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06/12/2007

Mr Ian Richard Selden
20 Orion
Bracknell
Berkshire
RG12 7YX

Our Reference 119283

Dear Mr Selden

Inspection report

An Ofsted childcare inspector inspected your childcare and nursery education provision on 21/11/2007.

Please find enclosed:

- a copy of your inspection report
- a copy of *Requirements in regulations*

The inspection report

The inspection report sets out Ofsted's judgements about the quality of the provision you offer. The law says that you must provide a copy of the report for the parents of all the children that you care for unless you provide childcare in a crèche, open access or holiday playscheme.¹ Ofsted has published your report on the internet.

If you have any queries about your report or inspection judgements, please contact our helpline on 08456 404040 within 30 working days of receiving your report.

Recommendations

The report contains some recommendations to improve your provision further. We will check whether you have acted on these recommendations when you are next inspected.

Changes to conditions of registration

Following this inspection there have been no changes to the conditions of your registration. Your current certificate still applies.

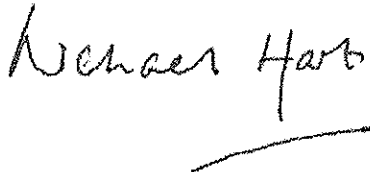
¹ The Nursery Education (Inspection)(England) Regulations 2005

Requirements in regulations

Please read the *Requirements in regulations* carefully, as you must also continue to meet these requirements in order to remain a registered day-care provider. You may find it useful to keep this notice handy, as you may need to refer to it in the future.

If you have any queries about this letter, please ring the above telephone number where one of my colleagues will be able to help you or write to the Divisional Manager at the above address.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Hart". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Michael Hart
Director, Children

Birch Hill Pre-School

— Inspection report for early years provision

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Unique Reference Number | 119283 |
| Inspection date | 21/11/2007 |
| Inspector | Hazel Farrant |
| Setting address | Community Centre, Leppington, BRACKNELL, Berkshire, RG12 7WW |
| Telephone number | 01344 302660 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Birch Hill Pre School |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Sessional care |

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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 provider must give a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must give a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Day Care and Childminding (inspection) (England) Regulations 2005 No 2300 Regulations 5 and 6).

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 satisfactory. 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?

Birch Hill Pre-school has been open for over 20 years. It operates from the Birch Hill Community Centre in Bracknell, Berkshire. The provision has use of a large hall, kitchen and sufficient toilet facilities. The pre-school serves the local community.

— A maximum of 26 children aged two to under five years old may attend the setting at any one time. The group opens five days a week during school term times only. Sessions are from 09.15 to 12.15 and from 12.45 pm to 15.00 on Monday and Tuesday.

There are currently 46 children on roll. Of these 14 children receive funding for early years education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and for those who speak English as an additional language.

There are seven members of staff who work with the children, two hold early years qualifications and a further two are currently working towards a childcare qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene procedures and understand why they need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating food. However, the spread of infection is not always prevented as children use the same water to wash their hands. Children also use the same towel to dry their hands before snack time. In addition, the floor mats children sit and play on, are dirty and require cleaning.

Staff gather relevant information regarding diet and medical history to ensure individual needs of the children are met. Children benefit from daily snacks, for example fruit and toast. They enjoy the social interaction of sitting together and chatting between themselves. Children have independent access to drinking water throughout the sessions; children are able to use cups or beakers.

Staff care for children appropriately if there is an accident as a high percentage of staff hold a current first aid certificate. Documentation is recorded and stored appropriately and necessary parental permissions are in place regarding medication and emergency treatment.

Children have daily opportunities to develop their physical skills while they play

outside and get lots of fresh air. They enjoy throwing balls into a basketball net and step in and out of tyres. Indoors, children enjoy using a seesaw, slide and parachute.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

- Children and parents are warmly greeted on arrival. Staff check visitors on arrival and only known persons are permitted into the setting. Staff work hard to transform the large hall each day. The hall is bright and welcoming although there are limited posters and examples of the children's work displayed. Toys and equipment are of a high standard. They are set out by staff members each day for children to access on tables and floor mats which helps their independence.

Children are cared for in a secure environment where the risk of accidental injury is minimised by staff's implementation of daily risk assessments. However, the floor mats are in need of securing to prevent them being trip hazards. An unsecured electrical wire and window blind cords require being made safe so that children are protected from hazards. Emergency evacuation exercises take place regularly to accustom children to the routines to follow in the event of a fire. An emergency evacuation procedure is clearly displayed on the wall.

