

Tydd St Mary Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253630
Inspection date	12 July 2007
Inspector	Melanie Calway
Setting Address	Trafford Room, Common Way, Tydd St Mary, Lincolnshire, PE13 5QY
Telephone number	01945 420331
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Registered person	Tydd St Mary Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Tydd St. Mary Playgroup was first established over 30 years ago. It operates from one room in the old village school building, 'The Trafford Room', in the village of Tydd St. Mary, near to the town of Wisbech. A maximum of 18 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 11.45 during school term times. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 24 children aged from two to under five on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the village and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs four members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications. They are supported by a teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because there are satisfactory hygiene procedures in place. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, and so are learning about good hygiene through the daily routine. Children's independence is encouraged as a step stool is provided for them in the bathroom and individual paper towels in a dispenser. However, children share water to wash their hands and this could increase the risk of cross-infection. Staff clean the premises after every session and once a term all equipment is cleaned thoroughly.

Children's medical needs are met as all staff are trained in first aid qualification and a first aid kit is kept so that minor accidents and injuries can be dealt with appropriately. An accurate record of all accidents is maintained. There is a system for recording the administration of medicines and information about children's medical needs is obtained on the registration forms. Consent has been obtained from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice so that help can be sought in the event of an emergency. Children are protected from the risk of infection as there are clear procedures on not accepting children with infectious conditions and parents are advised of this in the brochure. Children are able to rest if they need to on cushions in the book corner. Children have opportunities to play outside on most days. However, this is not usually until near the end of the session, giving children little physical outlet earlier on. Some form of physical play is available on most sessions but children are not always able to access this when they need to. Children move about the room with control and confidence. Outside they can ride tricycles and scooters. On some sessions they can use the climbing frame or join in with action songs. Inside, they develop fine manipulative skills as they use scissors, sand tools, pencils and paint brushes.

Children are well nourished. A healthy snack of toast and spreads or bread sticks and fresh fruit is offered. Fresh drinking water is available at all times. Children's independence is promoted as they help to pour drinks for each other at snack time. Children's dietary needs are met as all the relevant information is obtained on their forms and children are given choices about what they eat.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises which are safe and suitable. The premises are secure as the door is locked when children are present and is supervised at arrival and departure times. The environment is made welcoming as there are bright displays on the walls and a good range of appropriate activities set out for the children. Children can access resources for themselves and toys and equipment are of good quality and are checked for safety.

Children are kept safe as staff carry out daily checks to ensure that the environment is free from hazards, and a more detailed risk assessment is carried out every term to identify and minimise any possible risks. Staff are well deployed and supervise children at all times. Children do not access the kitchen. Children begin to develop an awareness of safety issues because explanations are given, for example, children are asked to think about what might happen if they run inside. There are procedures in place for outings to ensure that children are kept safe. Children are protected from the risk of fire as the evacuation procedure is displayed, smoke

alarms are tested and fire drills carried out at regular intervals, so that staff and children know what to do in the event of a fire.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as all the staff have completed child protection training and are aware of their duty to refer any concerns. Information about child protection is kept in the group in case there is a need to refer to it.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the setting enthusiastically and settle quickly to a good range of appropriate activities such as home corner, sand, books, computer, puzzles, and painting and drawing. In the first half of the session children are able to choose freely what they want to play with. Staff are positioned at activities and welcome children, who show affection to staff and bring items from home connected with the current theme of dinosaurs. Most of the resources are easily accessible to the children and they can ask for any additional items they might need. Staff engage children in conversation and listen to them, showing a genuine interest in their contributions. As a result children are confident in approaching staff and sharing their experiences. Children are developing independence as they use the toilet, fetch chairs for themselves and help to pour the drinks at snack time. The children all sit down together for a snack in the second half of the morning. They are given responsibilities and enjoy helping to serve each other with drinks. However the organisation of snack time does not fully promote children's choice or independence as children sit together in a large group and are involved in large group activities directed by adults for some time. The routine also means that time for outdoor play is limited and children are not able to choose whether to play outside. Children under three receive appropriate care and play experiences, particularly during the free play session. The group are using the 'Birth to Three matters' framework pack to ensure that the needs of children under three are met.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan activities to cover the six areas of learning. Staff contribute ideas to the planning process and the plans are displayed in the play room for the benefit of parents and staff. Plans are organised around topics and include clear learning intentions and the language to be used so that staff know what they are aiming for.

