

Tops Day Nurseries/Mini Mariners

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY343441
Inspection date	17 April 2007
Inspector	Jacqueline Allen
Setting Address	The Hydrographic Department, Bridgewater Road, Taunton, TA1 2DU
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Registered person	Tops Day Nursery Limited
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?

Tops Day Nurseries/Mini Mariners operates from premises situated within the Hydrographic Department based in the town of Taunton. Children have use of two main play rooms and associated facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor play area with paved playground and grassed sections at the side. The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 35 children aged under five years at any one time. There are currently 65 children on roll, of which 28 are in receipt of funded education. The nursery caters for children with additional needs. There are 11 members of staff, which includes an overall nursery manager and deputy. Seven of the staff hold level 3 qualifications in early years, four are working towards level 2 and there are additional bank staff. The nursery receive support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's minor accidents are appropriately treated, recorded and shared with parents. Nine members of staff hold current first aid certificates and one member of staff has been designated to replenish the contents of the first aid box, which benefits children's health. Children's medication needs are obtained from parents, along with their consent to administer, which are adequately recorded when given. Children are effectively considered in an emergency as parents have given their consent for emergency medical treatment or advice to be sought by the nursery. However, children and babies are not consistently protected from the effects of the sun, as not all wear sun hats or sit in the shade.

Children benefit from hygienic nappy procedures as all staff members wear disposable gloves and aprons and anti-bacterial spray is used on the changing mat after each use, which prevents the risk of cross infection. Children also benefit from the staff's effective hygiene procedures when handling or serving children's food, as they wash their hands and put on a disposable apron, to prevent cross contamination. However, although children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating, this is not monitored by staff, and therefore many children do not use soap, which compromises their health. In addition, after enjoying a feet painting activity, the children all use the same towel to dry their feet, which does not prevent the risk of cross infection.

Children are learning about healthy eating through the varied, nutritious food supplied by the nursery. For example, children are offered a variety of fresh fruit at snack time and enjoy a cooked lunch, brought in by outside caterers, such as cottage pie, quiche, coleslaw, potatoes and beans followed by banana custard. Babies have their food mashed as needed, or provided by parents. Children access water freely throughout the day, from their own sports bottle or cup or from the jug and plastic cups provided at a low-level. Children are frequently reminded by staff to have a drink, especially after playing outside and young babies and toddlers are offered drinks frequently. Children's individual dietary needs are well known and met by staff, with clear information displayed.

All children benefit from daily opportunities to enjoy physical activities inside and outdoors, as the outdoor area provides an extension of the activities indoors. For example, there are clear areas for construction, role play and more physical activities, such as using the climbing frame, slide and a variety of wheeled resources.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

All children benefit from the clean, bright and welcoming nursery, which provides a stimulating environment for all children to play. Children's work is attractively displayed around the room and a low-level line enables children to hang their work up to dry. The outside area is effectively organised to extend children's learning when playing outdoors. For example, there are separate areas for children to enjoy physical play, role play, construction, water play and table top activities. Children freely access good quality resources from a range of low-level storage units in each area. For example, role play, books, computer, tapes and headphones, construction, small world and puzzles. In addition, outside there are large construction bricks, climbing frames and slides, wheeled resources and a play house, kitchen and accessories for children to extend

their play. Babies also benefit from the variety of interesting resources, such as a swing, activity stand, soft play, small ball pool, activity cubes, blocks, pop-up resources and books.

Children regularly practise fire drills, which are effectively recorded by staff, to ensure everyone on the premises can safely and quickly leave the building in an emergency. Staff are consistent in obtaining passwords from parents, to ensure that only authorised people collect children. Children's safety is considered by staff who hold documented risk assessments. Staff have identified a risk with the low level fencing around one side of the outdoor area and are taking action to improve this, although there is some risk to children in the meantime. Other ongoing risks are not always identified with appropriate actions taken to minimise these, such as routinely locking the inside door and keeping children away from wet floor areas. This impacts on children's safety.

