

Little Treasures

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY259361
Inspection date	26 June 2007
Inspector	Susan Patricia Birkenhead
Setting Address	Evelyn Street Primary School, Evelyn Street, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 1BD
Telephone number	01925 416515
E-mail	ltittletreasures@tiscali.co.uk
Registered person	Lisa Anne Edwards
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Treasures nursery and link club is one of three registered settings owned and managed by Little Treasures Nursery Limited. It opened in 2003 and the nursery operates from four rooms in purpose-built premises in the grounds of Evelyn Street Primary School. Children attending the link club are cared for in the school hall and a designated classroom. The setting is situated in the Sankey Bridges area of Warrington. A maximum of 71 children may attend the nursery, 32 may attend the out of school club and 12 may attend the creche at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 all year round. The link club operates from 07.30 to 09.00 and 15.00 to 18.00 during term time and 07.30 to 18.00 during school holidays. Children attending the nursery all share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area and children attending the link club have access to the school grounds for outdoor play. The creche operates on demand as parents attend training in the school.

There are currently 95 children aged from nought to under five years on roll who attend the nursery and 53 children aged from four to eight years on roll who attend the link club. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery and link club currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 22 staff; of these, 15 staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications and five staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is effectively promoted due to the consistent hygiene practices and procedures followed with children from a young age. Children recognise the importance of washing their hands at appropriate times during the day and the display of hand washing notices provide reminders for older children. Children confidently explain that they 'get germs on their hands, and the soap makes them clean'. Children sleeping have individual bedding, which is changed very regularly. The informative sickness policy reflects the positive procedures followed and information regarding infectious illness is on display for parents to read. Therefore, children are cared for within an environment that protects them from the risk of infection. A consistent approach is in place for recording accidents, incidents and medication. Records contain the necessary detail and parents acknowledge entries made by signing against them. A high proportion of staff are qualified in first aid, and appropriate first aid materials are accessible for treating minor injuries, which further safeguards the children's welfare.

All children have various opportunities to develop their physical skills, both indoors and outdoors. They access the well designed, outdoor area where they can access the tyres, beam and blocks to develop their balancing skills. They negotiate space outdoors as they skilfully use their feet or pedals to manoeuvre the wheeled toys along the pathway, avoiding collision with others. They develop their fine, physical skills as they use spatulas to spread the glue and construction materials to build. Non-mobile babies develop their walking skills as they pull themselves up to stand, aided by the sturdy furniture and staff support. They have opportunities to crawl and roll using the sufficient space available and experience fresh air at regular intervals throughout their day. All children attending the setting share access to the outdoor play area. Children attending the link club make trips to the local park and can access the school grounds for football and rugby. Therefore, children learn to develop good coordination and control of their bodies from a young age.

Children enjoy a range of healthy foods throughout their day, reflected in the menus on display. Meals and snacks are freshly prepared by the cook to provide a very varied, balanced and nutritional diet, taking into account the children's individual dietary requirements. Alternatives are available to children with special dietary needs. Staff document well, during discussion with parents initially, the baby feeding routines to ensure a consistent approach. Baby bottles prepared at home are stored in accordance with food safety and clearly labelled. Drinking water is available within the rooms for children to access independently or with support according to their age and stage of development. Staff offer positive support to children at lunchtimes, sitting with them to feed them or offer assistance where necessary. Mealtimes contribute to the development of children's social interaction as children sit in smaller groupings and engage in conversation. Children attending the out of school club take greater responsibility for the preparation of their snack. They select items of their choice from the variety set out, which includes fruit and salad items daily, make their own sandwiches and help themselves to a drink.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming and secure environment. The individual age related group rooms are attractively decorated and well maintained. The photographs of staff, activities, and the children's artwork on display contribute to the bright, welcoming environment. Good use is made of the well organised space available, which results in the children eating, playing, relaxing or sleeping in comfort. Rooms are well prepared on a daily basis, which enables children to access play materials on arrival. Children access the well resourced and exciting outdoor area, where their learning is extended. For example, number cards and notices are displayed, and children learn about the natural world through the planting activities and the sensory area.

