

Tot Stop Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220158
Inspection date	02 October 2007
Inspector	Kelly Eyre
Setting Address	5 Harrowden Road, Brackmills Industrial Estate, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN4 7EB
Telephone number	01604 674600
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Registered person	Nurtury (Northants) Ltd.
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Tot Stop Day Nursery is run by Nurtury (Northants) Limited. It opened in 2000 and operates from three main areas in a converted building. It is situated on the Brackmills Industrial Estate in Northampton. A maximum of 65 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 all year round. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 66 children aged from three months to under eight years on roll. Of these, 20 children receive funding for early education. The setting serves the local and neighbouring communities. It is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 17 members of staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications and the remainder are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted because there are good daily hygiene practices in place which help prevent the spread of infection, for example, children and adults change their shoes as they enter the setting and children wash their hands before snack and meal times. Children are developing a clear understanding of the relevance of these practices because they are given explanations by staff. Children's health in an emergency situation is very well promoted because all members of staff hold an appropriate first aid qualification. All records and policies are in place to further support children's health, for example, there are thorough procedures for the administration of medication and guidance regarding the exclusion of children who are unwell.

Children's special requirements with regard to health and diet are clearly documented and observed. All preferences and special diets are well catered for and there is a clear system for identifying babies' feeds. Children's growth and development are well promoted because they are offered healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. These are prepared daily on the premises, with weekly menus prepared in advance and displayed for parents to see. These contain a balanced range of fresh ingredients and all food types. This area is further enhanced as the setting has a 'Healthy Eating' award. Snack and meal times are seen as additional learning opportunities, with children and staff sitting together and discussing various subjects. Babies and young children are encouraged to feed themselves and staff are vigilant, ensuring that children's independence is promoted but they are also eating sufficient quantities. Children are gaining a good understanding of where food comes from as they have grown their own vegetables in the nursery garden and regularly help with shopping.

Children's health and development are promoted because they enjoy a wide variety of physical activities. They develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills and co-ordination as they participate in structured activities such as obstacle courses, music and movement sessions and action rhymes. For example, young children participating in a music and movement session wave their arms, wriggle their bodies, clap hands, jump and stretch up and down. Children regularly access the outdoor play areas where they use equipment such as ride-on toys, tunnels, balance beams, a slide and climbing apparatus.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where there are colourful displays and resources are well-organised and generally accessible. Their ongoing safety is effectively promoted because staff have a sound understanding of this area. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised frequently so that children and staff become familiar with these. There are also clear procedures regarding the arrival and collection of children, ensuring that they are always supervised and are only collected by the correct person. However, children's safety is affected because they are able to access a trailing electrical lead, an unreeled hose pipe and a broken fence post in the outdoor play area. Children are developing their understanding about keeping themselves safe because they discuss these issues with staff. They have also had visits from the fire brigade and have accessed resources to promote their understanding of fire safety.

Children are able to select toys and activities from a wide range of resources. These are sorted into appropriate categories and the majority of storage containers are labelled so that children are able to see what is available and make choices about their play. Their welfare is effectively promoted as staff have a sound understanding of child protection procedures. They have attended additional training and have appropriate paperwork in place to identify, record and report any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and secure. They separate well from their parent's and carer's and are keen to play and explore the resources and activities. Their care and daily experiences are enhanced by staff who are very kind and caring. They help the children to feel valued and welcome by showing them that they genuinely appreciate their company, joining in with their play and discussions and taking time to get to know each child. This creates a positive, caring environment where children play happily and are consistently offered appropriate support and encouragement in their activities. For example, a young child explores a shape puzzle and is then supported in learning how to put the pieces in and is encouraged to name the shapes as they are placed on the board.

Babies and new children settle well and build secure, trusting relationships with staff. This is enhanced as staff make sure that they are aware of children's normal routines, keeping to these as much as possible, for example, babies sleep according to their need and in accordance with parents' wishes. Children's individual development is promoted because staff have a good understanding of child development and are skilled in their interactions with children. For example, a member of staff reading a book maintains children's interest and makes them laugh by making the noises of the animals illustrated. Babies and young children consistently receive appropriate individual attention which enables them to feel secure and further promotes their development. For example, a member of staff encourages a young child to stand, making the child giggle by playing 'boo' whilst supporting them.

