

Blackbirds Fun for Kids

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113378
Inspection date	11 July 2007
Inspector	Michele, Karen Beasley
Setting Address	118 Felpham Way, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 8QL
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care, Out of School 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Blackbirds Fun for Kids is a privately owned facility which opened in 1997. The setting offers sessional care and after school care. The setting is situated within the Methodist church hall accommodation, in the area of Felpham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex. The premises are shared, however the group have sole use of the rooms whilst sessions are running. The children attending mainly use two large halls, although an additional room for small group work and a spacious hall for physical activities are sometimes used. There is an adjacent play park and large open playing fields, which the children use under supervision. Children attend from the nearby and wider community.

A maximum of 52 children may attend the provision at any one time. There are currently 79 children under five years on roll. Of these, 54 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend on a sessional or full-time basis. Presently there are two children attending with additional needs and no children currently attending with English as an additional language.

The setting opens term time Monday to Friday 09:15 - 11:45. Children can stay for lunch until 12:30. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday there is an afternoon session until 15:00. The after school club operates Monday to Friday 15:00 - 18:00.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children recognise the importance of following good hygiene procedures, as they know to wash their hands after messy activities, toileting and before having snack. Practitioners prepare tables for snack by wiping them down with anti bacterial spray. Children gain an increasing understanding of healthy eating. They are beginning to understand through planting and growing their own vegetables such as carrots, onions and potatoes that vegetables help their bodies to grow. Children delight in opportunities to sit with their peers and socialise with each other at snack and meal times. They enjoy a range of healthy nutritious snacks and light buffet lunches, which are planned according to their individual dietary requirements and preferences. Children eat healthy options such as cucumber, grapes and tuna sandwiches. They are encouraged to pour their own drinks, butter their own crackers and self select from the food available which helps them develop a sense of independence.

Practitioners are fully aware of the systems to record all accidents and the administration of medication, helping to keep the children healthy and ensure the parents are well informed. Parents sign all records to acknowledge the entries and give written consent prior to medication being administered. Children are protected because at least two practitioners who are qualified in first aid attend each day. This ensures the children will receive immediate treatment in the event of an accident.

Children recognise the benefits of vigorous exercise and enjoy daily opportunities to participate in activities developing their co-ordination and sensory skills, for example walking along textured balancing blocks and playing with musical instruments outside in the play area. They enjoy planting and growing flowers in planters at the entrance to the setting. In the outdoor area children paint on large strips of wall-paper with paint and paint brushes. Children have use of an enclosed grassed play area with large and small apparatus such as a climbing net, large tyres to swing on, smaller swings, a slide and seesaws which is situated adjacent to the setting. These contribute to their good health and help them to develop a positive attitude towards exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move freely and in safety around the learning environment, because practitioners pay good attention to ensuring risks and hazards are minimised and children's safety is promoted. Children show a good understanding of safety issues and group boundaries, for example not running in the setting. Children learn how to keep themselves safe by practising regular fire drills, however, these are not recorded in detail and evaluated. The front entrance is kept locked. Visitors have to ring a door bell to gain access to the setting and sign in and out, keeping the premises and children secure and ensuring that no unvetted visitors have access to the children.

Children move confidently around the learning environment which is bright and stimulating, welcoming to both children and adults. This enhances children's learning and increases opportunities for them to be independent and develop self-esteem, for example as they notice

their creative work displayed. Space is organised in each room into designated learning areas. These are used to allow children opportunities to be active, engage in physical activities, table top and floor activities and to enjoy opportunities to share books whilst sitting on cushions. Children access a very good range of play equipment and resources, much of which is presented at low level in labelled boxes and in open storage trolleys in the younger children's room.

Practitioners' good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues help to ensure children are protected from harm and neglect. For example, staff know how to implement child protection procedures and have the required policies and documents in place to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are extremely happy and they laugh and giggle throughout the activities, for whilst exploring hay, sawdust and soil with their hands. Staff interact with the children exceptionally well, talking to them all the time, making eye contact, playing at their level and showing affection. Younger children enjoy experimenting and exploring paint with their hands during craft activities. Staff praise and encourage the children helping them to learn different skills.

Staff use the Birth to three matters framework adequately to observe the children's progress and plan specific activities, ensuring the needs of the younger children are being met fully.

Evidence shows that children attending the after school club are engrossed in activities such as board games. They enjoy physical activities outside in the grassed play park. They are happy and relaxed in the provision and relate well with practitioners and one another.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a working knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this to plan a broad range of activities and experiences that promote children's development in each area. They use a range of methods to gain children's interest and help them learn. Staff are interested in children's ideas. They encourage children to learn by adapting planned activities to suit children's interests. Written observations of children's progress are ongoing. However, these are not used consistently to update children's assessment records. Therefore, children's learning cannot be tracked to show parents their child's next steps in learning. Consequently, the systems to ensure that the educational programme is effectively monitored, reviewed and evaluated needs developing.

Most resources are used effectively throughout the day, however in the older children's room they have limited opportunities to self-select their own resources. This limits their opportunities to explore their freedom of choice and develop their decision making skills to extend their play. Children are beginning to understand that text has meaning as they handle books independently and make good use of the mobile library bus which visits the setting. Children hold the books correctly and listen intently at group story time.