Children's welfare is protected as staff regularly update their child protection knowledge to ensure they are familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are aware of the correct procedures to follow if they have concerns about children in their care which are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children under three are well supported by staff, to enable them to benefit from all the activities. Babies enjoy time outside sitting on a large blanket on the grass. Staff read books and sing action songs to stimulate their interest. Tubs of toys are brought outside for them and put nearby for them to access. Mobile children wander about exploring the outdoor environment. They paint with water on large tyres and use wheeled resources. Children delight in watching and following an empty plastic bottle as it rolls in the wind. Children receive lots of ongoing praise and encouragement from staff, who are good at talking to children, and presenting very positive facial expressions. The Birth to three framework is well implemented and children's records show their clear progress. Children are encouraged to be independent and soon learn to feed themselves. They enjoy sensory experiences both inside and outdoors, exploring different textures on the wall and appreciating wind chimes and multi-coloured streamers hung from the trees.

Nursery Education

Children are very keen to partake in a range of planned activities. For example, they take off their shoes and socks in preparation for a feet painting activity. They watch attentively to see what other children do whilst waiting patiently for their turn. They ask questions, such as "Can I add more paint?" and "Can I make green?" which staff respond to positively. Children benefit from staff's constant open ended questioning, such as "What does it feel like" and extension to activities. For example, children enjoy making different colours and patterns when printing their feet, staff extend this by encouraging children to see which one is biggest and children then use a ruler to measure. Children spontaneously count how many printed feet they can see, successfully counting from one to fifteen. Children happily find their name from the board to register themselves, they join in with nursery rhymes and contort their faces imaginatively when playing lions and tigers. They are forming good relationships with their peers, behave well and are considerate of others, helping children up when they fall over. Children are confident to stand up and speak in a group, have opportunities to increase their computer skills and access books independently. They regularly explore a range of mediums, take responsibility for watering plants which they have grown and independently access a drink as needed.

Children are making good progress through the stepping stones, although some gaps have been identified. Staff regularly track children and their interests to ensure they plan effectively for children's individual development. They also use their observations and photographs of children to evidence their achievements. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and have created a stimulating environment to enhance children's learning both inside and outdoors. Staff manage children's behaviour effectively providing consistent, positive role models. They continually engage children, supporting and extending their play as required. Staff's good use of open ended questions encourages children to think and problem solve in their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected and valued as individuals. Staff make every effort to meet children's individual needs which are well known, through continuous interaction and observation as well as good links with parents. Babies visit the main room regularly to prepare them for the next stage in their development and help them feel secure. Staff are willing to implement communication systems in the nursery which are consistent with those used by parents, to aid children's learning. Although none of the children currently attending have any learning difficulties or disabilities, staff do have previous experience and good links with professionals to ensure children's needs are met. Children learn about other cultures and beliefs through planned activities and resources which reflect positive images of diversity, such as books, dolls and puzzles. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well as staff are all calm, consistent and patient and reward children with lots of ongoing praise and encouragement. Staff use lots of positive behaviour management to ensure younger children persist in picking up resources that they have thrown down. Children are given time to finish their play, as staff use a sand timer to show them when it will be time to tidy up. All children get involved at this time, even toddlers.

Children benefit from the good communication between the staff and their parents on children's daily routines, which ensures continuity of care. The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have good information available to them via newsletters, policies and procedures, notice boards and ongoing daily communication with staff. Current planning is displayed and children's progress regularly shared with parents, when they meet with the staff to discover the next steps planned for their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from the good organisation of space and resources within the learning environment and the continuous interaction of interested staff. Registration systems for children, staff and visitors are clear and accurate. The nursery are Investors in People, which enables staff to continually develop their skills and knowledge through training. The staff team work well together and have positive attitudes and high moral, with all achievements being recognised and rewarded. The nursery manager displays a question each week for staff to answer, such as "If a parent made a complaint, what would you do in order to try and rectify the situation?". This helps to progress staff's knowledge and understanding of the National Standards. However, weaknesses in children's hand washing, inconsistencies in protecting children from the sun, identifying and

minimising risks, staff deployment and the security of the premises all impact on children's health and safety.

The Leadership and Management is good. The nursery's Operations Manager conducts regular mini inspections to observe and assess the staff team and offer constructive criticism. The staff have already identified a global weakness in one area of learning which they have quickly corrected. The staff team are highly motivated and continuously look for ways to improve children's learning.

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):

- improve hygiene procedures to prevent the spread of cross infection
- ensure babies and children are consistently protected from the effects of the sun when spending time outdoors
- ensure staff consistently apply their own safety procedures
- improve security procedures to ensure children cannot leave the premises unsupervised and unauthorised visitors cannot gain entry
- improve the deployment of staff when children are playing outside

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):

- improve the links between the observation and assessment records to ensure children's achievements in all areas of learning are acknowledged

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