The thoughtful planning of activities for all age groups ensures that children are offered a wide variety of play opportunities which are closely linked to their individual developmental stages. Staff have a thorough understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They use this confidently to inform their activity planning for younger children, ensuring that their play is fun, purposeful and stimulating. Children make balanced progress in all areas because staff use comprehensive assessment methods throughout the child's time at the setting. These ensure that any strengths or areas for further development are highlighted and fed into future activity planning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use appropriate teaching methods, ensuring that children are offered opportunities which enable them to make good progress in all areas of learning. Children's progress is well balanced because staff carry out regular assessments, using these to write comprehensive monthly reviews and to plan the next steps for each child.

Children's confidence in playing and exploring is promoted because they are offered a wide variety of familiar activities and play resources. These include role play, construction, reading, sand and water play, and a wide range of crafts. Their knowledge is then further extended as

they participate in a range of themed topics which are changed each week. This enables them to look more closely at subjects such as 'shapes', 'food From around the world' and 'Autumn and Harvest'.

Children's play is extended because staff are skilled in continuously assessing them. For example, a small group of children engaged in role play are allowed ample time to explore and develop their play before a staff member extends this by suggesting that they find a table to set for dinner or use a rug for a picnic. Children thoroughly enjoy setting this up and continue to extend the scenario they have created. The flexible approach to planning ensures that children are able to determine their play and staff are able to maximise daily learning opportunities. For example, during an activity to explore shells, children talk about crabs, and the staff member adapts the activity to accommodate this, using the computer to help children access further information.

The environment within the setting provides children with good opportunities to develop the attitudes and dispositions that enable them to achieve in their learning. They are motivated to learn through stimulating and interesting activities. For example, whilst covering a topic of 'food from around the world', children participate in an activity to make pizzas, where they have animated discussions about the ingredients and toppings, proudly showing off their cooked pizzas and sitting together to eat these. Children confidently use language to communicate their ideas. They interact well with others, negotiating play and taking turns in conversations. For example, children in the role play area decide which character they will play and the scenario they are going to act out. They show a keen interest in books and handle them carefully. They enjoy reading independently and in small groups. They are beginning to use writing as a means of communication but their understanding of this area is not fully promoted as staff miss some opportunities to encourage this.

Children are beginning to use numbers in a meaningful context and understand that numbers represent sets of objects. For example, children playing board games correctly count the number of dots on the dice and put in wooden pegs accordingly, while older children also identify written numerals. Children have a good understanding of mathematical concepts and use these in their daily play. For example, a child playing in the role play area shares out the pretend food, carefully counting each piece, calculating how many pieces each child has and then adding or taking away pieces so that all end up with an equal number. Children have daily opportunities to observe, explore and question in a variety of activities that form the foundation of their learning in subjects such as history, geography, science and technology. For example, they have grown flowers and vegetables, noting what these need in order to survive and flourish. They regularly use information and communication technology equipment. An example of this is a digital camera which they take out with them on walks, uploading and printing the photographs when they return to the setting.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that help them develop their confidence and skills, for example, they enjoy music and movement sessions and obstacle courses, and make good use of the outdoor area where they pedal tricycles, dig, crawl through tunnels and balance on the tyres. They enjoy a wide variety of opportunities to explore colour, texture and shape through activities such as painting, collage-making, sand and water play and playing with play dough. Their imagination is encouraged through a variety of activities and the use of a range of resources. For example, children transformed a small ornamental wooden bridge in the outdoor play area into a canoe, sitting one behind the other and using oars to pretend to paddle the boat.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected as individuals and their contributions are valued, helping them to develop a positive self-image. This is further enhanced because staff praise both their efforts and achievements, promoting children's confidence and self-esteem. Children are encouraged to express their views and needs but also to value the views and opinions of others. For example, three children building with a construction set show an interest in each other's models, talk about what they are doing and help each other to find relevant pieces. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities have their individual requirements recognised and consistently met. Staff are experienced and work consistently and sensitively with children and parents. Children's individual plans are reviewed on a regular basis, ensuring the balanced promotion of their development. The good levels of staff support and interaction ensure that children are able to participate meaningfully in all activities and daily routines.

