

Tiny Oaks Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY221807
Inspection date	16 March 2007
Inspector	Sheena Bankier

Setting Address	Oakridge West Community Centre, c/o Oakridge Infants School, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 5RR
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Telephone number	07881 560819
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E-mail

Registered person	Tiny Oaks Pre-School
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Tiny Oaks Pre-school is run by voluntary committee made up of parents and carers. It opened in 1998 and operates from the community hall, in Oakridge, which is on the outskirts of Basingstoke. The pre-school have use of Oakridge Infants School outside grounds on a daily basis and has regular use of the school hall. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time aged from two years nine months to under five years. The pre-school is open during term-time from Tuesday to Friday and offers sessions from 09.15 to 11.45 and 12.45 to 15.15 with a lunch club held in between. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 44 children on roll aged from rising three to four years of age. Of these 33 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and is able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and two members of staff are working towards additional qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from daily fresh air and enjoy a wide range of physical exercise both in and out of doors. Children's physical development is enhanced well with the variety of equipment and activities offered, such as balancing along a beam, crawling through tunnels and using their eye and hand co-ordination when playing with hockey sticks and balls. The pre-school have use of the adjoining schools outdoor grounds daily where children can use the fixed play equipment to climb and slide. They use their creativity in the imagination area, which has an outdoor puppet theatre. Twice a week the school hall is used for P.E. or music and movement. Staff plan topics and use excellent discussion with children to extend their knowledge and understanding of a healthy lifestyle. Parents are invited to participate, for example, attending a keep fit session and sports day. This helps support children in their learning by involving parents in the topic.

Excellent routines are in place to ensure children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment. Children have regular hand washing routines, such as before eating or preparing food and after using the toilet. Individual paper towels are used to dry hands which avoids cross-infection. A sign is up in the toilet which visually reminds children to wash their hands. Children independently access tissues and dispose of these afterwards in the bin. This reduces the spread of infection. Staff have a clear understanding of how to provide a healthy environment to children. Staff hold food hygiene certificates and follow clear procedures when preparing food. Cleaning routines are followed meticulously, such as ensuring toilets are clean and tables are cleaned before eating or preparing food. This considerably supports children's good health.

All necessary paperwork is in place to support children's health needs, such as accident records and consent to seek emergency treatment. The pre-school have developed effective paperwork. This ensures they understand the children's needs and parent's wishes regarding treatment of any known medical condition and are detailed in agreed care plans. Effective emergency procedures are clearly displayed next to the phone. This means that adults have necessary information to relay to the emergency services, such as access to the building. This aids the emergency services and therefore promotes children's welfare.

Children benefit from healthy and nutritious snacks, such as cherry tomatoes, dried fruits, grapes and crackers with water or milk to drink. Children are involved in preparing the snack at every session. This allows children to smell and feel the food and encourages them to try new food as it becomes familiar to them. Their understanding of healthy eating is enhanced well through the discussions which take place with staff. Parents are able to donate items for snack time which reinforces healthy eating at home and reflects the backgrounds of the children who attend. This means a wider range of foods are offered. This develops children's tastes and widens their knowledge of the range of foods available. Parents provide a packed lunch for children. Clear guidelines about suitable contents which are in line with healthy eating are given to parents, including a request to provide an ice pack to ensure food is kept fresh. Children enjoy and benefit greatly from social snack and lunch times, where they sit in small groups with staff enjoying conversations and discussions together. Children brush their teeth after lunch which increases their understanding of good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

There are excellent systems in place which mean the premises are safe and secure, for example, the door is locked and a buzzer system is in place, daily risk assessments and checks take place and are recorded and vigilant procedures are in place when children arrive or are collected. A high ratio of staff ensures children are very closely supervised. Staff have an excellent understanding of how to keep children safe and also allow children to explore and investigate safely. Children learn and understand the boundaries in place through clear discussions and explanations. There are also signs displayed to reinforce the rules visually to children which helps them to understand about safety, such as walking indoors. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through discussions, for example, when preparing snack they talk about how knives can be dangerous if not used carefully. The evacuation procedure is practised frequently to ensure all staff and children understand the procedure.

The pre-school is extremely welcoming to children and parents. Staff greet children by name and are available to speak to parents. Posters and artwork make the environment inviting. The careful setting out of the room makes the best use of the premises, ensuring areas for quiet and active play. Screens, mats, bean bags and cushions are used to divide areas. This enables children to play freely and comfortably. Children's independent skills are very well supported. There are low-level pegs in place for coats and belongings, self-selection units, toilet seats, step-up-stools and potties available to aid children. Staff positively encourage and support children in their skills, such as dressing or putting on art aprons.

There is a wide range of well-maintained resources which meet the needs of the children attending. Effective procedures ensure these are checked and cleaned on an on-going basis. This ensures they are in a clean and good condition for children to use.