Children are interested in the activities provided, particularly during the first half of the session, and are motivated to learn. Several children bring in items such as books, posters, fossils or toy dinosaurs to show the others as part of the current topic. Children concentrate well on self-chosen activities and play co-operatively together. A puppet theatre activity is used effectively to enable children to talk about and recognise their emotions. Children communicate confidently with each other and with adults, sharing their ideas and experiences. Children are recognising print as they choose their names to self-register and as labels are used around the room. They have free access to writing and drawing materials and some are able to write their names. Children enjoy listening to stories in large and small groups and have access to non-fiction books. Children are given opportunities to count as they sing number rhymes and as they count care bears. Staff help them with simple calculations as they add or subtract from a group of objects. Children recognise numerals, saying 'That's the same as that one'.

Children are learning about the world around them as they talk about and name dinosaurs. Non-fiction books are used to discuss dinosaur bones and why we all need bones in our bodies. Children can explore and investigate as they play in the sand. They have opportunities to use a computer and operate simple programmes. Children are able to express themselves as they use their imaginations in the home corner or with small world play. They can use different media such as drawing, paint or collage to make their pictures. However stencils and pre-drawn sheets are often used which do not fully encourage children's own creativity and displays of children's work are adult-inspired.

Adults support children's learning through the use of sensitive and open ended questioning. Key workers make regular observations of children which are put in their records. They use an assessment sheet to identify any gaps or the next steps for children's learning. Key workers know their children well and know their stage of development so they are able to work on areas to help them to progress in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met as relevant information is obtained from parents on their registration forms. Staff know children well and are therefore able to meet their needs. The key worker system is effective in enabling staff to get to know the stage of development of their key children. Children are beginning to learn about the wider world as resources reflect other cultures and lifestyles, and displays around the room show positive images of other cultures. Children have opportunities to celebrate festivals from other cultures such as Chinese New Year or Diwali. Children are given appropriate support. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and fully integrated in the setting. The supervisor liaises with parents and other agencies to ensure that children make good progress and individual education plans are used to good effect to help children to progress. Children behave well in the setting. They are forming positive relationships with staff and with each other and are able to play together co-operatively. Staff help children to negotiate and encourage them to take turns and share resources. Children develop confidence and self-esteem as they are given praise for their achievements and for showing kindness to each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are learning to recognise their own needs and the needs of each other, and are learning to respect other cultures through planned topics.

Children are cared for effectively because there is a friendly relationship with the parents who are made to feel welcome in the setting. Parents come in and chat to staff at arrival and collection times and some stay for the session to help their children to settle in. Parents are given information on the complaints procedure in the brochure, including the address and number of the regulator. The complaints record has been set up in line with regulations but the complaints policy does not reflect the new requirements regarding complaints.

The partnership with the parents of the funded children is satisfactory. Parents are provided with information on the Foundation Stage in the brochure and plans are displayed in the play room. Parents help children to bring in items related to the topic. They have opportunities to share their children's records with staff during special appointments which are made twice yearly. They are also advised that they can see their children's records when they want to. However, there is no system in place to encourage parents to share their children's records on a more regular basis or to contribute to them. Staff use observation to get to know children

but there is no system to ascertain from parents children's starting points to enable children to make as much progress as they can.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by experienced and qualified staff. The supervisor and the deputy have an early years qualification and the two assistants are planning to take up training. All staff attend regular workshops on relevant topics to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to care for children. All staff undergo the necessary vetting process to ensure that they are suitable to work with children, and the committee are checked to ensure that they are suitable to provide day care.

The premises are well organised to ensure children's safety and well-being and to give them a range of interesting play activities. The key worker system enables staff to get to know the children well and to meet their needs. An accurate record of children's hours of attendance is kept.

All of the required documentation is in place. The operational plan is well ordered and ensures the smooth operation of the setting. Policies and procedures cover most aspects of the service and are reviewed regularly. Paperwork is kept in an orderly fashion and with due regard to confidentiality. Overall, children's are met.

The leadership and management of the funded children is good. Staff are encouraged to take up any relevant training and are well supported through annual appraisals. The staff team works well together, and regular staff meetings are held as well as informal discussions to evaluate activities and adapt plans to meet the needs of individual children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure all medicines given to children are recorded in the medicine book and entries are countersigned by parents. All medicines given to children are recorded and parents now countersign the entry. For nursery Education they were asked to display areas within the main room for children's own work. There are some bright and attractive displays of children's work although some of it is adult-inspired. They were asked to identify more clearly how activities will be differentiated to meet individual ages and stages of development. Plans now show how activities can be adapted for different children.

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 the procedures for hand washing to minimise the risk of cross-infection
- review the routine and organisation of snack time to allow greater opportunities for outdoor play and to further develop children's choice and independence
- revise the complaints policy to ensure that it reflects current regulations.

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 children's creativity by encouraging their free drawing and painting and ensure that displays include examples of children's own creative work
- develop assessments to ascertain children's starting points, enable parents to share their children's records on a more regular basis and contribute to them so they become active partners in their children's learning.

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