

Tiny Gems Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226992
Inspection date	11 September 2007
Inspector	Judith Chinnery
Setting Address	2 Ambassador Road, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE5 4DL
Telephone number	0116 2760504
E-mail	
Registered person	Sabera Khan
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 good. 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?

Tiny Gems Day Nursery has been open for over 10 years. It operates from a converted bungalow, situated close to the Uppingham Road and the Leicester General Hospital. Children are cared for in three group rooms and have use of a secure rear garden. Children are drawn from all over the Leicester area.

There are currently 32 children from birth to eight years on roll. This includes five children in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 until 17:30. Children can attend for a whole or half day or before and after school.

There are eight members of staff working full time with the children. All hold relevant childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children in this setting are developing a good understanding about health and healthy lifestyles. Thorough cleaning routines adhered to by the staff ensure that the likelihood of cross-infection amongst children is minimised. Routines for hand washing amongst staff and children are well established and help the children to learn about the importance of good hygiene. The staff keep detailed records of accidents and medication, as well as dietary needs, which ensures that children's personal needs are met effectively.

The children are well nourished and like to learn about healthy eating during meal times. Improved menus ensure that children receive plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables with their meals, as well as a choice of fruit at snack time. For example they can choose from apples, bananas, strawberries and other fruits. Most of the children can help themselves to fresh drinking water if they wish to, which ensures that they are unlikely to be thirsty.

Children really enjoy being active and outside in this setting. Staff provide a wide variety of activities which encourage them to be active. The large equipment, including a slide and swings enables the children to develop their large body skills to climb, jump and balance. The staff use some music and movement activities to encourage the children to jump, hop and dance around the room with enthusiasm.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well protected from harm and neglect in this setting. They are welcomed into well-maintained and safe premises where children's work and photographs are attractively displayed. Staff make full use of detailed policies and risk assessments to minimise hazards to children. They ensure that electric sockets are covered, there are no trailing leads and access to unsafe areas such as the laundry are prevented. This contributes to ensuring that children are kept safe. Staff are vigilant and manage the external exits well to ensure that unwanted visitors do not gain access to the children.

Children use resources and equipment which is well maintained and safe for use. Toys are chosen to promote children's development and learning effectively. Low tables and chairs ensure that young children can sit, eat and play safely.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures. Their procedures for managing any concerns are detailed and up to date and ensure that staff can manage any issues promptly. The staff are confident in their knowledge of the main signs of abuse as well as the need to record and report their concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children really enjoy being in this setting. They are happy and well-settled and form good relationships with staff because they listen to children and work closely with them. Young babies are learning to explore and investigate because there is a growing range of activities available for them to choose from. For example babies play with a variety of musical instruments

enjoying finding out what noise they make. Toddlers enjoy exploring the texture of the sand and investigating the water as they fill and empty containers. Children are becoming skilful communicators because staff talk with them, allow them time to respond and try out new words and phrases.

Opportunities to play and move freely amongst activities enable young children to play alongside each other; this helps them to build good relationships with their peers. They attempt to build simple models with different construction sets. Babies and toddlers enjoy mark making with crayons and paper, trying out the different colours and making circles. They are becoming competent learners as they explore and investigate play dough and build with construction sets, readily identifying common colours.

The staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to guide their planning and provision of suitable activities for the younger children. This ensures that children have access to activities which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. The staff record their observations of what the children do but are not yet using these to accurately identify their developmental progress and what they need to do next. This means that some children are less likely to progress to their full potential.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning for funded children is satisfactory. Children readily join circle times and other activities in the group. They are comfortable with the staff and each other because the staff listen to them and offer appropriate encouragement to join in. Children are usually willing to take turns and share resources because staff support them effectively. Staff are providing increasing opportunities for children to do things for themselves, such as pouring their own drinks at snack time, which promotes their independence. Staff are beginning to find out about children's starting points and make useful observations of what children can do which they use to chart children's progress through the early learning goals. Plans cover all six areas of learning and their different aspects. However, staff do not always use information from children's assessments to provide activities and set learning objectives which are based on what the children are interested in and need to do next. This means that children are less likely to progress to their full potential.

The staff have a general knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones, which they are starting to use to plan appropriate activities such as opportunities for children to invent their own roles in the home corner and jewellery shop. They are beginning to ask some questions which encourage children to speak and think for themselves. The staff make appropriate use of the daily circle time to give children opportunities to talk about home and happenings in the setting. Children are starting to develop some interest in books because there are stories available in the room and staff read to them and encourage them to talk about what they see in the pictures. The children are beginning to grasp some mathematical skills as they count each other and use flash cards in circle time. Staff are also developing opportunities for children to start to solve simple problems in some every day activities such as sharing out the cups at snack time.