The nursery is attractively furnished, equipped with good quality play materials and resources to support, extend and challenge the children's learning and meet their needs well. These contribute to the bright and stimulating environment for children. Good storage systems are deployed throughout the nursery and out of school club, which enable children to self-select play materials of their choice. Children are allocated individual drawers where personal items or pictures can be stored, therefore promoting independence from a young age. Toys and equipment are checked regularly for safety and are routinely cleaned to ensure children stay safe.

Children are cared for within an environment where their safety is supported by good staff ratios and the positive steps taken to minimise risks. These include the use of safety surfaces in the outdoor play area, finger shields on doors and guards to protect the radiators. Detailed risk assessments are completed on all areas of the setting and prior to outings; information documented clearly reflects potential risks and the steps taken highlight how they are reduced. Children learn to keep themselves safe because the staff make them aware of unsafe practices and the consequences of their actions. They learn about safe evacuation in the event of an emergency as they practise drills regularly. However, information recorded lacks detail, regarding the number of children and staff present and any problems experienced.

Children's welfare is given high priority because the manager often discusses child protection during staff meetings, which reinforces the staff understanding of the signs of abuse and the procedures to follow. This means staff have a good understanding of the child protection policies and procedures and, as a result, they are confident about their responsibilities for safeguarding children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and secure within the nursery environment and separate from their parents or carers well. Good, warm, caring relationships between staff and children are evident, supported by the key worker system in place. They are greeted warmly by staff as they arrive enabling them to settle and participate eagerly in the play and activities on offer. Children's learning is promoted well through the positive staff communication and interaction, as a result, children turn to the staff for support when needed. They encourage children's enjoyment, have fun and share laughter. For example, staff climb aboard the role play fire engine and extend children's imagination as they talk about where they are going to and invite others to join them. Children move confidently between the play and activities organised and make choices for themselves.

A basic approach to the planning of morning and afternoon activities is consistent throughout and in the nursery; they are linked to individual children's observations staff complete. However, this planning is not linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. All children enjoy planned activities, which are supported by a range of resources covering a variety of play experiences. They have opportunities to access sand, water and creative experiences as part of the continuous play provision, play freely, look at books independently or approach staff to read a story. They play imaginatively, build using construction materials, and sing their favourite songs. The many photographs on display include the nursery cook completing baking activities with children. They confidently show off their skill when using the computer and demonstrate how they use the mouse to access and complete the programmes they select. Trips to places of interest, such as the Zoo, involve all children, and experiences are extended by the activities they complete on return. In addition, planned themes, which include 'Animals' and 'Mini Beasts', provide a focus for some activities. The daily routine incorporates the children's needs for rest and sleep. Staff have developed a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which is shared with parents through the many displays around the setting. They benefit from the good balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences made available.

Babies enjoy exploring their environment under close supervision and staff interact positively to extend and support their learning. They respond to 'peek-a-boo' and staff singing songs, with laughter and gestures to reflect pleasure. They develop an awareness of themselves as they study their reflection in the mirror, clearly having fun. They freely access natural materials from the treasure baskets and take part in many creative experiences. Toddlers become excited as they look to find animals hidden in the straw and repeat associated animal noises when prompted by staff. They develop their communication skills as they hold their arms out for staff to pick them up and use gestures to indicate what they want. Wall displays demonstrate interesting creative activities the toddlers take part in, for example, rolling wheeled toys in paint and producing the tyre prints on paper. Children who attend the out of school club are happy to share their experiences and talk about what they enjoy. Staff consult children about their play and activities; they select for themselves from the appropriate range of resources and take part in varied activities following the basic planning in place. Children show interest in the construction materials making various models of their choice, whilst others make paper planes and decorate them with their own designs. The holiday club incorporates trips out to places of interest using the Sure Start minibus to vary children's stay.

Staff in the main complete observations of the children's developmental achievements, which reflect the 'Birth to three matters' framework, however, due to the recent staff changes these are not consistently in place for all age groups.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued as individuals because of the positive staff approach to meeting their care needs. Children have equal access to play and stimulation without stereotyping. Staff in the main gather relevant information on the children's individual needs and care requirements. For example, staff in all areas have access to information regarding children's dietary needs. The baby routines followed at home and their individual care needs are discussed with parents initially and recorded, using a consistent system. However, similar systems in other rooms are not up to date due to the recent changes in staff. Good quality play materials and posters are available to represent positive images of diversity, such as play figures, books and puzzles, which reflect disability, race and culture. Children's understanding of the wider world is

developed effectively because they celebrate numerous festivals at different times of the year. They sample cultural foods and complete associated creative activities. The policy in place supports and welcomes children with learning difficulties or disabilities into the setting. Designated staff are appointed to support others in their care of children with additional needs, enabling them to have a full and active part in all activities. Where necessary individual educational programmes are developed, which involves close liaison with parents and outside agencies.

