

Best Friends Childcare

Francis Bacon School, Drakes Drive, ST. ALBANS, Hertfordshire, AL1 5AR

Inspection date	24/04/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	2 Not Applicable
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- The nursery plans a broad education program, which promotes children's learning to a good level. The experienced staff team have a good understanding how children learn through play. The staff team work well together to meet the needs of all children.
- The child focused learning environment engages all children and builds on their interests. They receive good support for their developing language, physical and early social skills from staff, who know them well.
- The leadership and management of the nursery is strong. Children are cared for in a safe environment. The safeguarding and welfare requirements are met to a good standard.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outside play provision does not fully promote children's imaginative or robust play. Opportunities, such as den building and being able to move resources, to build and explore are not always readily available.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to children and observed them playing in both playrooms and the garden. She recorded specific observations on selected activities.
- The inspector spoke to staff about the children's care, development and the daily routines.
- The inspector held the feedback meeting with the owner, who is the registered provider and works as the overall manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents as they collected their children.

Inspector

Tina Kelly

Full Report

Information about the setting

Best Friends Childcare was registered in 2012 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the childcare register. It is managed by the registered provider, who also runs Best Friends Nursery in London Colney. The nursery is situated in a purposely converted building in the grounds of the Samuel Ryder Academy on the outskirts of St Albans. Children are cared for in two playrooms and they have access to a secure outside play area. Children come from the surrounding areas and attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery offers core hours from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Morning and afternoon sessions are available. The nursery is open all year, closing for Christmas and Bank Holidays. There are currently 13 children on roll, six children were in attendance at the time of inspection. The nursery supports children, who speak English as an additional language.

The Best Friend Clubs run in a portable classroom alongside the day nursery. It operates a breakfast club from 8am until children go into school. The after school club provides care until 6.30pm and caters for children staying for after school activities. The holiday club operates during school holidays from 7.30am until 6.30pm

The registered provider works as overall manager for the nursery and out of school provision. She holds an Early Years Foundation Degree, BA (Honours) and Early Years Professional Status. One member of staff is a qualified teacher. Other staff have appropriate early years qualifications or are working towards qualifications on an apprenticeship scheme.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- review the planning and resourcing of the outside play areas to promote imaginative play and ensure an interesting and stimulating space for children to explore.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are happy and settled as the nursery is thoughtfully laid out and well resourced to meet the learning needs of the children, who attend. A broad educational programme ensures that all children benefit from interesting and stimulating activities based on their interests and learning needs. These are linked to the 'Development Matters in the Early

Years Foundation Stage' guidance to ensure that all areas of learning are covered. The information gained from the 'All about me' and 'This is me' forms and in depth discussion with parents as children join the nursery is effective in planning for the first steps in their learning. The key person maintains effective observations in the children's learning journeys to enable them to assess and plan for their developing skills. This information is used as the basis for the progress check at age two years.

Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress with ongoing discussions with their key persons and regular opportunities to look at their learning journeys. They are encouraged to share experiences from home with the 'magic moment' forms. This enables staff to build on children's interests and link their learning to events at home. The 'monthly agenda' outlines the themes and planned activities for the following term. Parents can support their children's learning at home and bring items into the nursery to engage and promote their learning.

Children's communication and language skills are developing well. Throughout the nursery, resources are stored at child-height and labelled with laminated pictographs. Children are reminded to 'use your words' to encourage children to express themselves verbally. Baby sign language is used by all staff to support early language skills. This ensures that young children and those, who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their learning. They are able to make their needs known, make independent choices about their play and understand simple routines.

Children are able use their imaginative skills inside the nursery as there are good quality home play resources readily available. Pop-up tents are used to give children opportunities to create home play settings. However, creative resources and imaginative play are not well-resourced or planned for the outside areas. Children have limited opportunities to investigate the natural world and to create their own structures and dens with resources that can be used in different ways, such as, milk crates, large cardboard tubes and boxes.

Pictographs of nursery rhymes and songs are displayed in the cosy book area, so even very young children can make their choice, hand the card to the member of staff and settle to join in their chosen song. This builds their confidence and self-esteem as they feel valued and included. Children are talkative and confident in sharing their play ideas with staff and other children. They are keen to share experiences from home, talking to family members on the telephone and re-enacting events and conversations with great detail.