Staff have a secure understanding of child protection and most staff have undertaken further training courses to underpin their knowledge. Staff are confident in the procedures they would follow in the event of concerns and all relevant documentation is in place. There is more than one member of staff who holds a current first aid certificate and other staff are undertaking further training in first aid. This ensures children's minor accidents and injuries are quickly attended to by appropriately qualified staff. This safeguards children's health and well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from a wide range of activities, toys and play opportunities. Children are able to initiate activities and play independently as resources are available from low level units, including art and craft materials. This means children can make their own choices and decisions. Staff support children in their choices and successfully extend children's knowledge and understanding, for example, through use of purposeful discussion and questioning. This stimulates children's thinking skills. Children enjoy the range of activities on offer and are well occupied.

Children enter confidently and are very settled and happy at the pre-school. Children and staff benefit from excellent relationships and enjoy spending time together. Children show care and consideration towards others, for example, an older child shows a new child where to find an art apron and helps the child to put it on. Children have fun together as they enjoy role play in the home corner. They benefit from new experiences, such as playing in the especially created

ice cream shop, pretending to serve and sell ice creams to each other. Children have a very good understanding of the routines of the pre-school, such as tidy up time and snack time.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

Children benefit from a curriculum which is broad and balanced. This is continually evaluated and reviewed to ensure the curriculum is child-led and initiated. The curriculum is versatile to accommodate children's changing needs and spontaneous events. Comprehensive activity plans are in place which link to the stepping stones, early learning goals and 'Birth to three' guidance. All staff are involved in planning the curriculum. They use their thorough knowledge of the individual children to plan for the next steps in their learning. This enables children to achieve their potential.

Staff have an excellent understanding of their role in supporting and extending children's learning and development. Children progress very well and successfully progress along the stepping stones to the early learning goals. Observations of children's progress are recorded on an on-going basis. These are entered into children's individual development files along with photos and examples of work. All evidence is clearly linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals, ensuring a detailed record of progress is maintained. Staff provide consistent and comprehensive support to children's understanding of colours, shapes, letters and numbers. They effectively use discussions, questions and observations with children at the play based activities.

Children are enthusiastic, motivated and interested to learn. They sit and listen well during large group activities, such as circle times. They are confident speakers who answer questions during large and small group activities and enjoy talking about their experiences. Children benefit from being independent as they pour their own drinks at snack times and put away their lunch bags.

The self-registration system develops children's recognition of their name. Children are able to develop and build on their skills as their name cards are also put out at snack and lunch times. Print is used purposefully in the environment with labels on furniture and with questions and statements displayed. This promotes the children's understanding that print carries meaning. Children enjoy writing for a purpose during role play, using pens and notebooks. At the writing table a range of materials are available, such as paper, pencils, crayons, stencils, chalks and boards. Therefore encouraging the children to participate in using their emergent writing and developing children's skills in pencil control through a choice of activities. The pre-school uses a sound system to encourage children's understanding of letter names and sounds. This develops children's early reading skills.

Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported, for example, visual time-tables are used and parents are asked for key words their child use in their home language. The pre-school have developed links with agencies for support and advice. Children with special educational needs have their needs met effectively. Substantial links are established with other parties to ensure staff have support, advice and access to equipment. Early action plans are in place where needed to support and aid children's progress.

Children use their imaginations and creativity as they have fun making junk models, using a variety of tools to cut, stick and decorate them. This also develops their small physical skills. Children explore and investigate different materials, such as cornflour play, sand and dough,

stimulating their senses. Children enjoy role-play as they play in the home corner, dress up and act out a story together. During the story they act out actions, such as facial expressions and movements to words. This also helps children to explore different emotions, such as happy and sad.

At registration time, the children count how many are present. An abacus is used which provides a visual counter for children. Children count clearly and confidently to ten and beyond, often reaching 20 and above without difficulty. The more able children are learning to add, as staff ask questions, such as 'how many more?' More able children have a competent understanding of how single numbers are put together to make a double number, such as one and six to make 16. Children show very good recognition of different shapes and understand their similarities and differences well.

Children develop understanding of the local community and the wider world, for example, children benefit from the strong links with the adjoining school. They use the school hall and grounds on a frequent basis and also attend events being held at the school. This benefits the children greatly as they start school as it develops their confidence in the surroundings and enables a smooth transition from the pre-school environment. Staff encourage children to make observations, for example, each day they discuss and complete a calendar with the day, date, year, month, season and weather. This develops the children's understanding of time and develops their observation skills. Children are interested and master information and technology equipment which they use independently, such as a laptop and a tape recorder.

Physical skills are developed through a wide range of activities. Children match movements when acting out a story, such as standing tall and making circle shapes with their legs. This also underpins their understanding of positional language as well as developing skills, such as balancing. Children increase their large and small physical abilities as they play with different sized construction, for example, the large scale bricks outdoors. Confidence is developed through using equipment to balance on, crawl through and climb. These offer challenge to children as they use and develop new skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's needs are understood very well by staff. Staff closely observe children and have clear communication with parents. This means they effectively respond to children's changing needs. Records are used efficiently, for example, information about children's likes and dislikes and what they can do at home is recorded when they start at pre-school. This provides valuable information to staff about children, enabling them to meet their needs.

