



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 113378

DfES Number: 584731

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/06/2004

Inspector Name Gill Moore

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Out of School Day Care, Sessional Day Care

Setting Name Blackbirds Fun for Kids

Setting Address 118 Felpham Way
Bognor Regis
West Sussex
PO22 8QL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Fay Crouch

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Blackbirds Fun for Kids is a privately owned group and opened in 1997. The group is situated in accommodation within the Methodist church hall 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 group mainly uses one large hall, although an additional room for small group work and a spacious hall for physical activities is sometimes used. The group serves the needs of the local community.

There are currently 70 children on roll from 2 years to 8 years. this includes 10 funded 3 year olds and 12 funded 4 year olds. the setting currently supports 3 children with special needs. There are no children attending for whom English is an additional language, however the group do support some bilingual children. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday 9:00-11:30 and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 12:30-15:00 term time only. The after school club operates Monday to Friday 15:00-18:00 term time only. A holiday play scheme is offered during some school holidays 9:00-18:00.

In addition to the owner, 3 qualified staff work full-time and 5 unqualified staff work part-time in the pre-school. The owner works full-time with another member of staff in the out of school club and holiday play scheme. the staff member has a qualification relating to early years and child care.

The setting receives support from West Sussex local authority and liaises with the local primary schools in the area.

How good is the Day Care?

Blackbirds Fun for Kids provides a satisfactory quality and standard of day care for children.

The staff team are a mixture of qualified and unqualified staff, however they are all committed to updating their knowledge and skills. High ratios of staff ensure children

feel secure and develop good relationships, although the structure of pre-school sessions and grouping of children does not always occupy the children fully, which impacts on their behaviour. The environment is welcoming and inviting to parents and children and space is used effectively. Children choose from resources and activities laid out by staff however, those presented often lack challenge and are not always appropriate to the ages of children attending. Most of the required documentation is in place, although procedures for the recruitment, appointment and induction of new staff, and the availability and accessibility of records are not yet fully developed.

Staff take collective responsibility for ensuring children's safety. Detailed records are maintained and effectively shared with parents when recording accidents and the administration of medication. Staff have a good knowledge of how to implement local child protection procedures. They show an understanding of equality and value all children. Snack times are well organised and promote children's independence.

Staff develop positive relationships with children. Children attending the out of school club and holiday play scheme are involved in the planning of activities and outings. Staff help children to recognise and value the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Effective systems are in place to support, monitor and review the progress children with special educational needs make. Staff continually praise and encourage children, increasing confidence and self-esteem.

Staff form positive relationships with parents and share information informally on a daily basis about their child.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Children with special educational needs are well supported by pre-school staff. The group have a dedicated special educational needs co-ordinator, who has a good understanding of her role and attends regular training. However, all staff have an involvement in working with children who have special educational needs, which helps develop secure relationships with the child and their family. One member of staff takes responsibility each session for ensuring children are included and involved in activities. Good links are made with parents and outside agencies to develop an individual education plan, helping to monitor and review children's progress, both in the home and at pre-school.
- Relationships between staff and parents are well established. Daily discussions provide opportunities for parents to share information about their child and discuss things that are happening at home. Parents provide written details relating to children's individual needs and staff ensure parents wishes are respected. Opportunities are provided for parents to help during pre-school sessions and they are well informed about activities that take

place within each session. Staff work very closely and establish very good relationships with parents of children with special educational needs.

- Very good use is made of snack times to encourage children to be independent and develop social skills. The pre-school operate a milk bar system, which enables children to decide for themselves when they wish to have their snack. Children select their name card from the board and place it in a tub. This enables staff to clearly identify those children who have not had snack. Children follow good hygiene routines and wash hands before sitting at the table. They pour their own drinks and choose from raisins or biscuits. Alternate snacks of fruit are sometimes provided. Children enjoy talking with staff and their peers about their day and things that are happening in their lives.

What needs to be improved?