Children willingly persevere in finding out how some of the electronic toys work such as what happens when you pull the lever in the pinball machine. Children sometimes join and fit things together but weaknesses in planning and staff's understanding mean that children's opportunity to experiment and design freely for themselves is not well promoted. The children are gaining some insight into their own and others cultures when they explore different foods when they

celebrate relevant festivals. Children's fine hand skills are improving because they are able to use scissors and cutlery, they also have access to some other more limited resources, such as threading cards, to encourage them to make more intricate movements with their hands. While the children are able to use collage, stick with glue and use paint this is often in an adult-led activity which means that they are less able to explore and create their own art works for themselves. They sometimes move in time to different styles of music and are learning a variety of songs with actions. Many of the focused activities, which staff lead, identify some learning objectives and new words for children to explore and use. However, because of weaknesses in staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage they sometimes fail to follow these through appropriately. Staff rely heavily on adult-directed activities to promote children's learning rather than allowing children to explore and experiment for themselves, which affects children's ability to make good progress in a number of areas including mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children love to join in and play a productive part in the setting. Staff form good relationships with parents and support them sensitively in caring for their children, such as offering advice and information about toilet training. Children's personal needs are met because staff use information from parents about their likes and dislikes as well as what they can do. The close partnerships with parents enable staff to care effectively for individual children, helping them to develop a good sense of security and belonging in the setting.

Staff promote equality of opportunity amongst the children well. They ensure that all children are included in the life of the setting and adapt activities according to need and ability. Children have a growing respect for themselves and others because they take part in activities such as dressing up using different clothes and jewellery. The celebration of various community festivals, such as Eid, Diwali and Christmas, also supports children's understanding and learning about their own and others beliefs and cultures. Children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is fostered. This is seen in their understanding of other's cultures and beliefs and good behaviour.

The children behave well in the setting because staff set clear boundaries and give simple and easily understood explanations. Younger children respond positively if staff have to intervene during minor squabbles over toys, while older children settle most disputes amiably between themselves.

Partnership with parents for funded children is satisfactory. Parents receive appropriate information about the educational provision which details the areas of learning and what they can expect to see in the setting. Staff are beginning to collect some useful information from parents about what their child can do when they first start at the setting but are not yet fully sharing information about children's progress with them. Parents are able to contribute comments to the activity ideas which children take home to support a particular area of learning which helps them to become involved meaningfully in their own child's learning. However, this is not always linked to what children are interested in or need to do next.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The care of children in the setting is well organised and managed by an owner and manager who ably lead a committed staff team. Their work towards achieving an accreditation mark has enabled them to plan for and implement effective improvements in both policies and practice. All staff have a clear sense of purpose in a setting where continuous improvement is encouraged and fostered. All staff readily access training and are keen to bring back what they have learnt so that the provision for all children is enhanced.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children are protected and well-cared for by staff who are suitably qualified. The staff work closely with the children offering support, where needed, to small groups or individuals. This means that children are well supported in their care, learning and play. The setting's operational plan, policies and procedures are comprehensive and well thought out. The staff make time to review these regularly and ensure that they know them well. They clearly work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and ability to make a positive contribution.

Leadership and management for nursery education is satisfactory. There are appropriate systems in place through annual staff appraisals to enable the manager to identify individual strengths and weaknesses and target some training. However, the setting relies heavily on local authority support from mentor teachers and others to guide and lead developments and improvements in their provision for the Foundation Stage. The manager has a general knowledge of the stepping stones and is supportive of the staff as they implement suggestions made by their mentors. There are few effective systems in place to enable the setting and its managers to monitor and evaluate the education provision for themselves or to direct and lead any ensuing improvements.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last nursery education inspection in November 2002 the setting was asked to make improvements to their planning and assessment systems, the provision for children's mathematics and creative development and the methods used to teach the children.

Since that inspection the setting has made some improvements. Some activity plans detail what the children are expected to learn and staff are starting to understand the need for planning information to be taken from the assessment of children's progress. This means that children's ability to progress and develop is improving and starting to be supported. The staff now have a better understanding of the stepping stones for mathematics and are beginning to plan suitable activities. This means that children's understanding of space, shape, measure and problem solving is beginning to improve. While much of the art and craft activity continues to be adult led, children have an increased access to role play activities which means they are beginning to be able to express their ideas and use their imagination more.

At the last care inspection in April 2004 the setting was asked to ensure that the laundry was made inaccessible to the children. They were also asked to make improvements to the provision of care, learning and play opportunities offered to all children as well as aspects of fire safety and child protection.

Since that inspection the setting has started to implement and use the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This has enabled the staff to plan and provide a more suitable range of activities

and resources. This means that children's overall development is better promoted and they are all able to access more appropriate resources which challenge and stimulate their learning. The setting has developed and implemented appropriate procedures for evacuating the building in case of emergency and has ensured that all staff receive training in child protection guidelines and procedures. This means that children are now better protected and safeguarded in the setting.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 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 any 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 the assessment of children's progress to ensure that it is used to fully inform the planning of activities which are based on children's interests and what they need to do next and which ensures that individual children are challenged to move on and make progress (this also applies to nursery education).

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 staff's knowledge of the foundation stage and the stepping stones to ensure that methods used to teach the children meet their needs and provide a better balance between adult and child-led activities
- ensure that parents are fully informed about their children's progress and are able to share what they know about their child to support their learning
- develop systems for monitoring and evaluating the educational provision so that children's progress can continually be improved.

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