

Tommies Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Unique Reference Number | EY271635 |
| Inspection date | 14 December 2007 |
| Inspector | Jan Burnet |
| Setting Address | Parkville Highway, Coventry, West Midlands, CV6 4HZ |
| Telephone number | 02476 366944 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | St Thomas Pre School 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?

Tommies Children's Centre opened in 2006 and primarily serves the North East of Coventry. The centre comprises of a day nursery and out of school provision, which is open each weekday for 50 weeks of the year from 07:30 to 18.00. In addition to childcare staff, a team of family, education and health workers provide services for families in the Centre and out in the community. The premises are a converted and extended scout hall. Stay and play sessions are operated at other sites within the community by staff based at the centre. There are currently 106 children aged from 6 weeks to 12 years on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for nursery education. A service is provided for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 28 childcare staff and of these 18 are qualified and five are working towards a qualification. A teacher supports the educational provision at the setting and a speech therapist, midwife and health link worker and two family support workers are based at the centre. The centre holds Pre-School Learning Alliance and National Day nursery association membership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is assured because hygiene routines are thorough and because the nutritional value of their food is given a high priority. Children are learning how to keep themselves healthy, including the benefits of exercise, and they are aware of good practice with regard to hand washing. The risk of cross-infection is minimal because parents are aware that their child should not attend if he or she has a contagious illness or sickness and diarrhoea and that they will be contacted if the child becomes ill. Children are protected by a staff team well informed on accident and emergency procedures as 16 currently hold in-date first aid certificates. The risk to children from unsafe food is very low because food hygiene is addressed well. Children's individual dietary needs are fully met and meals and snacks are nutritious. A four-week menu is rotated and is continually reviewed. It shows a good variety of substantial lunchtime meals and lighter teas. Children enjoy meal times as social occasions and older children are able to serve themselves at the table.

Children's emotional well-being is given a very high priority. A good settling in procedure includes a home visit and parents are asked to gradually settle their child so that separation anxiety is avoided. Children are happy and settled with staff consistently offering support and encouragement. They develop physical skills and confidence as they have daily access, weather permitting, to exciting and challenging climbing and sliding equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy activities in a very warm and welcoming environment. Children aged two years and over play in the main hall which is partitioned to create space for three- and four-year-olds, space for two-year-olds and a shared central area used at mealtimes. An area off the hall is partitioned to create a room for babies aged one to two years and a separate room off the reception area is for the younger babies. First floor space is used for the range of services offered by the Children's Centre and one room is used by older children before and after school and during school holidays. Equipment for children in all areas is safe and in a good condition. Children's independence is developing well as the storage of resources is organised to encourage them to self-select.

Risks of accidental injury to children are low because staff are vigilant and potential risks have been identified and addressed inside the building and in the outdoor play area. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly and children are aware of the evacuation procedure because it is practised every month. Wheeled evacuation cots are used to ensure that staff are able to evacuate quickly and easily with young babies. A thorough fire risk assessment has been drawn up and is reviewed annually. An automatic detection and alarm system is fitted. Children learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, they tell the inspector that, 'we walk inside because we might fall and bump our heads', 'we don't throw things', 'we wait for an adult before we go outside because we might trip over' and 'we hold hands when we cross the road and we look and listen'.

Children are safe from unwanted visitors and could not leave unsupervised because security is very good. Their welfare is safeguarded by staff who have a sound working knowledge of abuse and neglect and are aware of local referral procedures. A thorough child protection procedure

is provided for parents. Child protection training is mandatory for all staff and currently 11 staff have attended.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children play happily in the stimulating environment created by staff. They confidently select resources, relate well to each other and they enjoy and get involved in activities. Children achieve well because staff offer good support and effectively use their sound knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage to provide opportunities for learning. Play space and activities are well organised to ensure that the different needs of children at different stages of development are met. All children develop and learn as a result of consistently challenging experiences.

Children under two years are cared for in two separate rooms, generally changing rooms at the age of approximately one year. They have easy access to resources that promote the development of their senses, enjoy a range of messy and creative play activities and staff prioritise the development of emotional and social skills. Staff caring for the older babies count and name colours and shapes as they play with children. Control of large muscle groups and manipulative skills develop well with daily practise. Children aged two to three years benefit from staff knowledge of the early stepping stones as well as the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Today children are keen to make decorations for the Christmas tree. They use paste and glitter and some confidently talk about the colour of the glitter. They all happily make marks on their creation when asked to write their name. Children are able to explore an 'investigation area' and they play in the cosy corner where there are soft toys as well as books, a small world area, a construction area and a home corner which is currently Santa's House.

An average of five children each day currently attend the before and after school club. Their playroom is on the first floor and is used as a community room during the day in term time. The room is set out by staff before they arrive, but children are able to select from their own storage cupboard. A general activity plan is used and identifies role play, programmable toys, creative play, games, quiet activities, small world and sport. Children have drawn up a wish list and have asked staff to prioritise the purchase of remote control cars and helicopters.