Children count confidently up to, and sometimes above 10 throughout the day, using number rhymes. Children use mathematical language with confidence, talking about shape, size, position and quantity during a small group activity about dinosaurs. Children use language well to communicate. They are confident to initiate conversations with adults and each other. They

regularly identify the initial sound of their name through phonics and learn to recognise their written name through daily routine.

Children are very happy and confident. They play well together and on their own, children's free play is used effectively by staff to consolidate their knowledge and promote their learning. Children begin to form friendships and share resources with each other. Good warm, caring relationships between staff and children are evident. Children's independence skills are developing well in the setting as they are encouraged to take their socks and shoes off by themselves to participate in physical activities such as balancing on beams. Children enjoy being a special helper for practitioners.

In the role play area older children enjoy and show great interest in trying on school uniforms from the schools they will be attending next term. Children enjoy using their imaginations, they enthusiastically make their own picnics, deciding who is invited to their 'picnic party'. Art and craft activities such as making collage pictures are readily available and are popular with the children. They express their own ideas as they paint and draw. Children show curiosity in looking through kaleidoscopes, binoculars, magnifying glasses and playing with stop watches, digital cameras and torches.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children receive lots of cuddles, praise and encouragement. They form positive relationships with each other and are comfortable and at ease with practitioners who know them well. Children are proud to show others evidence of their art and craft work. Clear and consistent guidance helps children to understand what is expected of them. Children's behaviour is very good. They play well together, learn to share and take turns and are carefully reminded to say please and thank you.

Children are becoming increasingly independent. Most children aged over two years are beginning to manage their own personal hygiene and more able children are encouraged to pour their own drinks and help prepare snack. Children are able to make their own choices of some of the activities they engage in. Clear and consistent guidance helps children to understand what is expected of them. Children are familiar with daily routines, for example, they know when reminded whilst they are playing that it is time to start tidying up. They enjoy helping and offer to fetch items when needed. Younger children and children with additional needs develop self-assurance and are well supported by practitioners who are sensitive to their needs and value them as individuals.

Children learn about the world around them exploring different cultures, linked to discussions and activities based around a variety of special days and cultural festivals. Consequently, children begin to recognise and value the similarities and differences between themselves and others. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents speak very highly of the setting and parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child when they begin the group and through parents evenings and helping out in the provision. Flexible settling in arrangements helps to ensure parents are involved and practitioners value parents' comments and suggestions, using these to enhance the provision for children. Parents are given good information about the setting and the education provided for their children via a prospectus and regular newsletters. An Ofsted poster is displayed which informs parents of the procedures

they should follow if they have any views of the setting. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning by sending in items which relate to topics such as dinosaurs. Individual Foundation Stage developmental records are in place for each child, however developmental comments are inconsistent and incomplete. Consequently, even though the practitioners know the children very well and discuss with parents their child's progress, this is not being appropriately recorded.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit because practitioners work well as a team and communicate through regular meetings and daily discussions to ensure the preschool runs smoothly and children's care and wellbeing is promoted. The management structure is adequate and both the manager and all practitioners have clear roles and responsibilities on a daily basis ensuring they understand what is expected of them, which promotes team work. Children are supported and settle well because practitioners are deployed effectively to ensure they are fully involved and interested in activities. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Practitioners know and implement most policies and procedures to ensure satisfactory outcomes for children are promoted.

Practitioners are supported by the manager both formally and informally through daily discussions and opportunities to review staff performance and development, for example through appraisal meetings. Effective systems are in place to ensure checks are carried out on practitioners and they have relevant qualifications and experience of working with children. Procedures to recruit, appoint and induct new staff are rigorous to ensure ongoing suitability, which ensures children's safety.

Leadership and management are satisfactory with strengths being recognised within the setting and some areas for improvement identified. Such as, maintaining children's assessment records and increasing opportunities for older children to self-select from accessible resources. The manager influences practice on a daily basis and monitors this. However, systems to ensure that the educational programme is effectively monitored, reviewed and evaluated needs to be developed, to ensure children's next stages in learning are identified.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provision was asked to continue to improve the level of qualified staff to increase staff knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones to enable all staff to offer learning opportunities through all activities and regular routines. There are currently 13 practitioners working in the setting of which 10 have a childcare qualification and one practitioner is working towards a childcare qualification. Practitioners have a working knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this to plan a broad range of activities and experiences that promote children's development in each area.

The setting was also asked to develop activities to involve and extend older, more able children, to provide stimulation, challenge and opportunities for continued learning and ensure that this is reflected in the assessments of all children's development. Practitioners encourage children to learn by adapting planned activities to suit children's interests. However, children's progress cannot be tracked to show parents their child's next steps in learning as children's assessment records are incomplete. This part of the recommendation remains outstanding therefore, it has been raised again.

The provision was asked to continue to develop and organise all documentation and to inform Ofsted of changes within the provision. Policies and procedures have been updated to reflect new regulatory guidelines and current practices within the group. The manager is aware to inform Ofsted of any changes within the provision.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- increase opportunities for older children to self-select from accessible resources to develop and extend their learning
- develop the recording of fire drills to include more details of evacuation

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):

- improve the systems to observe, monitor and evaluate the recording of children's achievements using this information to plan their next stages of learning in all areas
- maintain the current assessment records regularly to track children's progress and develop systems to ensure that the educational programme is effectively monitored, reviewed and evaluated.

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