



## Cherry Tots Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253540
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Melanie Arnold
<b>Setting Address</b>	Cherry Willingham CP School, Lime Grove, Cherry Willingham, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN3 4BD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01522 751148
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Cherry Tot Playgroup Committee
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cherry Tots Playgroup has been registered since 1975. It operates from a classroom in Cherry Willingham primary school. The room is for the sole use of the group during its opening hours, although some reception class children use the toilets. The large room incorporates toilets and a cloakroom. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each morning from 09:00 until 12:00 hours and each afternoon, except Friday, from

12:30 until 15:00 hours, during term time only

There are currently 41 children on roll. This includes 34 children receiving funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions each week. The playgroup serves the village and surrounding area. Seven part-time staff work with the children. Of these, four staff hold

appropriate early years qualifications and four staff are currently working towards a level three qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is well promoted because good health and hygiene routines are in place, which helps to maintain a clean environment. Clear exclusion policies contribute to preventing the spread of infection. For example, if children become poorly during the session they are sent home as soon as possible and when children are poorly they are not re-admitted to the setting until they have recovered. Staff hold current first aid certificates, which helps to protect children's health, however, permission to seek emergency medical treatment has not been obtained to fully ensure children's well-being is not compromised. Children learn about good hygiene practices during the course of the day because good hand washing routines are actively encouraged by staff. Their understanding of health care issues is further promoted through discussions and topic work.

Children's physical development is promoted generally well. Children attending for the morning sessions benefit from a wide range of regular physical play activities, which helps to develop their physical skills, control and co-ordination. However, children attending for the afternoon sessions have fewer opportunities to access physical play to fully ensure their all round physical development is effectively promoted. Daily activities during the morning session include children playing in the hall or outside with a good range of resources. For example, children show an awareness of space as they negotiate around each other during games in the hall and they access tunnels and climbing frames which enables them to practise going over, under and through equipment. All children are beginning to use equipment, tools and resources with increasing control and levels of skills. For example, children are learning how to hold pencils correctly when drawing or writing, they use cutters and resources to mould the play dough into shapes and they use different construction materials to build with.

Snack time is arranged to allow children to freely access it at their own leisure. Staff are mindful and ensure when children do not independently choose to access the snack time, they are actually asked whether they require a drink. This helps to ensure all children's needs are met. Children's independence and self-care skills are developing because they choose whether they wish to have milk or juice and they are also beginning to attempt to pour their own drinks. Children's health is promoted generally well because healthier snack options are beginning to be introduced all year round. Afternoon children bring their own packed lunch, which they sit and eat with staff in small groups. This helps to effectively promote children's good social skills and manners. During the lunch time period children also learn important skills in preparation for starting school. For example, children put their hand up when they require assistance with their lunch because this will ensure they are seen by the dinner assistants during the busier school lunch time.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy playing in the well-organised environment, where a good range of developmentally appropriate toys and resources are set out each day to enable children to initiate their own play. Their safety is fully ensured because the setting is maintained securely, with outer doors locked by a keypad or swipe card entry system to ensure unauthorised people do not have access to the setting. Vigilant staff who are deployed well, and a clear policy relating to children being released into authorised people's care, helps to effectively keep children safe from harm. Further informative policies and procedures, including a critical incident plan, fire evacuation plans, child protection and health and safety policies, contribute to ensuring children's health and safety is well maintained.

Children's safety is fully ensured because the setting completes regular risk assessments each year in line with their insurance renewal. Further daily safety checks completed on all toys which are set out around the room, ensures children are playing with well maintained resources, which helps to protect them from harm. Children's understanding of safety issues like stranger danger, road safety and wearing seat belts when travelling in a car, is promoted through informative topic work and discussions. Good outings procedures, including having a higher staff to child ratio, ensures children are fully protected on any outings. Children's welfare is fully safeguarded because staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and show they have a clear awareness of the setting's routine as they immediately sit on the carpet for register time. Any children who are unsettled as they arrive are offered good levels of support, which enables them to quickly feel confident in their surroundings. Children then eagerly go and play with the good range of toys set up around the room. This helps to develop children's decision making skills and confidence as they freely choose their play experiences from the activities provided. For example, children enjoy playing with puzzles, construction toys, dressing-up resources, doing painting and playing with cars. Younger children attend the pre-school during the morning sessions and they are provided with a good range of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which helps to effectively promote their development. For example, staff support children well during their chosen activities, through questioning and engaging in play with them, which helps to keep children stimulated in purposeful play experiences. Children's knowledge and understanding is effectively promoted during adult-led group times. Brief discussions on the date, day, month, year and the weather, help to ensure children's interest is maintained and clearly promotes cross-curricular learning. Children are confident and their behaviour is good because they are well stimulated and occupied. Children relate well to staff who listen and value what they are saying.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress in each area of learning because staff have an appropriate understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, although staff do know children well, they are not effectively using

children's assessments to inform future planning. This results in planning lacking information regarding how to fully support or challenge individual children. Planning is in place but is not always clearly linked to the stepping stones to ensure all aspects of learning are effectively covered.

All children are happy and their behaviour is extremely good. Afternoon sessions are run for the older children who will be eligible for school during the coming year. The focus of this session is to give children an insight into school life and to help them to new learn skills for school. For example, children eat their packed lunch with the staff and they learn to put their hand up when they require assistance. This is because staff have explained to them that this will enable them to be seen and get help from the dinner assistants when they are eating their lunch in the school hall. Further life skills children learn in preparation for school include identifying their own names and finding and putting on their own shoes. Children are split into groups during the afternoon session and they complete set activities to prepare them for when they start school. However, this approach results in the learning environment not being as effective as the morning session because limited methods, time and resources are used by the staff to effectively promote children's development in all areas. For example, children are unable to freely access play resources during the course of the afternoon session, access to computers is limited to planned activities only and due to time constraints some areas of learning, like physical development are missed or not effectively covered.

