

# Tenacres Little Folk Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	205353
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Lynn Williams
<b>Setting Address</b>	Quibery Close, Winyates East, Redditch, Worcs, B98 0PB
<b>Telephone number</b>	Mob 07967 510549
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Tenacres Little Folk Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Tenacres Little Folk Playgroup opened in 1979. It operates from two rooms within an outreach children's centre attached to Tenacres First School in the Winyates area of Redditch. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09:00 to 15:15 during term time only. All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 33 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 28 children receive funding for early education. This includes funded two-year-olds. Children attend from the local area and for a variety of sessions.

The playgroup employs a total of eight members of staff who attend on a rota basis. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from a local authority mentor teacher and forms part of a local area children's centre which offers children under five and their families access to information, advice and professional services.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well planned daily routines and positive support. They show a clear understanding of how to keep themselves healthy through such things as regularly washing their hands, learning to wipe their noses and putting the used tissue in the bin. Good toilet and hand washing facilities allow children to gain independence in their self-care from an early age and children also show they are learning to recognise when they are tired and where to go to rest. Staff follow clear hygiene routines throughout the playgroup and toys and playthings are regularly cleaned. Children's health and medication needs are clearly recorded and staff trained in first aid are always present to ensure that minor accidents are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner.

Children thoroughly enjoy the outside areas where they learn to develop positive attitudes to the importance of gaining lots of fresh air and exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. They make the most of the secure courtyard area outside their learning room and this allows children to often move freely from inside to outside as part of their play. For example, children make wide use of sand and water play in the courtyard, as well as enjoying bikes and push along rides. Three and four-year-olds use the physical play facilities with real enjoyment and have good control over their bodies. They develop confidence as they move in different ways and enjoy the freedom to practise moving creatively. They learn to skip and march during movement and music sessions and practice jumping and forward rolls on mats. Daily use of a climbing frame, bikes and push along rides ensure they develop strong skills in climbing, sliding and pedalling. Children are quick to make room for each other at the sand tray or when sitting together at story time and show a keen sense of personal space as they peddle their bikes skilfully, so that they do not bump into their friends. Paint, dough, construction and drawing tools help them to develop good hand and finger control and they show they are learning to understand what happens to their bodies when they are active. For example, they recognise when they are out of breath after running and know to help themselves to water when they are thirsty.

Children are helped to enjoy their food and are beginning to understand why some foods are healthier than others. They sit sociably for snacks and lunch, help to hand out snacks to their friends and independently get drinks from a water cooler. Morning and afternoon snacks are provided by the playgroup and these include a nutritional balance of such things as toast and fruit. There is a clear diet policy which highlights how staff provide fresh wholesome ingredients and how these are monitored to ensure that they do not contain high quantities of fat, sugar, salt or additives. Parents provide packed lunches for their children and staff have worked closely with them to encourage healthy eating. Mealtimes play an important part in the social life of the playgroup and are used effectively to reinforce children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating. They sit together in small groups to enjoy their food and each other's company, talk about the "good food" they have in their lunch boxes and learn to cope with opening packages and drinks cartons in readiness for school.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a light, airy and spacious environment where indoor and outdoor space is organised effectively and they can learn, explore and develop safely and with close adult support. Toys are attractively laid out to allow children to easily choose what they want to play

with and colourful displays are used effectively to welcome children into the group. There is a high ratio of adults to the number of children present and staff are carefully deployed, alert to children's safety needs and provide good levels of supervision. Although the premises have recently been refurbished to offer a high standard of accommodation and facilities, the intrusion of the fire alarm system linked into the school bell is intrusive and is not conducive to helping young children settle and feel comfortable with their surroundings.

Children play safely because staff have a clear understanding about safety issues and accident prevention. All potential risks to children have been assessed and minimised and staff provide a safe environment for children to learn to challenge themselves. For example, safety mats are placed around the climbing frame and only small numbers of children can use the equipment at any one time to ensure their safety. Daily safety checks are carried out on the building and play equipment and arrival and collection times are carefully organised to ensure children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Staff are proactive in helping children to assess their own safety and to learn to use equipment and resources safely. For example, children know why it is important not to run in the room and how to use scissors safely. They know what to do if they need to evacuate the setting in an emergency because they have discussed and practised the routine with staff.