Children are gaining a good awareness of other cultures and ways of life through discussions, topic work and daily access to a range of resources which promote positive images and provide information. Their awareness of their closer community is enhanced through the use of local facilities such as shops and walks and through visitors to the setting, including the fire brigade, music teachers and an African music specialist. Children's behaviour is good throughout the sessions. The good role modelling and clear guidance from staff help children to build up their understanding of right and wrong. They are gaining a good understanding about taking responsibility for their own actions because staff give them clear explanations, enabling them to understand their behaviour and make decisions about this. They show care and concern for each other, for example, children often stop their play to give each other cuddles. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given comprehensive information about the group's policies and practice, ensuring that they are aware of daily procedures and expectations. Staff make good use of letters and notice boards to ensure that parents receive information about current activities, topics and events. They are given information about the Foundation Stage and are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning, for example, older children take home library books to read. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and activities through daily discussions with staff, open evenings and the use of daily record sheets for younger children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. They benefit from the daily care and activities provided by qualified, well-organised staff. Their ongoing safety and welfare are promoted because there are robust procedures in place for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children. The clear staff induction process ensures that the nursery's policies and procedures are understood by all staff and are implemented on a daily basis. This is supported by regular supervision, staff appraisals and daily monitoring of all areas by the manager and senior staff. All paperwork and records are in place to ensure that children's needs are clearly documented and staff are able to work appropriately to promote their ongoing safety and individual development.

Children's activities and daily play opportunities are enhanced by the good organisation of space within the setting. The designated base areas for each age group help to ensure that children are able to move freely and safely between activities and feel confident to initiate

their own play and learning. The careful organisation of each base area means that children's varying needs can be met and they can be offered a range of play opportunities, for example, there is space for messy play, role play and for resting or sleeping. There are clear daily routines which remain flexible in order to accommodate children's individual routines. For example, babies sleep according to their normal routine and are then able to return to their group and continue to play.

Leadership and management is good. Children's learning and development are enhanced and their overall welfare promoted by the clear understanding that the manager and senior staff have of their roles and responsibilities. Ongoing monitoring and reviewing help to ensure that staff are well supported and are able to access appropriate training when needed. The manager and senior staff act as good role models, demonstrating their genuine enjoyment of their work and attending training in order to keep up with current practice and legislation. They support staff well, providing in-house training to ensure that all are able to provide appropriate and consistent care. This promotes a positive environment in which children are able to play, learn and develop.

Improvements since the last inspection

At their last inspection, the setting was asked to continue to develop good hygiene practices. Staff now have access to additional cleaning resources and have attended further training, helping to minimise the spread of infection and promote children's health. They were asked to maintain accident records and these are now consistently recorded and signed by parents, improving children's safety and well-being. They were also asked to ensure that there is an appropriate range of resources to promote equality of opportunity and have purchased a wide range of additional resources, thus promoting children's understanding of this area.

The setting was asked to make sure that children are grouped appropriately in the pre-school group. Staffing procedures have now been reviewed so that children are able to work consistently in small groups and independently, promoting their learning and development. The setting was also asked to request written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. This is now in place for all children, promoting their safety in an emergency situation.

With regard to the provision of funded early education, the setting was asked to continue to develop staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Staff have attended a range of additional training and continue to update this, thereby improving their knowledge and the teaching methods used to promote children's individual development. They were asked to continue to develop activity plans so that they include sufficient detail. Activity planning has been reviewed so that plans now contain relevant details regarding appropriate methods and extensions for all children, thus ensuring that children are offered appropriate opportunities to promote their development. Finally the setting was asked to improve the assessment methods. They have now introduced new, comprehensive assessment methods that are reviewed regularly by key workers and information from these is fed into future planning, therefore ensuring that all children are offered appropriate opportunities that promote their development.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standard 6: Safety, and National Standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers. Concerns were raised about children's safety whilst floors were being cleaned and the passing on of

information to parents. Ofsted required the provider to investigate. As a result, the provider reviewed and improved their procedures regarding cleaning. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider remained qualified for registration at the time and the investigations were closed.

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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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):

- improve children's safety by ensuring that they are not able to access hazardous items. This refers to the unreeled hose pipe and the broken fence in the outdoor play area, and the trailing electrical wire in the older children's base area.

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):

- provide further opportunities for children to write and gain an understanding that writing can be used for a range of purposes.

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