All staff care for children as individuals. They plan a good range of activities for groups of children and use their knowledge of child development to ensure that all children are challenged effectively. Staff record observations, assess children's progress and key workers decide on two target areas for each child's progress every term. However, not all staff use what they know to plan the next steps for children's play, learning and development and potentially this impacts upon the progress that each child makes.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children aged three and four years access a wide range of resources that support their learning across all of the six areas of learning. They are keen to be involved in activities, either when supported by staff or when playing independently with activities chosen by themselves. Children are self-assured, motivated and enthusiastic. Activity planning is good with objectives for learning clearly identified.

Children have access to books at all times and enjoy listening to stories. They speak confidently and are learning to listen to others. They benefit from good opportunities to practise

manipulative skills and pencil control is developing well. Writing is encouraged in a variety of ways including naming their own art work and using writing as part of role play. Name cards are used for children to copy and also to promote the sound of different letters. Mathematical development is good. The current theme is Christmas and children talk about different shapes as they wrap presents. They count throughout the day and spontaneously name numerals. For example, a four-year-old asks the inspector if he can press the number nine key on her computer and then tells her that a one and a zero make 10. Calculation is included at group time when children sing 'Five little ducks' and 'Ten in the bed' and they count how many are left each time one is taken away. They independently choose from a range of resources that promote counting, numeral recognition, shape and pattern making.

Children behave well and are aware of behaviour boundaries. Their physical skills develop and improve with a good variety of experiences and equipment. Children are developing skills with small equipment and tools and climbing and sliding equipment challenges three and four-year-old children effectively. They are learning to control their bodies whilst moving to music and they are developing an awareness of healthy eating and the benefit and effects of exercise. Children explore different materials, for example, creating pictures in different ways with paint, melting ice and modelling with clay. They repeat situations familiar to them in their role play, currently Santa's House where three children pretend to be parents and baby. Children are currently learning to use a new laptop computer and staff are offering good support, however, opportunities for children to develop skills with information, communication, technology equipment are very limited because the group of up to 24 children have access to only the computer, a cash register and calculators.

Initial information provided by parents and carers is thorough and so staff are aware of children's skills, interests and needs as care begins. The range of planned and spontaneous activities is good and routines are well balanced. Staff record observations and use evidence to assess children's progress along the stepping stones. However, except for the two targets each term, they do not use this information to plan the next steps in children's learning across the six areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and their individual needs are known and met by staff. They are encouraged to talk about home and their experiences in order to appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences and they celebrate different religious and cultural festivals through the year. Children also gain an awareness of diversity because they are able to choose from a good variety of resources that reflect positive images. Children who are learning to speak English are offered good support and staff work with parents to learn words in a child's first language. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well by staff who have experience of working with parents and other professionals to ensure that all children are able to reach their full potential.

Children are aware of boundaries for behaviour, they cooperate and behave well and show consideration for others. A group of three- and four-year-old children explain the 'Golden Rules' to the inspector. These include being kind to friends, sharing, looking after toys and having fun. One child also confidently adds to the rules, 'we say please and thank you'. Out of school club children have drawn up and display their own rules and these include, being friendly and respectful to staff and other children, using nice language and being helpful. Staff are

good role models and encourage children to respect themselves and others and their environment.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and contributes significantly to children's early years education and their well-being. Initially all parents are asked to identify their child's stage of development and admission information is thorough. Parents of funded children are provided with information on the Foundation Stage in the prospectus and the six areas of learning are also displayed. Newsletters are sent out at least once each month and these include details on topics and activities. Every child has a home book in which key workers share news for parents each day and invite parents to make entries. Assessment records are shared with parents on request and at meetings arranged each term, although information from parents is not used by staff to inform their planning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider ensures that staff enhance children's care and education with the quality of organisation. Children's welfare and care are very well supported with staff implementation of the setting's policies and procedures. Legally required documentation is in place and is kept up to date and in good order.

Leadership and management is good. The day care manager is a supernumerary member of the childcare team and she receives good support from the provider. One of two deputies is also supernumerary and staff to child ratios are good. Pre-school staff are supported by a qualified teacher. Procedures for recruitment, selection, induction and appraisal are thorough and all staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Children benefit from the commitment shown by staff to improve their knowledge and skills as a high percentage are qualified and all regularly attend training. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and all staff are involved in planning and assessment to ensure that children make good progress. Advice from other professionals is sort and welcomed in order to improve practice and outcomes for children. Key issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed well.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last care inspection the provider was asked to develop the range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. This has been satisfactorily addressed as children are able to access a range of resources that reflect diversity.

At the time of the last nursery education inspection four key issues were raised. The provider was asked to ensure that expectations for the development of writing skills and numeral recognition are not too high for younger and less able children. Staff demonstrate that they are aware of children's different stages of development and expectations are not too high for any child. The provider was asked to ensure that children develop an awareness of calculation, have access to large equipment for physical development that will challenge them effectively and have the opportunity to explore the differences between features in the local environment. These issues have been addressed. As children play they compare and separate groups of objects and recognise that the total is the same, fixed climbing and sliding equipment in the nursery

garden is challenging and exciting, and children enjoy local walks to, for example, the post office.

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 that observations are more consistently used to plan the next steps for children's play, learning and development.

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):

- develop assessment systems so that information from parents as well as staff observations and assessment informs planning for the next steps in each child's learning
- extend opportunities for children to develop skills with information, communication, technology equipment.

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