Staff have a good understanding of how to protect children and recognise that this is their first priority. They are vigilant, aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child. A clear child protection policy has been developed and this is shared with parents so that they know what action will be taken if staff have concerns about a child in their care.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Warm caring relationships between adults and children are evident. A key worker system is used effectively to gain information about young children's starting points, individual routines, needs and preferences and provides a continuity of care that ensures children feel secure and nurtured. A wide variety of interesting and stimulating activities are planned under the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum and these support children's development and learning and help them to make good progress. Two-year-olds play alongside three and four-year-olds and enjoy watching and learning from their older friends. They join in with most of the activities on offer, choose what they want to do and are encouraged to experiment with sand, water, pasta and corn silk. There are lots of different tactile materials for them to use, such as scrunched-up tissue and this stimulates their senses and helps them to explore, using their natural curiosity. Young children's individual abilities and level of concentration is well considered and they are grouped separately for some activities, such as story times. This ensures younger children benefit from small intimate groups, while older children can extend their knowledge and develop more advanced story telling skills. As a result, story times are pleasurable experiences for all of the children attending.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from good teaching and this ensures they enjoy and achieve. A range of quality learning experiences are offered which are structured, offer a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities and provide first hand, positive experiences. These help children to develop confidence and become motivated to learn. Planning shows a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and shows how

children will make progress towards the early learning goals. Well designed topics and themes are used effectively alongside focused activities to promote specific areas of the curriculum or to help individual children to extend or refine their skills. Staff complete regular observations and assessments of children's learning and development and these are used effectively to plan children's next steps and set new challenges. Staff form close relationships with the children and are attentive and responsive. They give clear explanations, work well with the children and consistently and positively talk to them. As a result, children are fully involved and learning.

Staff develop children's personal, social and emotional development well, using it to underpin the rest of the learning. Three-year-olds are confident, self-assured and often show excitement and pleasure as they play and learn. They are quick to share their ideas, what they know and what they can do. Staff set good examples and use careful explanation to help children to understand the rules of the group and this results in children working together harmoniously and learning to share and take turns. Children's self-care and independence is supported extremely well as they learn to put on their own aprons for painting, help themselves to drinks and self-select their playthings.

Children are developing generally well in the area of communication, language and literacy. They are confident speakers who express themselves freely at circle times and during activities. They enjoy a variety of good quality story and reference books and story times are provided in different and interesting ways to encourage children to listen, talk about what is happening and to develop their own views on what might happen next. A simple phonic system helps children to link sounds to letters and they enjoy listening to the rhyming sounds of different words. Older children have some opportunities to recognise their own name, although this is less well developed for the younger three-year-olds attending and there is limited use of labels, signs and symbols to help children recognise that words have real meaning. As a result children are not progressing fully in this area. Children make marks in dough, paint and sand and writing pads and pencils are freely available so that children can use their emergent writing skills during their imaginary games.

Children show positive attitudes to mathematics as they count, match and sort. Counting and number recognition is threaded through most activities. For example, they count the number of hats in a picture book and how many children are waiting to go outside. Some numbers are displayed around their learning room and a good range of mathematical resources and number rhymes are used to help children learn to understand how numbers change when one or more is added. Children regularly measure, match and sort as they play and they show a good understanding of shape and how to link these to familiar objects, such as acorns.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good. They have regular opportunities to investigate, explore and use their senses through such things as sand, dried pasta and corn-silk and carry out simple experiments, such as finding out which things float and sink. They learn about the natural environment as they look at and record seasonal changes on a weather board and enjoy looking closely at the leaves, cones and acorns on the nature table. A good variety of different shaped and sized construction sets are provided and children use these with skill, freely building towers or houses. They enjoy using simple, everyday technology, such as CD players and karaoke machines and show confidence in freely choosing which CD to listen to and in singing along using the microphone. Programmable toys create great excitement and the setting has recently purchased a laptop computer which the children are learning to use.

Children's creativity is well supported and they express themselves freely through paint, drawing, music and imaginary play. They make up their own games and stories during small world play and act out familiar roles in the home corner. Music is used widely throughout the setting for such things as helping children to know when it is time to tidy away their toys and they show excitement and real enthusiasm when joining in with musical games and music and movement sessions. They regularly experiment with musical instruments, listen to the different sounds and rhythms and sing loudly during their favourite songs and action rhymes.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children show a strong sense of belonging at the setting. Their individuality is valued and staff help children feel good about themselves by frequently providing positive support, praise and encouragement to help build children's self-esteem. Good settling arrangements and an effective key worker system benefit children, helping them to adjust to new experiences and to feel emotionally secure, although the regular sounding of the school bell often unsettles the youngest children in the group. Staff are quick to tell children about what is kind and not and to acknowledge when children are being good, achieving and helpful. They consistently and sensitively enforce behaviour rules, give clear instructions and praise. As a result, children behave well and learn to share and work together harmoniously.

