

Ecole Francaise De Bristol

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY293732
Inspection date	08 February 2008
Inspector	Timothy Butcher
Setting Address	PO Box 275, Henbury Village Hall, Bristol, Avon, BS10 7WZ
Telephone number	0117 9593311
E-mail	info@efbi.fsnet.co.uk
Registered person	L'Ecole Francais de Bristol Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 satisfactory. 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?

Ecole Francaise de Bristol Nursery and out of school scheme is based at the village hall in Henbury, a suburb of the city of Bristol. It was originally set up in 1993 and moved to its current premises in 2004. Children have the use of the main hall, adjacent toilets and an upstairs room. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The nursery is open during term time only, on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 08.00 until 17.30 each day. A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently thirteen children on roll aged from two to under five years. Of these children, twelve are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The setting supports children to become bilingual in English and French.

The setting supports children with special educational needs and children for whom English is an additional language. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The day-release school programme operates during term time on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 08.00 until 17.30. After-school children attend on a Monday, from 16.15 until 17.45, and a maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time.

There are two teams of staff, and currently four members work directly with the children. The staff are all French speaking and the children are encouraged to communicate in French. The nursery follows the French Maternelle model. The children also learn English and follow a curriculum based on the Foundation Stage.

Both the day-release school programme and the after-school scheme consists of lessons in French as an additional language and for children who are bilingual. The holiday scheme, which takes place during some of the school holiday periods operates in blocks of activity weeks.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about the importance of good hygiene. They go as a group to wash their hands before eating. However, children sit on the floor while waiting to be accompanied back into the hall and they touch the floor with their hands. As a result the good hygiene that is practised is undermined.

Children enjoy healthy options of fresh vegetable or fruit at snack time. However, they are not provided with suitable plates and although table surfaces are cleaned and wiped, children's independence and good hygiene is not fully promoted. Water is offered at snack times. Lunch times are very social times for younger children as older children from the class upstairs join them to eat and to mix. Children's packed lunches are suitably stored in the fridge so that foodstuffs are kept fresh.

Children have their health safeguarded because there are clear policies and procedures for dealing with accidents, incidents and the administration of medication. Parents report positively on the care and concern shown to children should they become ill. Children are sensitively supported and staff pass on information to parents. They gain written acknowledgement that the information has been shared when a child is collected.

Children have regular opportunities for exercise and this promotes a healthy life-style. Most days children go outside where they practise their balancing, running and throwing skills. They develop large muscle control and practise steering and stopping when using wheeled bikes and scooters. Children also have good opportunities for physical development during activities inside. They split into two groups for a structured physical activity session each day. They develop their balancing, crawling and jumping skills in one group, whilst the other group throw and catch soft balls. They negotiate space as they skip around and learn to listen and to follow instructions, such as to touch the ground. Children have lots of opportunities to move to music and thoroughly enjoy singing their favourite action and nursery rhymes from France. During 'English time' they sing songs from England and from around the world. The setting organises trips out to Blaise Castle to take advantage of the climbing frame and other apparatus; and for children to learn about the natural world.

Children use a wide range of tools, equipment and materials that help develop their small muscle control. They thread beads, use paintbrushes, scissors and glue sticks. They are encouraged to hold pencils correctly and develop these skills when mark making and when writing in a number of activities throughout their day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff work very hard to maintain the warm and child-friendly environment that has been established for children to enjoy. Examples of children's work are on display. Posters, pictures and other useful information are attractively presented to stimulate children's interests. Space is very constructively used, with an area divided off for children to rest or to sleep in comfort. The main room is very appropriately laid out for its purpose as staff plan well to ensure a suitable range and variety of resources are provided at a low level for children to access easily. There is a balance of tabletop and floor activities. This significantly contributes to children's enjoyment and learning. The role-play area is not always creatively presented and although some resources are a little tired, the area is augmented with dressing up materials. Other areas are also set up for imaginative play such as with puppets and as a theatre.

Children enjoy a safe environment in which to play. The provider has carried out a thorough risk assessment of the premises and has effective control measures in place to reduce the risk of accidental injury to children. The car park has barrier fencing to keep cars out and to prevent children leaving unsupervised. Access to the premises is monitored. Staff and children practise the fire drill. Fire safety equipment is in place. Children learn about keeping themselves and others safe when using the sit-on equipment outside as staff prompt them to be aware of others. They line up to be escorted to and from the main room and from the toilets as there are steps to negotiate.