The nursery plans around flexible themes that are appropriate to the children's ages and stages of development. Story times are linked to the topic, so children's understanding and interests are developed and extended to a good level. Staff are skilled story tellers. They use props and elaborate signing to add excitement to a story. Children listen intently, they call out phrases and numbers in response to the story line. Technology is used to support literacy sessions. Children can select a story on the computer and watch authors telling their own stories. These are told simply but with great effect. Pre-school children sit at the screen, copying the familiar actions and phrases from favourite stories. This activity introduces children to different styles of storytelling. They are beginning to understand how to use technology appropriately. Pre-school children are supported in their early

reading and letter recognition as they are helped to write their names on their artwork. They chose different sized paper and handle pencils and pens with great skill. Simple phonics are used to build on their skills. The nursery provides all children with opportunities to experience a range of activities and events, which will give them confidence as they move on to school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children of all ages build strong bonds and attachments to both their key persons and other staff. The key person system works well, children settle quickly when parents leave, this shows that they feel secure and happy to be left at the nursery. Children are co-operative and enjoy helping and taking part in setting up activities and games. They are beginning to share and be part of a team. Staff thank the children for their help, they praise and promote good behaviour in everyday routines. Children show great pride when they receive a sticker for good work.

Young children are beginning to help and take part in daily routines, such as tidy up time. A timeline with photographs of activities, nappy change times, snacks and lunch time enables children to make sense of their day and be confident in understanding what is expected of them. Meal and snack times are calm and social occasions. Healthy and nutritious meals based on the children's individual dietary needs are cooked on site. Children eat well, they receive good support from staff. Sign language is used to remind them to say 'please' and 'thank you'.

Outside play sessions are planned into the daily routines. Children can ask to play outside, staff adapt and change the routines to accommodate their request whenever possible. Young children practise their recently acquired physical skills and take part in ball games and sporting activities with good support and interaction by staff. Children can practise moving in different ways and at different speeds as they explore the grass area, running up and down the slopes with great skill. The large sand pit and mud play areas promote children's moving and handling skills. They manoeuvre large pieces of wood and digging tools with great skill and dexterity.

Children are cared for in a clean and well-managed setting. Staff wear indoor shoes and visitors are asked to remove their shoes to maintain a clean environment for children of all ages. Children take part in simple everyday routines, which promotes their independence to a good level. They are encouraged clean their teeth, to change their shoes and help in setting out their own blankets at sleep time. Children's personal and social skills are supported to a high level. Children are acquiring the skills, which will enable them to take part in new activities and experiences with confidence.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The registered provider has high expectations for the quality of care that is provided to the children in their care. Regular reviews and updates from team meetings ensure that the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are met to a good standard. The registered provider and senior staff take responsibility for overseeing safeguarding issues. A robust recruitment process and comprehensive documents are in place. The nursery uses the Local Safeguarding Children Board code of practice to monitor and manage any concerns about children. Information is available for staff on the referral process. Parents are kept informed with information in the parent pack. Children's welfare is further protected as the setting has a closed circuit television monitoring system around the nursery. There is a comprehensive risk assessment in place to ensure a safe environment both in the nursery and outside play areas.

The nursery has established good relationships with parents. Ongoing discussions and updates of personal care details ensure that the children's needs are recognised and met. Parents' evenings are planned throughout the year to ensure that they are fully informed about their children's progress. Parents are comfortable when they come to the setting. They have confidence in the staff team, they talk and share information about the children. The nursery has very good links with the adjoining school. Children are taken for visits in the term leading up to them moving into reception. Older siblings may be cared for by the Best Friends Club out of school provision. The nursery provides an all day care setting for families with children attending the school. Links with other local schools are being developed to ensure that children feel secure when they move onto new settings.

There is an effective evaluation process in place. Information from staff meetings and feedback from parents are used to identify areas of the practice that work well and areas to be developed. The nursery ensures that all staff continue to develop their professional skills with training opportunities from the local authority. New staff are part of an apprenticeship scheme, so that they have consistent support in developing their skills. Comprehensive, dated action plans and check lists are in place to ensure continuous improvement. Management have a good overview of the curriculum through effective monitoring of educational programmes to ensure that children receive a broad range of learning experiences, which promote their good progress towards the early learning goals.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY449240
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	888369
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	27
Number of children on roll	13
Name of provider	Bestfriends Childcare Centre Ltd
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01727810199

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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