Children have excellent opportunities to learn about other people different to themselves through their natural play. There is a wide range of toys and resources which reflect positive images of society. These include books, musical instruments, dolls, play kitchenware, ethnic and cultural items and information which is displayed, such as writing in other languages. Children learn about each others backgrounds by celebrating festival and religious dates relating the families which attend the pre-school. This values and respects the different backgrounds of the children and families. Children also learn about countries and cultures through topics, for example, dressing up in national costumes, learning key words in different languages and food tasting. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities have their needs sensitively met by the pre-school. Staff are experienced and have further underpinned their expertise with training. The pre-school have developed effective links and communication with outside agencies. This ensures children receive the support they need. Thorough systems are in place to monitor and support children through use of tracking observations and individual play plans. Inclusion is very well promoted, for example, all children and staff use sign language and all children are fully included in the activities and play opportunities on offer.

Children's behaviour is very good. They have a secure understanding of the pre-school routines, for example, they stand still and listen when the bells are shaken, line up patiently to take their turn in the tunnel or to wash their hands and help to tidy up. Staff manage behaviour very well and provide excellent role models to the children, as they are calm, polite and kind. They provide clear explanations to children which develops children's understanding of right and wrong. Children's self-esteem and confidence is superbly supported through the staff giving frequent encouragement and praise to children for their efforts, achievements and good behaviour.

The partnerships with parents and carers is outstanding. The pre-school have excellent communication with parents and carers ensuring positive relationships are in place. Parents have access to exceptional information which staff also discuss with them. This ensures parents are well-informed about the policies and procedures of the pre-school and the aims and objectives of the Foundation Stage. Parents receive frequent ideas of how they can help their child at home, for example, through newsletters. This encourages parents to support and be involved with their children's learning. Parents are welcome in the pre-school to help out and are regularly invited to attend events being held, such as attending a garden party and sports day. Parents are encouraged to join the committee where they can help with routine jobs, such as washing dressing up clothes or organise fund raising events. Parents can speak to staff about their child at any time and have free-access to their child's development file. More formal meetings between the key person and parents are held each term to discuss children's progress and development in detail. The pre-school seeks information from parents about the service it offers, such as through the suggestions box.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

The leadership and management of the setting is outstanding. The pre-school have a highly committed and dedicated staff and committee team, who are focused on the needs of the children. They are self-motivated and proactive in setting high standards for the pre-school. Staff undertake frequent training and work towards further qualifications in childcare and education. This enables them to fully underpin and review their practice. The committee are actively involved in all aspects of the setting, helping daily in the setting, for example, putting out the equipment and taking fees. This dynamic team work ensures staff can use their professional skills to their full potential. The committee and staff communicate effectively both through daily contact and more formal meetings. They review and evaluate on an on-going basis to the benefit of the pre-school. This enables them to effectively respond to changes and take new information into account when needed.

Staff are experienced and knowledgeable in their roles. They work extremely well together as a team. They are well deployed within the room and the needs of the children are their top priority. Children thrive in the pre-school environment due to their positive relationships with

staff and the child-friendly environment. Adaptable space at the setting plus use of the adjoining school hall and grounds ensures children experience a rich environment.

All regulatory paperwork is in place and is fully detailed. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they remain in line with the National Standards. Further documentation over and above the requirements of the National Standards has been resourcefully devised. This results in the staff having a comprehensive understanding of the children's needs and the parents' wishes, for example, care plans. Clear systems developed ensure effective procedures are in place to manage situations, such as emergencies.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were made, one relating to the lighting in the environment and the other in regard to paperwork, including parent's access to policies and procedures and to gain consent to seek emergency treatment for children. Two key issues were set for nursery education. These related to the provision of large apparatus for children to use and methods to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school have addressed the recommendations and key issues. The lighting in the hall has been enhanced by tying back the curtains to let natural light in and overhead lights are also used. This ensures the children play in suitable lighting conditions. Parents receive in-depth information about the pre-school and staff also fully discuss this with them on entry to the pre-school. The policies and procedures are available to parents to read as they wish. Parents are made aware of any changes made to them. This ensures parents are kept well-informed. Consent has been gained from parents to seek emergency medical treatment or advice for children. This safeguards children's well-being and health.

The pre-school provides opportunities to children to use large apparatus as it has access to the adjoining school's Foundation Stage playground and the pre-school have a variety of equipment to use both in and out of doors. The pre-school have recently ordered a climbing frame. This ensures children have sufficient opportunities to use large apparatus to climb and slide and therefore develop their skills and abilities.

Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well. Links have been established with agencies that are able to advise and support the pre-school in the care and education of the children. The pre-school requests information regarding key words and welcomes parents or carers to stay with their child until they feel secure in the environment. Staff understand well how they can support children through using visual time-tables, sign language and knowledge of body language. This encourages communication and offers support to children and families.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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