The nominated person has a secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and has an understanding of child protection procedures. Staff know to whom they should report concerns. Clear policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's welfare is promoted. However, the written policy concerning an allegation made against a member of staff is incomplete. Although the staff are clear about the procedure to follow and describe the circumstances under which the regulator is contacted, the written policy is not made explicit enough.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good and varied range of activities to stimulate their learning and development. A particular strength of the setting is the very effective support of children towards becoming bilingual in French and English. Staff are knowledgeable. They offer children good opportunities to develop their learning through both adult-led and child-initiated activities. A key worker system has been recently introduced but has yet to be fully implemented. However, the numbers of children are small and this means that staff have a good understanding of each child's day-to-day needs. The head teacher in particular, makes time for warm discussions with parents. All staff greet children very warmly on arrival. A child enthusiastically and spontaneously hugs a member of staff in greeting before rushing off to find friends to play with. Children usually settle quickly to self-chosen activities on arrival. Staff sensitively support those children who are less able to easily separate from carers.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The setting follows the Maternelle model of education. The head teacher is also knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage curriculum and maintains good records that carefully document the links between the two systems to ensure

children's general all round development is planned for and covered. A learning profile (Livret Scolaire) records children's developmental progress and this is made available (in French) to parents twice yearly. This is cross-referenced against the six areas of learning within the Foundation Stage Curriculum and a version in English is in the process of being made available to parents also. Planning is thorough and records show the activities and skills to be covered, although the documents do not always reflect the extent of planning for individual children or identify their specific next steps in development. Observations of what children know have yet to be used effectively within the assessment process. They are used rather as a record to inform parents of the different activities that children have undertaken.

There is a strong emphasis placed on routines that support children's emotional security and social development. Children are eager to learn, self assured in their play and confident to try new experiences when presented with them. They work well together sharing resources and seeking each other out for, example, two children happily engage in role-play. They share ideas and agree the storyline that they then enact. They share the props taking turns to wear the hat.

Children's French language skills are significantly enhanced by the good interactions between staff and children. Children enthusiastically practise French traditional songs, poems and rhymes and grow in confidence. They join with others and follow actions to a beat or dance, as they do so. A portfolio folder is built up for each child to take home to show parents and to practise. The setting is in the process of providing an accompanying compact disc of the songs, poems and rhymes for home use.

Staff effectively support children's play and learning. They skilfully ask questions of children to extend thinking and to prompt children's language and communication skills. Children quickly recognise their written names. They self-register on arrival using name labels and readily identify their own tray where their folders of work is stored. Children enjoy the regular opportunities to have stories read to them and to look at books such as 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and 'The Fox and the Gallette'. They spontaneously select books themselves during free play. They have access to books that develop their understanding of the wider world which are presented creatively such as an atlas and an Australian story during 'English Time'. The setting has identified that opportunities for children to use their natural curiosity are somewhat limited and have bought some new resources to stimulate children's interests in the natural world and in science.

Children learn to count confidently and make good progress in mathematics as they routinely count throughout the day. They enthusiastically count their fingers at circle time when singing 'la danse des mathematiques', cars on a wooden track during free play and beads that they have threaded during a tabletop activity. Children learn about shape. Children quickly develop their mathematical language. An adult-led and structured activity around shape recognition also introduces to children the concept of matching big and small. They readily recognise shape and size. Children's workbooks show that a number of worksheets are used to develop children's recognition of shape and colour; and to match and sequence numbers. They are also used to provide further opportunities for children to make marks and practise pencil control. Opportunities for learning through practical play are less in evidence, for example, role-play areas rarely have props for writing and counting and there are fewer opportunities for children to mark-make as part of other activities. Themes in the role-play area are not always creatively presented to be dynamic or awe-inspiring.

Children develop a sense of time through every day activities such as through reference to the calendar and to a weather chart at circle and registration times. They are sensitively encouraged to speak in the group and to express what they know. They listen and respond well in general as staff are enthusiastic and encouraging and take the time to value each child's contribution.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected by caring staff that are committed to ensuring that each child's needs are identified and closely met within the setting. Children's awareness and understanding of French and English cultures is fostered well. Staff help children learn about and celebrate differences through meaningful activities. They celebrate birthdays, talk about cultures such as France, Britain and Australia. They sensitively help children share their own experiences with others, for example, a member of staff uses a puppet so that children can take turns to speak and to listen. Children also learn about diversity through the positive images they encounter when using the small range of multi-cultural resources.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities have their specific needs appropriately met as they are well supported. Parents are consulted and their opinions are welcomed. They consult with other professionals in order to fully support children's progress. All children are helped to join in activities and are encouraged to express their individuality.