- the procedures for the recruitment, appointment and induction of new staff
- the structure of the pre-school session and the grouping of children to ensure all children are sufficiently challenged and involved in their play
- the resources to ensure they are suitable for the ages of children attending both pre-school sessions and out of school care
- the documentation, to include arrangements for children who are not collected from the group, records of visitors to include times on and off the premises and contact details, arrangements for reviewing policies and procedures and the availability of these relating to out of school care.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
1	Develop the procedures for the recruitment, appointment and induction of

	new staff.
2	Evaluate and improve the structure of the pre-school session and the grouping of children to ensure all children are sufficiently challenged and involved in their play.
5	Increase and improve the resources to ensure they are suitable for the ages of children attending both pre-school sessions and out of school care.
14	Develop the procedure for uncollected children, obtain relevant details of visitors, evaluate arrangements for reviewing policies and procedures and ensure those relating to the out of school care are on site and available to parents.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Blackbirds Fun for Kids offers acceptable nursery education but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses.

The overall quality of teaching has some areas of significant weaknesses. Planning links to the areas of learning, however staff lack the understanding in how to use the stepping stones to help children progress and are not always clear about what children are expected to learn. Staff make observations of children's progress, however little use is made of this information to plan what individual children need to learn next. Many learning opportunities are missed and insufficient challenges provided, in particular for four-year-olds. The structure of sessions does not always occupy the children fully, which means their behaviour is sometimes disruptive. Choices available lack challenge and the accessibility of resources limits children's opportunities to be independent and express their imagination. Staff form positive relationships with children and help them to feel valued, increasing children's confidence and self-esteem. Effective systems are in place to support children with special educational needs.

Leadership and management have some significant weaknesses. Staff communicate effectively and have a clear understanding of their daily responsibilities. They are encouraged to identify their own training needs, however systems to monitor and evaluate teaching are not fully developed. The system to monitor and evaluate planning, the effectiveness of routines and the impact the educational programme has on children's progress is weak.

Partnerships with parents are generally good. Staff develop friendly informal relationships and communicate verbally on a daily basis. At present there are informal systems in place to share information about children and their progress.

What is being done well?

- Relationships within the pre-school are very good. Staff value children and listen to what they have to say. They encourage children to talk about things that happen at home and have a good knowledge of individual children's home and family circumstances. Staff praise children and encourage them to learn to play together and take turns when playing snakes and ladders. As a result, children are confident and show good self-esteem, which impacts on the relationships they build with staff and their peers.
- Parents receive detailed information about pre-school topics and activities. newsletters are sent out each term keeping them informed about forthcoming events and topics children are covering. A white board displays information about activities and experiences their child is involved in each day, which provides opportunities for parents to engage their child in discussion about

what they have been doing in pre-school. Information about the foundation stage curriculum and the stepping stones is made available for parents in the reception area. Parents are encouraged to support their child in finding items from home to bring in to pre-school linked to topics.

- Staff make excellent use of the park and field adjacent to the pre-school to provide daily opportunities for children to engage in outside physical play. Children enjoy opportunities to develop their climbing skills through the use of the large frame and rope ladders. Large group games are organised on the field using the parachute and staff set up varied activities, which help develop children's co-ordination and sense of balance, for example using balancing beams and stilts. Children enjoy opportunities to use bicycles and scooters and show a good awareness of space.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and how to use daily routines, self-chosen activities and incidental opportunities to challenge and extend all children
- the system for planning, to ensure staff are clear about what children are expected to learn from activities and children's assessments are used to help them move on to the next stage in their learning
- the organisation and availability of resources to enable children to independently access the full range of equipment, be fully involved in the session, and express imagination, in particular relating to creative activities, tools and equipment, construction materials and access to natural resources
- the programme for mathematical development, to ensure children have increased opportunities to recognise numbers, develop their understanding of addition and subtraction through practical activities and use their own ideas and methods to solve problems
- the systems to monitor and evaluate teaching, the effectiveness of the curriculum planning and the impact the educational programme has on children's progress
- opportunities for parents to be informed about and contribute to their child's achievements and progress and how they can extend learning in the home.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Limited improvement has been made since the last inspection.

