

# The Bees Knees Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 129334                                                           |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 20 July 2007                                                     |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Jane Mount                                                       |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Cambrian Way, Highfield, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 5TD |
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| <b>Registered person</b>       | Kathryn Hay                                                      |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated                                                       |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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 Bees Knees Day Nursery opened in 1986 and is a privately owned nursery. It operates from a purpose built, single storey building with three interconnecting large rooms and associated facilities. A large outside play area is also available which is fully secure. The nursery is located in the Highfield area of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire and serves the local area and wider community.

A maximum of 60 children aged under five years may attend at any one time and there are currently 122 children on roll. This includes 28 funded three-year-olds and six funded four-year-olds. Children can attend for a variety of sessions including full day care. The setting is able to support children who have English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery operates Monday to Friday, 50 weeks of the year with sessions from 08:00 until 18:00.

There are 25 staff who work with the children including 12 part-time and 13 full-time staff. Over half of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3 and four have NVQ level 2

childcare qualifications. Another three staff are currently undertaking training programmes to achieve either NVQ level 2 or 3 childcare qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children have their dietary needs met well. Menus are planned on a four week cycle and are displayed to inform parents. Menus take account of children's individual dietary needs. Children's health is safeguarded as special dietary requirements are effectively met with good recording procedures in place to ensure all staff are aware and fully informed of specific food allergies a child may have. Children benefit from a healthy, balanced diet, with all meals freshly prepared and cooked on the premises. The dietary needs of young babies are met well with individual routines carefully followed and their dietary intake recorded in their daily communications books and shared with parents. Mealtimes are used as a time of social interaction and a time to promote good table manners, with staff sitting and talking with children while they eat. Children can access drinks at all times and drinking water is freely available. For example, a water dispenser is available in each of the older children's rooms and they confidently pour themselves a drink whenever they are thirsty and dispose of the cup appropriately afterwards. Support is given by staff if required. Younger children are regularly offered drinks by staff to ensure they are not thirsty, while very young children have named beakers or cups. Children have opportunities to learn about healthy eating through discussion and play. For example, they delight in playing the 'Hungry Gorilla' game and are able to confidently identify which of the food options are healthy foods and which are not. Also, at mealtimes they discuss healthy food and what they like to eat, including talking about the texture and colours of the fruit and vegetables they are eating.

Children's health is promoted because staff are aware of good hygiene practices to prevent the spread of infection. For example, high chairs and tables are always cleaned with anti-bacterial spray before and after eating. Soap and towels are available to encourage hand washing and hand towels are usually changed at the end of the morning and the afternoon. Paper towels are also available for hand drying. Staff ensure they wear green tabards when changing nappies and blue or red tabards are always worn when handling food, so the risk of cross-infection is minimised and children stay healthy. Staff support and help children gain an understanding of good hygiene practices. For example, they remind children to use tissues to wipe their noses and to dispose of them appropriately. Also, children are reminded to wash their hands after visiting the toilet and staff usually explain to them the reason for doing so. Children's health is safeguarded as priority is given to ensuring staff knowledge of first aid is regularly updated and most staff have a current first aid certificate. There are clear recording procedures for accidents and medicines which staff consistently implement, including obtaining parental signatures where required.

Children participate in a varied range of activities which contributes to their physical health and promotes a positive attitude towards exercise. They develop self-confidence in their physical ability as they are able to use a varied range of indoor and outdoor equipment on a daily basis. Resources allow them to run, jump, climb and balance. Children show expertise as they ride their bikes and scooters skilfully around obstacles, run on the treadmill, or throw and catch balls. Children are learning that physical exercise can be fun and enjoy participating in music and movement sessions. They keenly march like soldiers, competently balance on one leg, hop, or energetically jump high when doing star jumps. Children have some opportunities to learn