Children's get on well with each other and are very social. They show care and consideration for each other and benefit from the gentle explanation about how their behaviour may affect others. They are strongly helped to feel good about themselves through positive praise. They are happy, settled, and quickly become involved in activities, leaving little time for boredom or undesirable behaviour. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents report very positively about the approach the setting adopts towards developing children's language in French and English. They like the friendliness and approachability of its staff and the good range of experiences provided for their children. Parents comment very positively on the nurturing environment for children and on the information provided through the newsletter, which is provided in both French and English.

Clear information is provided about the setting for parents and carers. Information is comprehensively shared through warm and informal discussions at either end of the day and this contributes significantly to the continuity of care for children. There is a parents evening, twice yearly, to share specific information about children's progress in education and development. Parents and carers can ask to see workbooks and folders at any time. Parents are closely consulted and asked to give their informed consent for a range of permissions. The key worker system has yet to be effectively developed.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Records are very well documented with the significant exception of the attendance register. Although the record shows when children leave it does not clearly show when children arrive. This is a breach of regulation and has been discussed with the provider at inspection.

Documentation, policies and procedures are otherwise used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children however, the child protection policy lacks clarity in one area. The staff team work well together to ensure children have suitable routines. Children are grouped appropriately in general. The key-worker system has yet to be fully developed to be of benefit to children and to parents. There are good, supportive relationships between teaching and administrative staff. There is a clear system in place for the recruitment of new staff and for checking their suitability.

Children's progress is significantly enhanced by the good organisation of the nursery. Children are cared for by a capable and skilled staff team. Children benefit from the good adult-child interaction. Time, space and resources are used very effectively to offer children a wide variety of experiences, in a child-friendly and well-organised environment. It is recommended that hygiene arrangements for children be reviewed.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are good. The manager provides a very good role model. An overview is held and there is a sound awareness of the main strengths and weaknesses of the provision. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement, for example, through the quality assurance accreditation scheme that is now being worked towards and through staff training. The group continue to gain support from an advisory teacher from the local authority. Although the setting has worked diligently towards an integration of both the Maternelle and the Foundation Stage curricula, planning has yet to be closely linked to all aspects of the Foundation Stage and to identify children's specific next steps in development. Observations are not yet used effectively within the assessment process. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of care the following recommendations were raised: make safe both outside play areas; ensure a record is kept of all visitors and that fire drills are regularly undertaken and detailed appropriately; make sure that the outside play areas provide children with sufficient challenge, interest and stimulation; review all available play resources and equipment, including those for the outside areas, to ensure they meet the needs of all children and reflect the diversity within the community.

At the last inspection of education the following recommendations were made: develop staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, the early learning goals and the stepping stones; develop the planning and assessment systems to ensure all aspects of the early learning goals are covered and resourced, and that the emphasis is on learning through practical play experiences, particularly for the younger children; enhance the programmes for physical and creative development by providing children with more equipment and planned activities for the development of large muscle skills, and encouraging children to express themselves freely and imaginatively in art-and-craft activities.

All the recommendations have been satisfactorily addressed. The provider has reviewed the risk assessment and now has in place a fire drill log and a visitor's log. The outside areas are safe or children are prevented from entering them. The provider has increased the resources made available to children for their physical development. The provider has a small but suitable number of resources that reflect diversity and plans to increase these further.

The provider has attended some training on the integration of the Foundation Stage with the Maternelle system and continues to work towards further integration. Further improvement

to the system of planning and assessment is necessary so that the planning is more closely linked to the stepping stones and observations are used to inform planning for children's next steps in development. Children now have increased opportunities for creative and imaginative play.

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.

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 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):

- review the hygiene arrangements so that children have suitable plates to eat from at snack times and so that hand washing procedures are not made ineffective when children wait in line
- review the child protection procedures to include greater written detail about the circumstances under which the regulator is contacted
- ensure that the record of children's attendance is kept accurate and up to date and includes the specific times that children arrive and depart.

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):

- continue to develop the planning, observation and assessment systems to ensure all aspects of the early learning goals are covered.

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