

Smarty Tots

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY339915
Inspection date	22 March 2007
Inspector	Margaret, Ann Sandfield
Setting Address	5 Millfield, FOLKESTONE, Kent, CT20 1EU
Telephone number	01303 850515 or 07879 416015
E-mail	karenwilley@btinternet.com
Registered person	Smarty Pants Nursery School LTD
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 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?

Smarty Tots is one of two nurseries run by Smarty Pants Nursery School Ltd. It opened in 2006 and operates from four rooms in large Victorian premises. It is situated in Folkestone town centre. A maximum of 36 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The manager holds appropriate early years qualifications.

There are currently 47 children aged from three months old to under five years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs ten members of staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children have regular breaks timetabled into the nursery routine. Babies follow their normal home sleep times according to their individual needs. Routines help prevent the spread of infections. Older children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care when they wash their hands before lunch, snack times and after using the toilet. Babies and toddlers have their hands wiped with baby wipes to prevent the spread of infections. They are also provided with additional protection, as staff and visitors are required to remove outdoor footwear before entering their play area.

Children benefit from opportunities to develop their physical skills. Children enthusiastically play with a range of resources, including large building bricks and balancing equipment. The small outdoor play area has insufficient space to provide children with regular opportunities for vigorous play. Older children walk to a nearby park to use their facilities, weather and staffing levels permitting. Babies and toddlers have opportunities to have fresh air. They play in the garden or go out for walks in the local community. These activities help children of all ages to develop control of their bodies and learn about how exercise has a positive effect on their health.

Staff and children chat about the different fruit and their likes and dislikes and the positive effect eating healthy food has on their bodies. A well planned snack time encourages children to try a variety of fresh fruit. As a result, children are beginning to have a good understanding about healthy foods. Staff talk with children about the benefits of drinking water and what positive effects milk can have on their own body's health and development. Snacks and drinks are provided in accordance with their dietary needs, parents' wishes and children's personal likes and dislikes. Staff use information in children's personal records to ensure their dietary needs are met well. Parents provide all packed lunches and all meals and snacks for children less than two years of age.

There is a clear policy and procedure to follow, in the case of sick children, to prevent the spread of infections. Accident records are shared with parents. All relevant information is recorded in the medication record, which adequately supports children's good health. There is a suitable, easily accessible first aid kit available in each room and sufficient staff who hold a first aid qualification.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery as the premises are warm and welcoming. Most areas are fairly well ventilated. There is plenty of natural light to most of the rooms. However, the room used for the two and three-year-olds is fairly dark and frequently needs additional artificial lighting. There is a small fully fenced secure outdoor play area directly accessed from the baby and toddlers room. The two and three-year-old children's room also opens out onto the garden area. Their play is disrupted when children from another group walk through this area to access the garden.

The provider generally has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is being safeguarded and promoted. Several staff employed to work with

children hold a current first aid certificate. They have a concise lost child procedure. However, the setting does not formally complete a risk assessment for outings to the park or in the community. None of the staff have undertaken a child protection course with the new procedures and best practice. Staff and children regularly practise the fire drills.

Children's safety is ensured across the setting because practitioners are generally vigilant in identifying risks. There is a secure and safe entrance system via the vestibule and an additional security lock to the entrance into the baby and under twos room. The staff follow sound procedures to ensure babies and children arrive safely and are also kept safe when being collected. Only persons authorised to do so are allowed to take them home and the records on individual children include details of these persons. Any changes to arrangements are recorded in the 'Collection' book. Effective systems are in place to ensure all resources and equipment is safe, clean and well maintained. These routines provide all children with a safe environment in which to relax and play confidently and safely.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children and babies enjoy their stay in the nursery. They settle quickly and happily join in activities when they arrive. Sessions at the nursery are a mixture of free play and adult directed play. Staff provide a meaningful range of activities and resources so that children have both times to relax as well as be active. Toys and resources are easily accessible for children to self-select the activities of their choice, which meets their needs and interests. These are either set up around the room or stored in containers. Children happily play by themselves, in small groups or all together in group games. Younger children and toddlers are given more adult support and encouragement. Babies and toddlers are very much involved in a range of sensory play. Two and three-year-olds excitedly play with a new selection of musical instruments, thoroughly enjoying being creative. Consequently children's imaginations are being appropriately stimulated. There are many displays created by children and babies. Children are supported by the staff who know them very well and, as a result, they plan to extend children's learning appropriately. This enables children to continue to develop & progress effectively. Children speak openly and confidently to their peers and staff. They respond well to adults who are interested in what they do and say. As a consequence staff are able to build on children's self esteem.

