedures are available for inspection at any time. Practitioners always make themselves available at the beginning and end of sessions and parents and carers are encouraged to discuss concerns or ask for information on any matter relating to the nursery’s activities.
The setting makes good use of its minibuses to enhance children’s learning by visiting different places in the locality; for example, visits to the local post office, shops and library. At Harvest, Christmas and Easter children are taken to a local old people’s home to sing and interact with the residents. Recent visits to the playgroup by a police officer, a dentist, fire fighters, sniffer dogs and a postman help develop children’s understanding of how others in the community help them.

**Shortcomings**
No important shortcomings were identified

### 4.6 The extent to which the setting contributes to children’s wellbeing

The extent to which the setting contributes to children’s wellbeing is good with outstanding features

**Outstanding features**
There are outstanding procedures in place to ensure the setting contributes to children’s well being, supported by a wealth of clear policies and procedures to safeguard children and ensure their health and well being. There are secure arrangements for the safety of children, who are very well supervised at all times. The anti bullying and behaviour policies are very effective in ensuring the children’s well being.

**Good features**
Children are taught to be caring of others and relationships in the setting are very positive. There are well thought through procedures for safe conduct on visits, with appropriate risk assessments undertaken. All staff have very recently undertaken update training for the safeguarding of children. Accident and medicine procedures are adhered to.

Snacks are healthy and nutritious, and children are encouraged to participate in vigorous activity in the outdoor area.

**Shortcomings**
No shortcomings were identified.
4.7 Quality of the leadership and management of the setting

The quality of the leadership and management of the setting is good with outstanding features

Outstanding features
The nursery has clear aims and objectives that are focussed on the development and well being of the children. Self evaluation is well embedded into the organisation of the nursery and staff are striving for improvement wherever this is possible. Relationships within the nursery are excellent and staff work together for the common good.

The setting is very well managed. As part of the requirements of the national parent company management systems are regularly audited to ensure that they maintain high standards. Monitoring of staff, provision of training and recognition of strengths are outstanding.

Maximum use is made of the space available and the outdoor space is an outstanding example of this. It provides a variety of areas to enable indoor learning to be enhanced and supported outdoors.

Good features
The setting enjoys a good relationship with the Early Years Childcare and Development Partnership. Staff attend a wide range of courses provided by the local education authority which support their personal and professional development.

Although the parent company mainly operated in England, appropriate adaptations have been made to enable the nursery to follow the Foundation Phase in Wales,

Shortcomings
No shortcomings were identified.

4.8 The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for action identified in the last inspection report

This is the first time the nursery has been inspected by Estyn.
5.0 Recommendations

The setting needs to:

**R1** Improve standards in and provision for Welsh language development;

**R2** Continue to develop children's skills in ICT

**R3** Continue to provide a well planned, stimulating high quality education for the children in their care.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days, or 45 working days if the plan needs to be translated to or from Welsh, showing how the issues identified above will be addressed. The action plan must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the setting. A copy of the action plan must be sent to the Chair of the Early Years and Childcare Partnership or Children and Young Peoples' Partnership, as appropriate, and to the Local Authority. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection.