

The Covey Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY269792
Inspection date	23 July 2007
Inspector	Karen Elizabeth Screen
Setting Address	Unit 6, Baileys Court, Webbs Wood Road, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, Avon, BS32 8EJ
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Registered person	Sheila Frances Partridge
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Covey Nursery was registered in September 2003. It is located on the first floor of a self contained unit, on a small commercial estate in Bradley Stoke. It is one of two privately owned childcare settings owned and managed by Covey Childcare Ltd. The other, Covey Pre-school, is situated opposite the nursery. Children attending the nursery are given priority on the Pre-school waiting list.

The nursery is open between 08:00 and 18:00 from Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. Children attend from local and wider geographical areas of Bristol. There are currently 60 children on roll, of whom eight receive funding for early years education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties/disabilities and children learning English as an additional language.

There are 22 members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, nine hold Level 3 qualifications and five hold Level 2 qualifications. Most of the staff hold current first aid and child protection certificates. The nursery have been awarded the South Gloucestershire quality assurance award 'For One and All Children' which is valid until March 2008.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good records are kept of children with particular health requirements in order to safeguard their welfare; and staff take excellent measures to ensure that medicines are administered following the latest best practice guidelines. Most staff members hold valid first aid certificates and demonstrate a clear understanding in the treatment of minor accidents. Older children are very independent in their personal care. They are aware of the importance of personal hygiene and select tissues from the wall dispenser to wipe their own noses. Staff ensure that nappy changes are carried out using protective aprons and gloves; and young children who need assistance in completing personal tasks, receive a high level of support. In addition, a prominent display in the kitchen, reminds staff to maintain good hygiene when preparing the snack. However, children's health is compromised because they share a bowl of water in which to wash their hands before eating, and because the damaged changing mat can no longer be kept hygienically clean.

Children enjoy the range and variety of snacks provided and understand which foods are good for them. Children enjoy lunch times as a social event where they chat to their friends and staff. Lunches are very popular with the children and parents. The menu plan for the term is shared with parents, so that they may plan their own meals in advance. The lunches are bought from a catering company, heated-up, and brought in to the nursery. The nutritional content and salt level of each item is carefully monitored by the owner. Children help themselves to water from a dispenser, throughout the session, but during lunch-time children are not offered water until they have eaten most of their first course.

Children's physical development is fostered through resources and activities, such as indoor stepping stones, stilts, and well-supervised individual play on a trampoline. Children also take part in group exercise as they join in with sounds and movements of songs such as the 'Hokey-Cokey'. However, there are few opportunities for energetic outside play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery environment is warm and welcoming to children, with child-sized furniture, such as several very comfortable soft sofas. The environment is also welcoming to parents, with staff photographs, useful leaflets such as those produced by Sure Start and South Gloucestershire, and numerous recent photographs of the children adorning the walls. Children are interested and want to play with the available toys and resources, which are safe and in good condition. Children make selections for themselves from the easily accessible and well-labelled toys and general resources. However, most craft resources are kept in the office, which means that children are unable to add to adult-led activities, or work to their own designs.

Children's safety and welfare is promoted through strong promotion of nursery procedures for delivering and collecting children. Parents and visitors to the nursery are captured on closed circuit television and are only able to enter by ringing the door bell. Visitors are challenged for their identification and required to sign the visitors book. All the required documents and procedures are in place, such as records of fire drills. However, evacuations are not currently practised using both escape routes. Communication between staff and management for reporting and recording accidents are robust.

Children are very well protected by knowledgeable and very experienced staff and management, who are clear about child protection procedures. They are aware of the possible signs of children at risk and of their responsibility to report their concerns, according to Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Less experienced members of staff are aware of the nursery policy and procedure, and of their own role in safeguarding children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and keen to attend. They make friends with their peers and develop very good relationships with the staff team. Staff are warm and attentive, for example, babies respond by smiling when they make eye contact with staff. Babies make their needs known, such as pulling the bottle closer or pushing it away. Staff are sensitive to the children's needs. For example, spotting the signs of children needing to visit the toilet, when children are beginning to learn to use a potty. Children of all ages benefit from taking their meals together in mixed age groups. For example, older children enjoy passing on to the younger children, their knowledge of nursery ways and routines. Babies make connections through sensory exploration, such as painting their own bodies using their fingers and large soft brushes.