about the physical effects exercise can have on their body, such as talking about how they feel warm after a music and movement session. Younger children have clear space to practise their crawling and walking skills and staff support and encourage them as they develop control over their bodies. Children can rest or sleep according to their needs, with babies regularly checked when having a sleep, and the information is shared with parents.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised because staff are vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to highlight and reduce potential hazards and to keep children safe. For example, a daily check list is completed by staff of all areas used by the children and a more detailed monthly assessment is also maintained, with a comprehensive annual risk assessment also completed. Children have choice in an environment kept safe, where they are able to explore with safe limits set. Staff have a sound knowledge of health and safety procedures and positive steps are taken to promote safety and keep children safe. For example, babies and young children are closely monitored when asleep, and clear and effective fire procedures are in place which all staff are fully aware of and know how to implement in an emergency. Also, the kitchen is inaccessible to children and effective staff deployment ensures children are closely supervised, including when playing in the garden. Supervising entry to the nursery is well managed by staff, with clear security systems in place including CCTV to monitor the car park. Consequently, no unauthorised person can gain access to the premises, children remain safe and are not at risk.

Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves and others safe with staff generally explaining safe practices. For example, staff explain to a young child why it is important to pick up a dropped toy before someone falls over and hurts themselves on it or breaks the toy. Also, staff remind a child of why it is important to allow sufficient space when riding a bike in case it crashes into someone and hurts them, or they fall off and hurt themselves. Children can independently access a varied range of resources and activities. Toys and equipment are developmentally appropriate and sufficiently challenging so children are interested and motivated in their play. Areas are organised to encourage children's independence and to promote their development and learning. For example, low-level storage units are used to encourage children to explore and select resources easily. Resources are well maintained and regularly checked by staff to ensure they are clean and safe.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a sound knowledge of child protection and give priority to children's safety and welfare. There is a comprehensive child protection policy in place which all staff are fully aware of and know how to implement. All required child protection documentation is in place and staff are familiar with reporting and recording procedures if they have a concern. Consequently, children remain safe and are protected from harm.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Younger children's learning is promoted through the staff's strong knowledge of child development and of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which they implement well. Staff use the framework to plan and organise play experiences for children under three years which are developmentally appropriate. Younger children's progress is monitored through the completion of achievement records which are completed on a regular basis. Achievement records are generally linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and show how children are

progressing and what their next stages of learning are. A flexible key worker system is in place, with staff knowing the children and their families well. Subsequently, children's individual needs are met well and they develop confidence and self-esteem. Staff work in close partnership with parents which results in them being able to support children in their play more effectively. Children feel at ease in the nursery environment. They happily separate from their parents and carers at the beginning of the session and enthusiastically explore and investigate the environment.

Younger children are able to participate in a range of activities which provide a balance of free play and more structured play opportunities. There is a daily routine which has a balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. Children's independence is encouraged as they are able to make independent choices in their play. Children regularly enjoy sensory play with opportunities to explore paint, water, sand and other mediums. For example, they delight in exploring the consistency of paint when finger painting, or the texture of dry sand in the sand tray. Staff encourage and develop children's early communication skills as they listen and encourage babies to vocalise as they sing and talk to them while playing. Children show an interest in books and independently look for their favourite story and confidently ask an adult to read it. Children's communication skills are supported well by staff as they listen and respond to children's questions while looking at books together and children are not rushed in their talking.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a very sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage which ensures that children take part in activities that enable them to make progress in all areas of learning. Children are motivated and making good progress towards the early learning goals with resources organised to allow them to make choices and gain independence. Children are encouraged to persist in tasks with appropriate support given and staff are skilled at asking open ended questions that encourage children to think. Staff build trusting relationships with the children. They talk about safety and behaviour within routines and children's behaviour is managed in a calm manner which helps to promote children's confidence and self-esteem.

Curriculum planning includes long, medium and short term plans and is linked to the six areas of learning, is generally informative and reflects a varied and balanced curriculum. However, short term plans do not always show clear learning intentions or how activities can be adapted for children who learn at different rates. Therefore, some children's individual learning needs may not be met and potentially their progress may be limited. Activities are always evaluated and this information is generally used to inform future planning. A flexible key worker system is used and staff regularly assess children to identify their achievements and progress over time. Assessment records are very detailed but do show how children are progressing. There are plans to review the recording system in place to ensure it remains informative but easier for staff to maintain.

