

Buffer Bear Nursery @ Maida Vale

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	135099
Inspection date	24/03/2011
Inspector	Martha Darkwah
Setting address	Essendine Road, London, W9 2LR
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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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Buffer Bear Nursery @ Maida Vale Nursery is one of a chain of nurseries opening 2000 run by Buffer Bears Limited. It is located in the Maida Vale area in the City of Westminster. The nursery premises is arranged over two floors and consists of a hall area, four rooms on the ground floor for children under two years, two playrooms on the first floor for children aged two to four years, combined office and waiting area, kitchen, parent's room, laundry room, toilets with nappy changing area and staff toilets. There is also an undercover enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery serves the local and wider communities.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 109 children may attend at any one time. Currently there are 92 children on roll. This includes 15 children who receive nursery education funding. No children presently attend who have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting supports a few children who are learning English as an additional language. The nursery opens 8.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday all year round with exception of Bank Holidays. The nursery offers full-time and part-time places.

The nursery employs 24 staff working directly with the children. Of these, 20 hold Early Years qualifications. Three domestic staff are employed. The manager is supernumerary. The nursery receives support from the Early Years Partnership. The nursery receives ongoing support from the Buffer Bears area manager and in-house training co-ordinator.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled and have formed positive warm relationships with staff and their friends. The staff team have a generally good knowledge of each child's achievements and learning needs therefore children are making satisfactory progress given their age and starting points. The setting has established generally effective working partnerships with children's parents and the information that they share each day helps the adults to work together to promote children's welfare successfully. There are systems in place for effective monitoring and reflecting on practice with appropriate action plans for further development and ongoing improvement. However, the current systems for reporting and dealing with faulty equipment are not secure. The organizations of resources in some of the rooms are not wholly effective.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children for example unsuitable equipment are kept to a minimum (Suitable premises, environment and equipment).

08/04/2011

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

- reappraise both the environments and organisation of resources in all rooms to ensure resources cover all areas of learning; are presented in good condition to give the children more opportunities to make choices and decisions about what they would like to play with
- extend the partnership with parents to involve them in their child's learning and development and how to support children's learning at home
- improve the organisation and provision of activities for free choice session after lunch in the pre-school room to ensure that all children are provided with challenging and interesting experiences
- increase the opportunities provided for play and learning acknowledge and celebrate the language and cultural backgrounds of all of the children in the nursery.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded from the risk of abuse or neglect as the staff have a sound knowledge of safeguarding procedures. They understand their responsibility to refer any concerns they may have about children's welfare to the appropriate agencies. The recruitment procedure is robust, the manager holds up to date information which shows that the majority of staff have suitable clearances which demonstrates their suitability to work with children. Staff members are never left unsupervised with children, if their clearances are yet to arrive. Visitors to the setting sign in and out and are not left unsupervised.

Overall the children are kept safe in the nursery through daily visual safety checks and regular risk assessments for indoors and outdoors. Regular fire drills are conducted with children; they are taught how to keep themselves safe for example going up and down the stairs. Risk assessments for outings are satisfactory to ensure children's safety. However, the staff team are not always sufficiently vigilant to identify and remove equipment that may pose a hazard to children. For example, broken equipment or exposed foam in vinyl child-sized sofas that children use.

The staff members attend useful training courses to improve their work with children and for their own professional development. The manager has taken appropriate steps to meet recommendations for improvement that were identified at the last inspection. The training co-ordinator in the nursery chain provides ongoing support to improve the quality of the educational provision. The provider reflects accurately on the practice and has developed a self-evaluation document

that portrays sound ongoing commitment to enhance and develop the service. There are immediate plans to refurbish the nursery and update the range of resources available for children in all rooms. The provider and manager have made exciting plans for developing the whole nursery, which will benefit the children. Weaknesses that have not been identified include limitations in the multicultural aspects of the programme and the organisation of some resources in the pre-school room.

Overall, the range of toys, equipment and resources meets the needs of the children in each age group. In some rooms, the staff members have created an environment that is warm with safe spaces for the children to play in. However, not all rooms are well arranged so that children can make sufficient choices and decisions about what they would like to play with meaningfully. The general state and presentation of some of the resources such as books, dressing up clothes are less inviting and interesting. Children are not encouraged to put resources away thereby promoting their independence and fostering respect for their nursery environment.

Parents express their confidence in the nursery staff and they say that their children are happy and making progress. Children's individual care needs are clearly identified as children start at the setting. This means their daily routines are designed to take children's needs into account. Parents know who their child's key person is and can ask to see their child's achievement records at any time. Parents are happy to exchange news with staff verbally and share their child's records at twice yearly formal meetings. They receive newsletters, and unique child folders reach month to share their children's interest. Information about staff is kept at the entrance hall. Parent's notice boards give information on the curriculum planning and child's day. Parents sometimes contribute to nursery activities by bringing their knowledge to multi-cultural events. Parent's involvement in children's continuous learning at home is not secure.

Partnerships are well established and make a positive contribution to children's achievement and well-being. Communication takes place with other providers and partners supporting children on a regular basis.

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

Young children show that they feel safe in the way that they relate to staff when their parents leave them in the setting. They rock and sway to songs and music and hold up their hands to be lifted up and cuddled by the staff and they calmly co-operate when their nappies are being changed or when they are settled into their secure chairs for lunch. Younger and older toddler groups also demonstrate their contentment in the way that they smile at the staff, play with their friends and settle easily to rest in the afternoon. Pre-school children are confident and well able to express their wishes and make some choices. They ask staff for things that they want to play with and their behaviour is reasonable. However, the organisation of the free play session after lunch in the pre-school room limits

children's opportunities for meaningful play. Staff members manage children's behaviour in all rooms well. They are firm but kind and they help children to understand that they are expected to share, be fair and take turns.

There are suitable systems to ensure children are given meals according to their individual dietary needs. A dedicated cook prepares a range of healthy meals on the premises and the children eat well. Children's independence is promoted well. They have easy access to water to keep them hydrated throughout the day and they enjoy fresh fruits. They are taken out into the outdoor area for energetic play. Children's sound health is promoted through the provision of clean bedding, reasonably clean floor surfaces and clean toys.

Staff members identify learning plans for the children in each room for the week ahead linked to the six areas of learning. They observe the children and make brief notes of their achievements. Children's ongoing progress is reflected in their learning journals. They are kept up to date and the information about achievements and subsequent planning for progress is generally current and pertinent. A unique child book is completed and shared with parents.

Overall, the older children are developing appropriate skills for their future learning. They learn about numbers through the songs and stories they read, they learn to recognize shapes when sorting or assembling puzzles. A selection of manipulative play materials help children develop further skills. Children's language is successfully promoted with good descriptive conversations as they play. Babies face light up as they are spoken to and picked up to see what is going on and rock and sway happily to songs and music. They are often involved in worthwhile matching, sorting and counting activities and table top activities that help them to learn as they play. Some children can write their names, identify shapes and colours and sing the alphabet song happily. Some children can count up to 10 and beyond accurately. After lunch they enjoy brief session of looking at and sharing books and they communicate freely with the staff that speak to children clearly and teach them new words. The children express their thoughts and ideas with emerging confidence.

Outings in the community are frequent which promotes the children's awareness of the community. A photographic gallery show children engaged in activities during a recent visit to the British Museum.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	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	3
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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met