Children are interested and motivated to learn. During the morning session children initiate their own play, which promotes their personal independence. Children confidently speak out in group discussions and show an awareness of their own needs as they freely access the toilet when needed and wash their hands after activities. Children relate well to the staff team and they are beginning to form relationships with their peers. They enjoy chatting and communicating with each other during play and happily answer staff's questions during activities. Children learn some sign language during group discussions, which helps to promote their understanding of other forms of communication. Children like listening to stories and they join in with singing activities. Discussions and activities around the letter of the week helps to develop children's understanding of linking sounds and letters.

Children's understanding of number is well promoted during the morning discussion where children are encouraged to count up to the current date. Written information transferred on to the chalk board associated with this and the current year, help children to begin to recognise numerals. During this discussion cross-curricular learning is well promoted because aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world are also included in these discussions. This results in children beginning to develop an understanding of a sense of time because staff chat about the days of the week and use language referring to yesterday and today. However, this is an example of where a good learning opportunity is not carried forward and completed during the afternoon, therefore children's understanding of number and a sense of time is only promoted if an activity is planned during the afternoon session. Children explore and investigate their environment as they go on nature walks and through observing special events like watching the eclipse of Venus. They learn about caring for living things through planting seeds and also by helping to care for the pre-school pet gerbil and giant snail.

Some children enjoy creative activities like painting, while others show reluctance to participate. Staff gently encourage all children to try creative activities but do not force them to join in as they believe children will develop their creativity in their own time. Planned activities allow children to explore colour, texture, shape and space in two and three dimensions. Children have fun matching movements to music as they join in action rhymes and they are able to recall songs from memory when singing. Children use their imagination well during play. They enjoy dressing up and role playing, they create houses and farms when building with Lego bricks and they have fun making shapes and people from play dough.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met because they are cared for in key worker groups, which enables staff to get to know children well. A consistent staff team effectively contributes to children receiving good continuity of care. Children's understanding of the wider world is promoted well through activities, the accessibility of a wide range of resources reflecting positive images of diversity and people of interest being invited into the setting to discuss their roles. For example, children enjoyed learning about the role of the police and fire officers when these professionals visited the setting. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by staff and the settings Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator who all work with outside agencies to ensure the child's needs are fully met.

Children's behaviour is very good because staff act as good role models and they use positive behaviour management techniques. For example, staff provide children with daily praise and encouragement, which effectively promotes their self-esteem. Children's understanding of right from wrong is well developed because their behaviour is predominantly good. The majority of children arrive and separate from their main carer with ease. They enjoy participating in activities, where they learn to concentrate well. Children wait for their turn as they line up and wait patiently to access the snack table. Children are settled and they are forming good relationships with their peers and the staff. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents comment positively on the setting, stating that they feel staff are approachable and they are more than happy with the care provided. Children benefit because staff work well with parents, which ensures their needs are met. Parents are kept generally well informed of the pre-schools practices, policies and procedures through the informative brochure. However, information on the Foundation Stage curriculum is not fully up to date with current guidance. Further information, including activities children have been doing, topics and themes children are learning about, are made available to parents through termly newsletters, fact sheets and information displayed on notice boards. Parents are kept updated about their children's progress through open days, where they are invited into the setting to discuss their child's progress record.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's needs are met because space and resources are well organised, which helps to create a warm and welcoming environment. Clear recruitment, induction and appraisal systems contribute to the promotion of children's safety and ensures children receive good continuity of care. Children's welfare, development and care are fully safeguarded and promoted because records and documents are in place, completed with good information and stored confidentially. Overall, children's needs are met

The leadership and management of nursery education are satisfactory. The manager and staff are committed, work well as a team and have a pro-active approach. Children benefit because staff work well with outside agencies and happily take on board any suggestions they have, which helps them to make improvements to the provision of nursery education. However, monitoring and evaluating systems with regard to nursery education are not fully effective, resulting in the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum not always being identified to fully ensure all children are achieving to their full potential and to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum is provided.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting agreed to consider the organisation of snack time to ensure all children have opportunities to serve themselves and to look at the way children access drinks to make sure they have more than minimal fluid intake. Children now freely access the café style snack time when they wish and they choose their own drinks. The setting is also beginning to introduce smaller drinks bottles, which allows children to now pour their own drinks. Children can freely access extra drinks from the water fountain to ensure their needs are met well. This contributes to children's health being promoted.

With regard to nursery education the setting agreed to consider making large physical play and free creative play available at every session. This has been satisfactorily achieved during the morning sessions, but further consideration to the organisation of the afternoon sessions has yet to ensure physical and creative activities are regularly and freely provided.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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 good. 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):

- obtain written permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice.

#### 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):

- develop the use of observations and assessments to inform future planning to ensure individual children are sufficiently challenged and moved on to the next stages of their development
- ensure planning is clearly linked to the stepping stones and identifies how activities can be sufficiently differentiated so that children of all abilities are able to gain the most from the activity and the learning materials
- ensure methods, time and resources are used more effectively during the afternoon session to enable these children to receive a broad and balanced curriculum which equally covers all areas of learning
- develop systems to monitor and evaluate nursery education to ensure all children receive a broad and balanced curriculum.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)