Two staff members have undertaken the Birth to three matters training and are implementing it well. Staff plan for some daily activities to cover the aspects. Displays of the aspects and photographs of children at play enables parents to see how they plan to and meet their children's needs.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff plan the curriculum to promote progress towards the early learning goals and inclusion of all children. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff working with children have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and provide a stimulating range of activities in each of the areas of learning. They plan to cover the contents of the early learning goals by focussing on a particular concept. There are good links to the learning outcome. Plans do not include a section for reflective practice. Staff provide routine plans, information on the Foundation Stage and labelled art and craft displays for parents. Teams of staff are clear about what is expected of them and understand how children learn. Staff use opportunities during free play sessions to

join in children's play. They use these sessions to continue to develop children's language, thinking and problem solving skills.

Children receive encouragement to develop an enjoyment of books and develop reading skills. Children clearly enjoy listening to stories and are very much involved in a well delivered interactive story time session. They confidently retell part of the narrative and correctly guess what happens next. Children know what books are available in the book corner. They confidently fetch books of their choice for staff to read to them during free play sessions. Children are beginning to learn the importance of language through signs, notices and labels. Children develop their communication and language skills during snack and lunch times. Staff see these occasions as a practical way of encouraging children to develop good social skills.

On other occasions children's thinking skills are encouraged. Staff ask open-ended questions, stimulate children's interests and build on what they already know. For example, they have opportunities to explore a range of food items. Children decide whether they are 'good' or 'bad' food and, in some cases, what effect they have on their teeth and bones. They are also beginning to understand what food groups the items fall into. Children develop an understanding of simple problem solving and calculating through practical activities during snack times. Children are encouraged to count the number of children at the table and say how many cups they think they will need. Counting or calculation was not evident during lining up routines. Children receive good opportunities to sing action nursery rhymes, building up a repertoire of songs.

Children's physical development is encouraged; however limited space in the outdoor play area prevents children from experiencing a variety of vigorous activities. They are given many opportunities to build on the development of their small muscle skills. They have regular access to puzzles, construction toys and mark making instruments. Both indoor and outdoor activities promote children's fine motor skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children show care and concern for each other, sharing and taking turns and playing well together. They chat happily and confidently during activities and are comfortable in the presence of less familiar adults. Babies and children of all ages and adults have warm relationships. Children are developing good self-esteem through opportunities to voice their opinions, take decisions and make choices. Babies and children are given lots of praise and encouragement. Staff are generally good role models, which encourages the children to remember their manners. Children are given consistent messages by staff and reminders about what is expected of them and why. Children enthusiastically follow staff when its time to tidy up. The atmosphere remains calm and provides babies and children with a suitable learning environment. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from activities and resources which help them value diversity. They celebrate a range of festivals and have various multi-cultural resources. This would help make families feel welcome and ensure children's positive attitudes towards others are further established in these early years. Overall children learn about equality and justice through their play.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit because secure relationships are established between practitioners and their parents. This is enhanced through relaxed and friendly communication between staff and parent's. Parents are well informed about the group through

a variety of different ways. This includes opportunities for parents to participate in any of the planned topic activities. The setting provides both formal and informal opportunities for information to be shared about children's individual needs, interests, family and home circumstances. Contact books are completed daily for babies and children. They provide two open evenings for parents to discuss their children's care and development. Consequently, practitioners develop a very good understanding of children's individual circumstances. This ensures all children are valued as individuals and their needs met effectively. There is information clearly displayed in the entrance hallway for parent's information. Parents are well informed about the curriculum, pre-school topics and babies and children's activities. They are provided with copies of the pre-schools policies and procedures, which includes the complaints procedure. All records are kept safe and secure in a lockable filing cabinet and remain confidential.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The registered person ensures that the required adult to child ratios are consistently met. They support children's needs effectively and safeguard their well-being. They ensure that there are a minimum of two adults on duty at all times. They follow robust recruitment procedures to ensure people working with children are thoroughly vetted. They delegate duties, for example, they have appointed a special educational needs co-ordinator and behaviour management co-ordinator. The manager and deputy are qualified and experienced. Staff are encouraged to undertake further supplementary training courses, when they are available. They also provide 'in house' training, for example, the nursery manager has gone through the recent changes to child protection procedures with members of staff.

Leadership and management are good. Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff effectively monitor how well the children are making progress and this information is shared with parents. The setting is committed to improving the care and education for all its children and knows what needs improving most. There is no evidence that the setting assess their teaching skills for strength and weaknesses. They demonstrate how they would plan and provide for the inclusion of children with additional needs. As a result, all children are valued and included in activities. The new staff team are beginning to work well together. They are providing a service in accordance with the clear vision the manager has on how she wants the setting to run.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are available. These impact positively on the quality of care children receive, as overall adults working with the children know what is expected of them. The registration certificate is displayed in a way that makes it easy for parents to see. Suitable organisation of activities, space and resources result in all children receiving adequate care. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Consequently, children's health, enjoyment and achievement are being promoted well.

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.

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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):

- provide staff with training to up-date their knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures to ensure they protect children's wellbeing
- ensure staff conduct a thorough risk assessment for outings to safeguard children

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):

- provide regular opportunities for children to experience a variety of vigorous activities on a regular basis to maintain their good health

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