

Tinytots Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	307549
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Inspector	Kay Margaret Armstrong
Setting Address	Church of Nazarene, Great Clowes Street, Salford, Lancashire, M7 1ZQ
Telephone number	07944 188 690
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Registered person	Tinytots Vision Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care, Crèche

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Tinytots Playgroup and crèche facility first opened in 1998. It is one of three settings run by Tinytots Vision Limited. The group operates from the Church of the Nazarene on Great Clowes Street, Salford. The playgroup uses one room, toilets and kitchen facilities. The group serves the local community. The crèche was not operating at the time of the inspection and the focus of this inspection is therefore the sessional playgroup.

There are currently 24 children on roll aged between two and four years. This includes seven funded children. The playgroup opens from 09.30 until 12.00, Tuesday to Friday during term times only.

Three staff work with the children of whom two hold relevant childcare and education qualifications. The playgroup also benefits from the help of regular volunteers, some of whom are parents.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff implement suitable policies to promote the health and welfare of children. The accident and medication procedures are clearly followed and relevant records are maintained. Hygiene practices are generally satisfactory, although there are some inconsistencies. For example, the children regularly wash their hands after using the toilet and before their snack, however they use a shared hand towel which increases the risk of cross-infection.

Children's health and dietary needs are met successfully as staff work well with parents to gather, record and review the relevant information. Snack times are relaxed social occasions where children sit together and chat. Food is served on attractive plates, which makes eating a more pleasurable experience for children. Good manners are encouraged and children freely select from a range of fruits which include crackers, tangerines and bananas. Self-help skills are adequately promoted as staff encourage and help children to pour out their own drinks. However, children are not able to independently help themselves to drinks at other times.

Children enjoy some activities which promote their physical skills and development. They skilfully manoeuvre bicycles around the play room. The children enthusiastically hop and jump as part of an impromptu activity, laughing and giggling. Thus developing spatial awareness as they follow the instructions. Children enjoy exploring a range of activities, using various tools and equipment, for example, they manipulate play dough, use crayons to mark make or thread laces through cards, which promote their fine motor skills and dexterity.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure environment. Adequate risk assessments are undertaken and all potential hazards are identified and minimised immediately. Space is organised to provide children with a balanced range of activities. Children move around their immediate environment with confidence and ease. This means that children are able to play safely and independently. The staff are vigilant and offer appropriate supervision as children play. Children are developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they are gently reminded by staff not walk up they slide, or to run and the emergency evacuation plan is practised regularly.

There is an adequate range of resources that generally meets the needs of the children. However, insufficient access to resources in the role play area impact on children's imaginative development. Toys are clean, appropriately maintained and comply with safety standards, which minimises the risk to children. Resources are organised and some are easily accessible to the children, which adequately enhances their learning, promotes some choice and independence.

Children's welfare is promoted because the staff are clear about their role with regard to protecting children from harm. Procedures are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and are shared with parents so that they are aware of the staff responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are comfortable and relaxed in the group. A happy, busy atmosphere ensures that children have positive experiences at the playgroup. They are given appropriate attention as the staff are aware of their needs and spend time playing and talking to them. Staff listen attentively to what children are saying and respond positively to their questions. As a result, the children are confident, happy and secure. The staff plan and provide a range of activities to promote and support children's development. Activities are displayed appropriately and encourage investigation by the children. The children are independent and make choices in their play. They are busy and occupied throughout the session. Staff make effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to record children's progress. This enables all staff to understand the abilities of the younger children attending and plan activities to promote their learning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory as the children are generally making sound progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have an adequate understanding of how children learn. However, due to recent changes in staff, there are some inconsistencies in the delivery of the education. Practitioners are not fully secure in their understanding of the curriculum and how to monitor and extend play activities to ensure children reach their maximum potential. Although staff make observations of children's progress these are not used to effectively inform the planning. As a result, some children are not always sufficiently challenged in some aspects of their learning and staff do not always offer additional support to help them make good progress in all areas.

Children show confidence and some independent skills, such as in personal care and pouring drinks. They are sociable and play well together, or alongside each other, depending on their age. Children develop language skills as they listen to stories and learn new songs. They begin to link sounds to letters and see that print has meaning, as they listen to stories and find their own names. Children use some writing materials and have opportunities for spontaneous mark making. For example, they enjoy drawing with their fingers in the sand and paint, which provides interest for them and enjoyment as they write on a large scale and observe the results. However, they have few opportunities to practise writing skills independently as resources for writing across areas such as the role-play area are not well developed. This inhibits children's ability to write for a purpose.

