



Tiny Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333372
Inspection date	16 November 2006
Inspector	Silvia Richardson
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Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Tiny Acorns day nursery was registered in 2006. It operates from group rooms set out over three floors of a converted residential premises. There is a fully enclosed area for outside play area. The nursery serves the local area and opens five days a week all year round, except public holidays and one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 07:30 to 19:00.

The nursery is registered to provide care for 25 children from three months to under five years. There are currently 10 children from five months to two and a half years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions, both full and part time. The setting is prepared to support children with disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are four full-time staff members who work with the children. More than half the staff, including the manager, have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Support is available from the area special educational needs coordinator (SENCO). Staff have access to training

courses and support services run by Lewisham Early Years and the Lewisham Early Years Advice and Resource Network (LEARN).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Babies and young children's health and welfare are actively promoted, through implementation of some good practices, such as taking off outdoor shoes in the entrance hall, so that carpeted areas are clean and hygienic for floor play. Surfaces, including nappy change mats, and equipment, such as high chairs and cots, are cleaned routinely with anti-bacterial spray, minimising risk of spread of infection. Sick children are excluded from the setting, avoiding spread of germs and protecting the health of well children. Children are developing good personal hygiene habits, because adults encourage appropriate hand washing routines. Adults continually observe and monitor babies and keep appropriate records, promoting their welfare and wellbeing.

Babies and young children are well nourished, because they are offered a good range meals and snacks that include fresh fruit and vegetables. They are also offered drinks at regular intervals throughout the day. The setting caters well for individual dietary needs and babies health and welfare are promoted through adults following individual feeding routines. Babies and young children are supported and encouraged to be active, enjoying physical play activities in the nursery and outside in the rear garden. Babies have good opportunities to develop mobility skills, because adults sit with them on the floor while they actively reach for toys, crawl and pull themselves up.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Babies and young children play and move around freely and confidently, because good measures are in place to keep them safe and protect them from hazards, such as good use of safety gates across staircases and doorways. Adults are vigilant and supervise children closely, while they actively explore their environment, helping to keep them safe. Good use is made of signs and notices, such as 'please knock, little people behind door', so that adults and visitors to the premises are aware of how they can contribute to children's safety. Children are kept safe while sleeping and resting, because adults monitor children closely and keep detailed records.

Babies and young children play safely with a range of toys, play materials and equipment, because these are well maintained in a good condition. They can safely access resources, because these are stored in suitable containers within easy reach. The safety and welfare of babies and young children is actively promoted, through well thought through emergency evacuation plans. Babies and young children are kept safe and protected from harm, should concerns arise, because adults know how to respond and make an appropriate referral to safe guard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Small babies are happy and settled, because adults caring for them are appropriately attentive to their needs. Individual routines are followed, so that babies' natural sleeping and feeding patterns are respected, promoting their wellbeing. Babies actively explore their environment and a range of toys and play materials, because adults sit with them on the floor, providing support and encouragement. The range of resources available lacks variety and choice, so that opportunities for discovery and practicing new skills are limited. The planned schedule of activities is more suited to toddlers than babies, as it provides experiences such as messy play with corn flour, before babies have had sufficient opportunities to handle and explore every day objects.

Young children access a small range of toys and books, set out so that they can help themselves. Scheduled activities, such as water play, are poorly organised and presented, so that children gain little benefit from the activity. Young children are expected to play as a group and are not always appropriately supported, to enable them to engage in satisfying play experiences. Interaction with children is often negative and frequently fails to help some children enjoy and achieve in their activity. Routines are task orientated, rather than child centred, so that immediate care needs, such as changing wet clothes are overlooked and children sit waiting for lunch for an unreasonable period of time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have everyday opportunities to appreciate differences, because a range of toys and books are offered reflecting diversity and positive images of race and culture. The setting actively promotes inclusion, helping children to feel valued and develop a sense of belonging. The manager is developing links with the area special educational needs co-ordinator, so the setting is well prepared to accept children with disabilities and special needs. Young children experiencing emotional difficulties are less well supported, because adults working with them have insufficient understanding of their needs.

Children's expressed feelings are largely ignored and management focuses on resulting behaviour, so children are confused and unnecessarily distressed. Young children have difficulty sharing and taking turns, because adult intervention is negative and fails to support and reassure children appropriately, while they develop social skills. Parents are made very welcome in the setting and a partnership approach to care is well established, promoting children's welfare. Some good written information is available to parents on a daily basis, keeping them well informed of children's care routines and activities.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Adults are properly vetted, ensuring they are suitable to look after children. However, not all staff are appropriately deployed, so the needs of the age group with whom they are working

are not fully met. Some adults are more experienced in childcare than others, so that arrangements for children's care and activities vary in quality. As a result, babies are generally happy and thriving in their setting and young children are less settled. In the preschool room, an excellent range of resources are set out, so that children moving up to this room have good opportunities to learn through the early years curriculum.

The nursery environment is generally very well organised, clean, tidy and attractively presented, so that children and families feel welcome and comfortable in the setting. Some good policies and procedures are implemented effectively, promoting the welfare of children. Detailed records support good care practices in the setting, such as monitoring sleeping children, food intakes and personal care, promoting accountability and providing information and reassurance for parents and carers. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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.

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):

- schedule an appropriate range of activities and provide suitable toys and resources to meet the developmental needs of babies aged under one year and organise activities and a child centred routine to meet the individual needs of children aged from one to three years, with reference to The birth to three matters framework
- develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour and expression of feelings, taking into account age and stage of development
- deploy staff effectively in the setting, ensuring less experienced staff are supervised, to meet the individual and group needs of children.

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