Children are protected from the possible signs of abuse or neglect because staff have an understanding of child protection issues. Some staff have updated their training and knowledge and there is an appropriate safeguarding policy in place. These all contribute to children's welfare and safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at their preschool. They arrive happy and confident and quickly settle into their play. They make their own choices from the resources made available and are keen to participate and play with their friends. Children enjoy regular opportunities to express their imagination through role-play. They spend time dressing up and acting out scenarios such as making tea and going shopping. Staff know the children well and how they are progressing and they plan activities around the current topic of 'autumn'. Staff recognise the value of play in the children's development and introduce a range of experiences enabling all children to learn to play and work together in small and large groups as well as independently.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make progress because staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn. Staff have sufficient knowledge of children and improve their understanding by making observations on what children do. Although their progress through the stepping stones is not clear. Planning is currently being reviewed but further development is required. Planning is completed a day in advance and activities are not currently

being evaluated in order to inform the planning cycle. This impacts on the effectiveness of planned activities meeting individual children's needs.

Children's social skills are developing well in a relaxed and sociable environment where they easily make friends. Their confidence is promoted during group sessions where children are praised for pouring out their own drinks at snack time. Children behave and generally listen well to instructions when participating in small group activities and when taking part in larger group sessions such as story time.

Children are beginning to understand that writing has meaning through daily routines such as self-registering. However, children have limited opportunities to access a variety of writing materials to make marks to express their ideas. Books are also very accessible to support children's interest in pictures and stories. They enjoy listening to stories such as 'Maisy's Rainbow Dream' where they talk about colours. Children also have the use of electronic 'Leap Pad' learning systems, which supports children's learning in literacy and mathematics. Although children have opportunities of accessing resources and activities promoting letter recognition they have little opportunity of linking sounds to letters.

Early recognition of numbers is introduced at group times when singing well-loved nursery rhymes. They have opportunities of using calculators and learning about size when completing jigsaws. However, children have limited opportunities of counting within normal daily routines to help them develop their understanding of mathematics in practical ways.

Children have opportunities to appreciate the wonders of the nature, for example, they look at Tarantula spider skins through a magnifying glass and plant seeds in the outside garden area. Children enjoy making their own music through a range of resources. Painting and colouring helps them to create their own designs and experiment with colours. Although they have limited access to independently select tools, media and other resources to further support their ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel good about themselves and show consideration for others as they share resources and take turns. For example, when playing with the sit and ride toys. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn about diversity through a range of activities and toys which include, books, play figures and dressing up clothes. Information is sought from parents about children's backgrounds and cultures. The pre-school has a clear policy for behaviour management. Children learn right from wrong as staff give good explanations and offer lots of praise when children have done well. Children are generally well behaved and respond positively to praise and encouragement.

Caring staff support children with learning disabilities and difficulties and for those who speak English as an additional language. All children are encouraged to join in

with all activities and appropriate support ensures individual needs are met.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive information about the pre-school, and know how to access the full policies and procedures of the group. However, parents have limited information regarding the curriculum their child follows as plans are not displayed for parents to view. Parents have the opportunity to see their child's key worker informally to be up-dated on their child's progress. Some parents have commented they would welcome a more formal meeting so that they are more aware of how their child is developing. Parents are able to view their child's progress records but currently have no method of recording their comments. Parents are able to take an active role in supporting the pre-school; a rota is in place for parents to provide help and support during sessions on a regular basis.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the setting are satisfactory. A new committee has just been elected and are in the process of taking on their roles and responsibilities. There is a positive attitude towards improvement to make changes to develop the service, for example, the outside play area has been refurbished recently. Children now enjoy riding their trikes around the painted roadway track. Most staff are appropriately qualified in childcare and early years. The planning system has been recently changed. However, documentation and observation systems need to be further developed to ensure the assessment record for each child is regularly updated. This is to ensure children's progress along the stepping stones and future areas of learning is clear.