Children are beginning to use some mathematical language as they count in songs and some everyday activities. For example, they make comparisons as they consider how long or short their snakes are, which they have made with the dough. Resources are available to prompt observations of capacity, such as when filling and emptying containers in the water play. However, there are limited opportunities for them to begin to make simple calculations or problem solve in every day situations.

Children use a telephone with confidence and have access to calculators. However, resources are limited for information technology and scientific exploration to develop children's understanding in technical play. Children begin to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world as they take part in various activities which reflect to different seasons and topics relating to nature.

Children use a range of materials to express themselves creatively. Displays of children's work provide examples of painting and that a variety of collage materials are used by the children. Children paint in a variety of ways, for example, with brushes, fingers and experiment by using the dough to print with. They have access to musical instruments and explore rhythm and sound independently. Children use their imaginations in the role-play area. The resources prompt them to talk about the food, or an activity in the home, such as caring for the baby. Imaginative play is extended when the area is changed to represent the hairdressers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Frequent praise and encouragement enables children to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Children are well behaved and benefit from a calm and consistent approach that is promoted by all members of staff. Minor altercations are dealt with in a calm and sensitive manner. Children play well together and help each other, for example, when they are tidying away resources. Staff act as good role models to the children and promote positive behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff divide their attention well and treat the children with equal concern. This establishes a sense of security and trusting relationships are formed. There are some resources which reflect diversity available which help to develop children's understanding of the world around them. As a result, all children are learning about difference and are beginning to respect each other.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children benefit from positive relationships, which are established from the outset. Staff value parents and share information with them in order for them to meet the individual learning needs of the children. Staff welcome voluntary help from parents in the play-group. Parents are advised of current activities and themes, which help to involve them in the children's learning. However, parents do not receive enough detailed information about the Foundation Stage and Early Learning goals. Practitioner's knowledge being limited inhibits communication with parents in respect of children's progress through the stepping stones to some extent.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. There are however, some gaps identified in the delivery of the educational provision. In the main this is due to recent changes in management. This has resulted in temporary cover arrangements not being effective. Staff keep records of observations made on the children to assess their progress. However, this information is not used to effectively inform the planning of activities or to identify children's interest and the next steps in their learning. The monitoring of the curriculum to ensure children make the optimum progress through the stepping stones is also identified for improvement. That being said, the staff do provide a satisfactory level of education and care for all children in attendance.

The mandatory records are available and most are maintained in satisfactory order, which contribute towards the welfare of the children. However, the record of children's and staff attendance does not show the times of arrival and departures. Systems are securely in place to ensure that all the staff are suitably vetted. This includes over half of the staff working with the children being appropriately qualified. Staffing levels are organised to ensure that children receive reasonable levels of support throughout the session. However, children's needs are unable to be met in the case of an emergency as there is no qualified first aider present. This

is a breach of regulations. There are staff who have attended training, whose qualification has now lapsed. The identified individual is currently awaiting placement on a recognised course, therefore minimising the level of risk to children.

Children are cared for in a supportive environment as the staff work well together as a team. They provide a range of activities for the children, which generally promote their overall development. Many resources are easily accessible which allows children to make choices and decisions about the activities they become involved in.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were raised relating to; staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and the minimising hazards to children indoors. Both these recommendations have been effectively addressed. Staff have attended training in relation to child protection issues and have clear policies and procedures in place to follow if they have concerns about a child. These are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Records show daily risk assessments are undertaken to ensure that potential hazards to children are identified and minimised. These improvements enhance children's overall safety and well-being.

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.

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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):

- improve hand washing procedures to minimise the risk of infection and ensure children are able to keep themselves hydrated
- ensure the daily attendance record accurately reflects the times of arrival and departure for both children and staff.

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):

- extend the opportunities, through resources being more readily accessible, such as information technology, including cause and effect; mark making, including cross curricular resources in the imaginative area; problem solving to explore number and science; and extend role-play (also applies to care)
- provide parents with written information on the Foundation Stage and implement more effective procedures to keep them informed of their children's progress
- develop practitioner's understanding of the Foundation Stage and their ability to gain the best from children, for example using assessment to inform the teaching and future planning of activities, and ensuring the delivery of the curriculum is monitored more effectively.

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