Children arrive happy, quickly settle and engage in activities. They are aware of boundaries and behavioural expectations such as sharing or taking turns when playing a game. Children show excellent independence skills through being able to access the environment, such as going to the toilet on their own or putting on their apron for painting. They keenly help to tidy away toys and are praised by staff for helping which develops their self-esteem. Children eagerly participate in activities and are keen to learn. They have regular opportunities to experience music, imaginative play and explore varied materials and media on a daily basis. Children can freely access drawing and writing materials. They enjoy creating art and craft and regularly

enjoy sticking, cutting, drawing and painting activities. Mathematical concepts are reinforced through books, singing and counting during the daily routine. Children show confidence and understanding in their mathematical learning through varied activities which involve numbers, shapes, patterns and problem solving. For example, children know when singing 'Five Cheeky Monkeys' that if one monkey goes away there are four monkeys left. Children have opportunities to explore concepts such as quantity and volume through sand and water play.

Children speak clearly and listen and respond with enjoyment to stories, songs and rhymes. They understand that print carries meaning and are becoming familiar with the written word, such as names on coat pegs, labelled toy boxes and name cards. Children are beginning to link sounds to letters through activities. For example, when playing an alphabet game children are able to confidently say 'insect' begins with the 'i' sound and 'jug' begins with a 'j' sound. Children's physical skills are fostered with regular opportunities to exercise within the daily routine and physical play is incorporated in the planning of children's activities. Resources allow children to climb, run, jump and balance. They show control as they run and jump and they move with control and co-ordination as they manoeuvre around obstacles while riding bikes and trikes. Children have access to resources that develop their knowledge and understanding of technology, such as developing their computer skills using the computer mouse and keyboard. Children learn about past and present through talking about their families. They develop a sense of belonging as they regularly go for walks in the local community.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others is promoted through the range of resources and activities they take part in. For example, during the current topic of 'Around the world' children enjoyed making a display showing where different animals live in the world. Children develop positive attitudes to others as they are able to select from resources which reflect diversity and the wider world, such as small world play, dressing-up clothes, books and puzzles. They are beginning to appreciate the customs and cultures of others with posters and displays which reflect positive images, and help children become aware of the wider society. Children have regular opportunities to learn about the local community. For example, they go for regular walks and enjoy visits to the park or the local shops. Visitors from the local community are sometimes invited in and in the past the police and fire service have visited. Parents are also invited in and children have been able to take part in music and cookery sessions, enjoy a visit about animals and have their faces painted.

Children play well together and behaviour is dealt with in a positive and consistent manner by staff. They talk with children about helping each other in their play and children are beginning to share, take turns and behave considerately towards others. Children are beginning to understand responsible behaviour, with staff generally explaining the implications their behaviour can have on others. For example, explaining to a child why they mustn't throw a toy as it may hit someone and hurt them. Children are taught to be polite to others and staff are good role models. The setting has effective systems in place to provide appropriate care and support to children who have English as an additional language, and they work in close partnership with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. There are excellent and very effective strategies in place for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. For example, the special needs co-ordinator is proactive in ensuring that appropriate action is taken when a child is identified or admitted to the setting with an identified need. All children are fully included and their families are supported. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the effective relationships that staff have developed with parents and carers and this significantly contributes to their overall well-being. A clear settling in programme ensures children settle well and become secure in their surroundings. Children's individual needs are effectively met as information is obtained from parents prior to their child starting at the nursery. Information is then exchanged on a daily basis between parents and staff to ensure children receive appropriate care and support. For example, a daily communication book is used in the baby room which ensures vital information such as what they have eaten and sleeps and nappy changes they may have had during the day are shared with parents. Also, notice boards display up-to-date information for all parents including the settings policies and procedures. Regular newsletters ensure parents are fully informed of what is happening in the nursery. Parents receive comprehensive written information about the Foundation Stage and staff encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning. For example, requests are sometimes made for items from home for a current theme or topic. Also, weekly plans are displayed to inform parents of what activities their children are participating in. Staff are available to discuss children's progress and achievements on a daily basis and parents are also able to book an appointment for a consultation to discuss their child's progress on a more formal basis. Parent questionnaires are used as a way of monitoring the quality of care and education provided. Parents spoken to at inspection felt well informed about the nursery's policies and procedures, including the Foundation Stage, and feel able to help their children make progress towards the early learning goals in close partnership with the nursery.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit because recruitment procedures ensure children are cared for by staff who have relevant experience, skills and qualifications to do their job effectively. Children are safeguarded because appropriate checks are completed on all staff and information is recorded correctly. Any persons such as visitors who have not been vetted would not have unsupervised access to children and all staff are fully aware of this.