Children's self-esteem is raised as their views are sought and recorded. Activities are generally adult-lead, and sometimes insufficient attention is directed towards developing children's capabilities. For example, staff cut out pieces of paper for children when they would benefit from practising doing this themselves. Group sizes for planned activities are suitable. However, grouping of children at other times does not allow all children to participate fully. Groups are too large, with too great a stretch of ages and abilities. This results in some children losing interest, and affects the ability of others to contribute and express their feelings about personal or significant events.

Staff know the children very well, and it is this strength which ensures good outcomes overall. Staff have begun to use the Birth to three matters framework and recognise that it is a useful tool in planning appropriate experiences and in tracking children's progress. However, some do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, or how to implement it in order to support their work with young children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide good opportunities for children to practise and develop in all areas of learning over time. The curriculum provides relevant and stimulating opportunities to support all areas of the Foundation Stage, but the balance between opportunities for children to initiate and plan activities, is weighted in favour of an adult-planned programme. The nursery manager has a secure knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. However, individual staff have variable knowledge and expertise in the application of the Foundation Stage to promote children's learning. Staff are not sufficiently involved in the planning process, which is currently undertaken by the manager. The same position is reflected in planning for younger children in the nursery.

Children learn to be co-operative, for example, helping each other to choose from and dress-up in the 'costumes' available. They are very independent, selecting their own aprons before beginning to paint, and tearing off pieces from a roll of thick blue tissue paper, to mop up spills. Children are confident and well behaved and show high levels of involvement in activities. They also take pride in helping to tidy away the toys, when they are told it is time to tidy away

before snack-time. Children learn to care for themselves and their environment, for example, independently taking off their Wellington boots and putting on indoor shoes in order to keep the nursery clean, after a torrential downpour.

Children confidently participate in discussions, for example, an older child describes to the whole group, his recent holiday with his brother, including the exciting flight. Older children talk activities through, reflecting and modifying what they are doing and use talk well to connect ideas, such as how to join together two models they have made independently from building bricks. Children's understanding of positional language such as under, over and behind, is promoted well by staff using dolls as 'props' in group discussions. Resources for role play often include materials to promote writing, such as pencils, paper and envelopes; but activities such as painting are not always exploited to promote writing for a purpose such as encouraging children to add their names to their own work. Children have favourite books which they select for themselves and 'read' sitting on the comfy sofas.

Children's understanding of number is re-enforced as they take part in every day tasks such as setting out the table for lunch time. They show confidence and offer solutions to mathematical problems posed by staff, such as 'how many plates do we need?' A child points to all of the chairs set out around the table and correctly answers 'five'. Children are beginning to compare size and shape as they construct with blocks. The potential to develop children's understanding of volume, weight and capacity is not always sufficiently exploited whilst they play with water and sand.

Children benefit from very good opportunities to learn about past and present, through everyday examples. For example, staff carefully explain about time, relating it to concrete ideas such as tea-time, and position the hands on a pretend clock, to show that tea-time will begin at 15.30. She also relates this to the need to wash hands before tea and re-positions the hands to 15.15, to indicate the time to begin washing hands. Children's knowledge of their local community is very well fostered through numerous purposeful visits, such as posting letters, or collecting children from a nearby school. Opportunities for children to examine and discuss changes that can be reversed, such as melting chocolate, are not sufficiently well demonstrated or explained. For example, the chocolate used for making chocolate crispies, is melted out of sight in the microwave. In addition, opportunities for children to examine the natural world and local wildlife, for example, through digging in the earth in the nursery garden, are few.

Children respond enthusiastically to rhythm and music as they sing a song about parts of the body. They show increasing awareness of their own bodily needs, for example, an older child remarks that she is hot and helps herself to a drink of water. Children receive good support to learn techniques such as threading and lacing using stiff templates. They also show a good awareness of themselves and others as they weave in and out avoiding others also riding trikes. However, there are few opportunities for children to learn to pull, swing, jump, and climb.