The group were asked to improve the programme for mathematics by providing more practical activities to help children understand the relationship between numbers below ten using real objects. Coins are now provided for children when they have access to the shop, however staff miss many learning opportunities throughout activities and self-chosen play to encourage children to count, recognise numbers and solve problems through practical activities.

They were also asked to provide more opportunities for children to use pictures and symbols and recognise familiar words and letters. A few labels are displayed around the room and children have opportunities to match words to pictures through jigsaw puzzles. However insufficient opportunities are provided for older children to recognise familiar words. For example, the weather board is displayed too high and staff find the words to attach to this.

The pre-school were asked to improve the planning by giving greater emphasis to what children should learn from activities. Some improvement has made to the plans and they now show six stepping stones to be worked towards each week. However, staff do not question children effectively and provide sufficient challenges and plans do not provide opportunities to help them understand how to promote discussion with children and adapt the activity to extend and challenge the older children.

The group were also asked to produce a comprehensive and manageable set of written records to record children's on-going progress and attainment. This has been improved and children's achievements and progress records now link to the areas of learning and stepping stones.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children show confidence when talking to the group about the items they have brought in from home. They show good concentration during group story time, however at other times during the session their behaviour is disruptive. They flit between activities as they are not provided with sufficient challenges and they lack interest. Children take turns when playing snakes and ladders, and show a caring attitude towards the new baby when a member of staff comes in to visit.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy talking about the animals that live in the jungle and use good vocabulary to describe how they look. They enjoy exploring books and making predictions about stories, and most children are confident in recognising their own name. Many children can write their name, however staff often write it for them. Many opportunities are missed to practice linking sounds to letters and older children are not sufficiently challenged in the recognition of letters and familiar words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children are able to count and many count confidently beyond ten. Some children recognise numbers, although insufficient opportunities are provided for them to do so. Children have limited access to use mathematical equipment and develop their own ideas to solve problems. They are not sufficiently challenged through activities and routines in developing concepts of number, addition and subtraction. Opportunities are missed to introduce mathematical language to children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children use magnifying glasses to observe tadpoles and talk about how they grow. Children learn about their local environment through visits to the beach and watching the diggers in the local park. They enjoy constructing models from Lego, however, resources, access to equipment and opportunities to design and build are limited. Information technology equipment is not used effectively to support children's learning and children have insufficient access to explore natural resources.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children demonstrate skill in jumping and climbing when using the large apparatus in the park. They enjoy opportunities to practice throwing and catching balls and riding tricycles and show good co-ordination when demonstrating forward rolls and handstands. Children practice scissor control when cutting jungle pictures and use glue sticks confidently. However, these cannot be accessed independently, which restricts opportunities for children to use malleable materials, cutters, knives and tools.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children enjoy using their senses to taste pancakes and listen to the sound of the coconuts; however, insufficient opportunities are provided for them to express themselves through access to materials and a range of experiences. Creative activities tend to be adult-led and prescriptive limiting children's opportunities to use their imagination. Lack of opportunities and resources are available for children to engage in role-play. Children enjoy singing and follow patterns using actions.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and use children's assessments to plan the next stage in their learning, provide sufficient challenges to children, in particular 4-year-olds and improve the systems to monitor and evaluate teaching, planning and the impact this has on children's progress
- evaluate and improve the organisation and accessibility of resources to enable children to independently access the full range of equipment and express imagination, in particular with regards to creative activities, tools and equipment, construction materials and access to natural resources
- improve the programme for mathematical development, to ensure children have increased opportunities to recognise numbers, develop their understanding of addition and subtraction through practical activities and use their own ideas and methods to solve problems
- increase opportunities for parents to be informed about and contribute to their child's achievements and progress and how they can extend learning in the home.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.