Children are cared for by staff who have a sound knowledge of child development and a high percentage of staff hold early years childcare qualifications. Training needs are identified through annual staff appraisals and staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff are well informed and keep up-to-date with current childcare practices through regular staff training, and information gained from the training courses attended is then shared with the rest of the team at staff meetings.

Clear induction systems ensure staff are fully informed of the settings policies and procedures, and these are implemented well. Ratios are always maintained and staff are well deployed to meet the needs of children. For example, extra staff are employed specifically to provide additional support and cover wherever needed in the nursery. Documentation for the efficient and safe management of the provision and to promote children's welfare, care and learning is in place and generally well organised and up-to-date.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. Children are cared for by staff who are supportive of each other and who work well together as a team. They are guided by the generally very efficient and effective leadership of the provider who is also the manager. She has a clear vision of the needs of children and is committed to ensuring children are safe, feel good about themselves and make progress in their learning. She leads by example and is a positive role model. She values her staff team and utilises their skills well, however, children's safety and

well-being are potentially at risk because systems are not in place to ensure there is always a named deputy in charge in the absence of the manager. Staff are supported through regular staff meetings and information gained from staff meetings and parent questionnaires is used to monitor and evaluate the quality of care and education provided within the setting. All recommendations raised at the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Overall, the needs of children are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to review and improve some documentation, including parental permission for medicines and accidents, and for emergency medical treatment. Children's health is safeguarded because systems have been reviewed to ensure parental signatures are always obtained before medication is administered and prior written consent for emergency medical treatment is always obtained when a child is first registered at the nursery. Also, staff are fully aware of the importance of asking parents to sign the accident record if a child has had an accident while at nursery and this is consistently implemented.

The setting was also asked to review and improve risk assessments and the child protection policy and registration systems for staff and children. Children's safety is protected as comprehensive and informative risk assessments are regularly carried out by staff, who have a secure knowledge of good health and safety practices. Registration systems are generally effective at ensuring all children, staff and visitors attendance is accurately recorded and therefore, children remain safe, particularly in an emergency. Children's welfare is safeguarded as the settings child protection policy has been reviewed and is very informative, including detailing the procedures to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.

The setting was also asked to ensure fresh drinking water is always available to children and this has been successfully achieved. Water is readily available to babies and younger children with staff regularly offering drinks to children in the baby room. In the other rooms children can freely access water. There are water dispensers and cups easily accessible to children if they become thirsty during their play and staff are available to offer any assistance a child may require pouring a drink. Also, drinks are offered with all meals and consequently children remain hydrated.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to ensure staff provide sufficient support with children's activities, including use of the computer. Staff deployment has been reviewed and it is ensured children are supported effectively in their play, by staff, to promote their learning and development, including closely monitoring the use of the computer by children.

### **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.



## 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 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):

- review and improve systems to ensure a named deputy is always available in the absence of a manager.

#### 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):

- develop short term planning to be more informative with clearer learning intentions and to show how activities can be adapted or extended to suit children who learn at different rates.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)