Children engage well in imaginative play based on their own experiences, such as a younger child telling another that she needed to 'make lunch' and needed 'help to clear the mess' before she will be able to cook. Children respond positively to what they hear, see, feel, and touch. For example, they delight in repeatedly dribbling runny gloop through their hands. Children enjoy combining different media and materials, but the organisation of craft resources does not encourage children to extend creative activities for themselves.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn to appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences, for example, staff use environmental print and group activities to reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children with learning difficulties/disabilities are very well supported throughout the nursery. The management and staff demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the process of identification, and measures for supporting individual children. They have a 'can-do' approach and work closely with parents and outside agencies. Staff teach the sign language Makaton to the older children at group times, but do not use it routinely with the babies.

Children behave very well. They are encouraged to negotiate solutions to conflicts and to explain how they feel. Children are involved in devising nursery rules and respond promptly to guidance about rules and boundaries. Staff provide very good role models through their calm and polite manner and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour.

Partnership with parents is good. Children are developing a strong sense of belonging through the warm welcome extended to their whole families. Staff are well informed and sensitive to the parents own needs. The notice board is full of helpful information about the organisation of the nursery such as their policies. Newsletters provide details of the topic being looked at, so that parents may choose to support their children at the nursery by bringing in items from home. They also detail any potential staff changes. Children are allocated a key worker on arrival, but also get to know all staff, because the organisation of staff rotas result in staff working in all areas of the nursery. Parents report that they value the reports they receive each term. Parents are offered places on parenting skills courses, such as 'Managing Challenging Behaviour', hosted by the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Personal information is obtained before the children attend. This is regularly up-dated and filed securely for each child. Good organisation of staff rotas and supply cover helps to ensure that familiar trusted adults care for the children in the event of sickness or holidays. Records and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the provision are maintained.

Leadership and management is good. Children profit from the management's commitment to staff training and development, and staff are committed to undertaking any relevant training. For example, the manager is undertaking an Early Years degree. Children also benefit from staff who feel valued, recognised and respected. Effective links with the management, such as through monthly staff meetings, help to ensure the smooth running of the nursery. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, achieved through regular appraisals. The management review the quality of their practice and provision, and have acted very quickly and positively to address many of the points raised during this inspection. For example, immediately making improvements to the way children wash their hands before eating. They also recognise that their practice will benefit from future development in shared planning, and through improved delivery of the curriculum, including maximising the full benefits of the enclosed outside area.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last care inspection, the nursery were asked to ensure that all staff are aware of the procedures for administering medication. Medication procedures are now robust and safeguard children's health. All staff are aware of the procedures for obtaining parental permission prior to administering medication. A large white-board records all medication administered and individual records are kept for each child. Parents provide prior permission for medication and staff ring parents prior to administering medication such as Calpol; they also request the times of the last dose.

Although the management review the quality of their practice and provision, they have been less successful in addressing areas identified for improvement through the last education inspection. The nursery were asked to continue to develop planning, observations and assessment to support children's learning. All areas of learning are now given sufficient emphasis and incorporate appropriate challenges for children. However, the 'next steps' in children's learning are not always clearly identified or sufficiently specific. The nursery were also asked to increase opportunities for parents to be better informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum and to be actively involved in their children's learning. Information provided about the Foundation Stage curriculum is confusing because it merges the two curricula being followed by the nursery; namely the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage. Parents contribute to children's initial assessment, but do not continue to add their own comments and observations to their children's files. This means that records are not quite as accurate and full as they might be and that parents knowledge of their children is not fully exploited to support and develop the learning opportunities provided by the nursery.

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.

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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):

- ensure good hygiene is maintained at all times
- ensure children are grouped appropriately to develop their listening skills according to their individual needs (applies to education also)

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):

- maximise the benefits of the enclosed outside area, to enhance and increase the variety of learning opportunities for children (applies to care also)
- ensure all staff have a secure understanding of the curriculum used to support children's learning; and are fully involved in planning a curriculum which promotes a 'child-led' approach to learning, and is used as a tool for planning individual children's progress (applies to care also)

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