Children broaden their experiences through well developed learning activities that help them to learn about themselves and the lives of other people. For example, they eagerly share their news about their family lives and compare these with the experiences of their friends. They use a variety of toys and playthings which reflect a diverse society and often act out their home lives and familiar situations in the home corner. Children share their own cultural festivals with the other children at the setting, such as Christmas and Easter and other special days are also celebrated including Chinese New Year. This helps children to develop positive attitudes to the their own cultures and those of other people. Staff work closely with parents to understand children's needs and plan ahead to provide additional support for children when necessary. An effective Special Educational Needs Coordinator helps ensure that each child's needs are met fully and staff show a strong commitment to liaising with other relevant professionals when necessary. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are welcomed into the group and are encouraged to be involved in both the running of the setting and in their children's learning and progress. They are kept well informed and are encouraged to talk freely to staff and key workers on a daily basis. Parents know that they can ask to see the observations and assessments made of their children's learning and progress at any time and parents of three and four-year-olds meet with staff to discuss their child's progress prior to them moving on to school. Regular newsletters provide additional information, reminders and details of the educational programme being offered. New ways of involving parents are continually being developed and the group has recently introduced a book lending scheme so that children can take home books to share with their parents at home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care is supported by enthusiastic staff and strong management. It is run by a parental committee and operates within buildings attached to a first school that has recently been

designated as a local area Children's Centre. Time and space are used effectively and there are high staffing levels. An effective key worker system helps staff to get to know the children in their care well and they show a shared commitment to providing good quality care. Management and staff work together to ensure operational issues are regularly reviewed and amended when necessary and good recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure children are well protected and cared for by qualified and knowledgeable staff.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good.

The setting is run by well qualified supervisors who guide and oversee the care and education being offered. Regular key worker and staff meetings are held to ensure all staff are fully involved in the assessment of children's progress and the curriculum planning processes and this ensures that clear aims for children's care and education are set. The group has an active parent committee who meet regularly to discuss management issues, such as resources and forthcoming training needs, as well as acting as a sounding board for parents. As a result, there is a commitment to making improvements and ongoing staff development and this is reflected in the progress made since the last inspection. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and there is a strong shared purpose and collaborative approach which has a very positive effect on children's progress. Close links are made with other early years professionals, including the school teaching staff, in order to share good practice and to make strong links that will benefit the children. Parental views are sought and good levels of commitment are shown by management and staff who work closely together to focus on ensuring children make good progress in all areas of their learning.

A well-considered and organised operational plan is in place which includes the documentation policies and records needed to ensure children's health, safety and well-being are carefully considered. Day-to-day records and documents are kept close to hand so that all staff can easily update them and gain appropriate signatures from parents. Overall the children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to review ways of enabling staff to be more proactive in managing children's behaviour, provide more opportunities for children to explore diversity through their play and to review the child protection procedure.

Good progress has been made since the last inspection as a result of an effective action plan being developed and staff making positive steps to improve the care and education for the children in their care. Staff deployment has been reviewed and a member of staff identified each day to watch children as they play and therefore be more pro-active in quickly identifying possible behaviour issues over such things as sharing. This ensures staff are able to quickly intervene and help children to resolve their differences and learn the importance of compromise. Children also now have greater opportunities to explore diversity through their play. Imaginary play resources and reference and story books are now used more effectively to reflect a multi-cultural society and additional playthings, such as dressing-up clothes encourage children to discuss and compare the way different people live and the things they believe in. Children's overall well-being is now fully safeguarded as a result of improved child protection procedures. Guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children's Board has been obtained and is freely available to staff and the setting's child protection policy has also been reviewed and amended to ensure that it is fully up to date and provides clear advice to staff on how to ensure that best practice is followed.

## Nursery Education.

The setting also agreed to develop methods of involving parents in their children's learning and to provide more opportunities for children to give meaning to their mark-making and develop and understanding of everyday technology.

Parents now have opportunities to share what they know about their children as they discuss and complete record forms with their child's key worker. Newsletters are used effectively to inform parents about the activities and topics their children will be learning through and new initiatives have been recently introduced to encourage fathers to help in teaching their children to play football and to encourage parents to take home books from the setting to share with their children. Children now have greater opportunities to make marks for their own purposes during their play, with writing pads and pencils kept in easy reach to encourage children to make lists, jot down notes and take telephone messages as part of their imaginary play. Opportunities for children to use everyday technology in their play have also been improved following the purchase of new equipment and playthings. Children now enjoy learning to use a variety of programmable toys, CD players and karaoke machines and show skill in using these. The group have also recently purchased a laptop computer which will be used by the children to aid their mathematical and language development

### 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 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 good.

### 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):

- ensure the premises are welcoming and help young children feel secure. This relates to the sounding of the school bell.

#### 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):

- further develop the use of labels, signs and symbols to help children begin to recognise their own names and to understand that words have real meaning.



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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)