Children behave well and learn about appropriate behaviour through positive staff interaction and support. Minor incidents are approached calmly and methods of time out allow children opportunities to reflect on unacceptable behaviour they display. They receive consistent praise and encouragement from the staff for their efforts, attempts and achievements. For example, children have opportunities to display models they make from construction materials for others to see. Incentives for good behaviour or achievements are in place, such as the reward stickers they receive, which has a positive impact on their confidence and self-esteem. Children learn to play cooperatively as they share resources, take turns and are learning from a young age to cooperate and show consideration for others. This includes using their manners and apologising to others who are upset by their actions. Pre-school rules are displayed and children in the link club produce their own book of rules, therefore, children develop a positive understanding of acceptable behaviour.

Parents and carers are positively welcomed into the setting on arrival and collection of their child. Children in the main benefit from the exchange of information initially to enable staff to get to know the children and meet their needs accordingly. However, written parental consent for some aspects of care have not been consistently obtained, such as the seeking of necessary emergency medical advice or treatment and photographs. The parents receive verbal or written information about their child's day upon collection, depending on their age and stage of development. The detailed parent information pack and the display of useful information makes parents aware of the policies, procedures, the 'Birth to three matters' framework, and activities involving the children. Some parents have contributed to the children's developmental observations completed, as they record comments on the bottom of the forms used. Effective home links are developed in the main through the newsletter issued monthly and the questionnaires they are asked to complete periodically. Relationships are seen to be supportive and friendly and the open door policy encourages parents and carers to visit the nursery at any time. Parents comment that they are very happy with the care their children receive and value the support they receive, proving reassuring when they go to work. Password systems are agreed with some parents, which ensure safe collection of children by persons authorised. Parents are welcomed into the setting for introductory sessions, as part of the settling in procedures initially, which contribute to the positive transition from home to nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected because of the efficient systems in place for selecting, recruiting and the clearance of all staff. Staff files in the main contain relevant information and include clearance details, however, there are some inconsistencies in the detail held as not all files contain copies of qualifications and additional training they attend. Staff are aware that persons employed and going through clearance cannot have unsupervised access to children. Good ratios of qualified staff are employed to work with children on a daily basis and a number of staff are working towards recognised qualifications. Staff are committed to attending additional

training, which they recognise contributes to the further development of their knowledge and skill and benefits the children's learning. The delegated person appointed manages their attendance on local courses. The registered person who is also the manager undertakes regular monitoring of the provision and is committed to the continual development of the setting. She regularly shares the self-evaluation form with staff, which they contribute to by recording identified aspects of good practice, which they discuss and consider developments.

The written policies and procedures in place contain concise information relating to the nursery practices and procedures. These are dated, which reflect when they are reviewed or updated and contribute to the operational plan. All legally required documentation that contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being is in the main in place. However, there are inconsistencies in the completion of the daily attendance records to provide accurate information of staff and children present. A confidential approach is in place for the storage and completion of records, ensures only authorised persons have access.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

During the last inspection the provider was asked to expand the range of resources to promote children's awareness of disability, to amend documentation to ensure parents are given Ofsted contact details, child protection information and that the children's records are updated. Since the last inspection forms are now accessible for parents to inform the nursery of necessary changes to children's records and the information parents receive contain the Ofsted contact details and procedures regarding child protection, therefore, keeping parents informed of procedures and ensuring children's needs are met. A range of good quality play materials is now available for children to develop their awareness of disability, therefore, extending their understanding of the wider world.

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.

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 good. 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):

- review the procedures for the planning of activities to include reference to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and ensure consistent practices are followed for the completion of children's developmental progress records
- ensure consistent procedures are followed for the recording of children's individual needs and written parental consent is obtained for certain care aspects, such as, the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment
- ensure children and staff attendances are accurately recorded daily and staff files contain consistent information regarding their recruitment and training.

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