Recruitment and vetting procedures make sure that suitably qualified and experienced staff care for children. The staff team work well together and have a high regard for the well-being of the children. Staff are encouraged to attend training which keeps them informed of the latest initiatives in childcare. There are two members of staff who are soon to complete the 'Diploma in Preschool Practise'. Staff ratios are appropriate and are supported by voluntary staff. They organise the environment well with a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Registration systems are recorded appropriately. Children's records are well maintained and confidentiality is considered paramount with respect to children's details; these are well secured in lockable facilities. There is a full range of policies and procedures in place, although the complaints procedure requires reviewing to include current regulations. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection a record of staff police clearances is now kept. A new committee has recently formed and they are in the process of completing all required checks. The fire procedure notice is clearly displayed for everyone to see. These all

contribute to promoting children's safety.

The group have recently started a new planning system. Currently activities are not evaluated or related to the stepping stones. The manager has realised there are improvements still to make and is in the process of addressing this. The group operates an open door policy to discuss children progress and they are currently looking at how this can be improved. Children have daily opportunities of enjoying role play activities. Children have access to programmable toys and the group will be introducing a computer for their use in the near future.

Complaints about the childcare provision

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 satisfactory. 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 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):

- further enhance hand washing procedures to ensure cross contamination is minimised and ensure mats are clean
- further enhance children's safety by ensuring the mats do not cause a trip hazard, make secure all accessible electrical wires and window blind cords in the main hall
- further develop partnerships with parents to ensure that parents are offered the opportunity to formally discuss their child's progress within the setting and the opportunity to include their comments

- review the complaints procedure to ensure it reflects the changes to the National Standards as detailed in the October 2005 Addendum and ensure written parental consent for photographs is in place.

The quality and standards of nursery education

— — To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further consolidate documentation to include the intended areas and aspects of learning, monitor the observation system to ensure the assessment record for each child is regularly updated to easily identify their progress along the stepping stones
- investigate ways of providing further opportunities for children to independently select tools, media and other resources to enhance the range of activities on offer to them.
- improve the mathematics programme and provide greater opportunities for children to count in everyday activities
- provide more daily opportunities for children to develop writing for a variety of purposes, build on children's language and literacy development by giving more opportunities for them to link sounds with letters.

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 2473)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Requirements in regulations which all providers of day care must meet

Besides the National Standards, there are certain requirements set out in regulations that all registered day-care providers must meet.

1. Let Ofsted know of changes and relevant events¹

You must inform Ofsted at the earliest opportunity of any of the following changes or proposed changes. Where it is not possible to notify Ofsted in advance, you must let Ofsted know the change as soon as you can (and no later than 14 days after the event occurs).

Change to premises, facilities and provision

You must tell Ofsted about:

- any change in the address of the premises
- any change in the facilities to be used for day care that may affect the space available to children and the level of care available to them
- any change in the hours during which day care is provided, which means that you offer overnight care
- any change in the childcare category applicable to the provision (for instance, if you decide you want to set up a crèche or you want to extend sessional care to full day care).

Changes to people

You must tell Ofsted about:

- any change to the manager or person in charge
- any changes:

i) to any person who is a member of a committee or corporate or unincorporated body whose prime purpose is to provide day care

ii) any person who has delegated, clearly identifiable and direct responsibility for the provision of day care where the day care is provided by a partnership, committee or corporate or unincorporated body whose prime purpose is not the provision of day care

iii) to the name or address of the registered person

iv) to the name or registered number of the company where day care is provided by a body corporate

v) to the name or registered number of the charity where day care is provided by a registered charity

¹These are set out in the Day Care and Child Minding (National Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 No 1996.

8. A statement of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire or accident.
9. A statement of the procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child or of a child being lost.
10. A statement of the procedure to be followed where a parent has a complaint about the service provided by the registered person.
11. A statement of the arrangements in place for the protection of children, including arrangements to safeguard the children from abuse or neglect and procedures to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse or neglect.
12. A written complaints procedure including Ofsted's address and telephone number.³
13. A record of any complaints for a period of 10 years.

3. Complaints record

You must keep a record of all complaints that you receive in writing or email from parents. The record should include the action you took following the complaint and the outcome of your investigation. You must share the complaints record with parents.

4. Informing parents of inspection

You must tell parents about any forthcoming inspection if you know the date in advance. You should give a copy of the inspection report to all parents with children in your setting. You must give any other person who requests it a copy of the inspection report but you may charge them the cost of copying. This requirement does not apply to crèches, holiday playschemes or open access schemes.

³ It is only mandatory to have a written complaints procedure, but it is good practice to include the address and telephone number of Ofsted.