

Tick Tock Nursery Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507882
Inspection date	10 October 2007
Inspector	Nikki Whinton
Setting Address	School Lane, Markham Road, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 9LE
Telephone number	01793 814191
E-mail	
Registered person	The Trustees of Tick Tock Nursery Playgroup
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?

Tick Tock Nursery Playgroup opened in 1981. It operates from its own building within the infant school grounds in Wroughton, Wiltshire. There is a main playroom and two smaller rooms plus a cloakroom and kitchen area. A maximum of 28 children may attend the setting at any one time. The group is open from Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions run from 09.00 until 12.00 and 12.45 until 15.15. Children may stay for lunch on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Tuesday and Thursday afternoon sessions are for two-year-olds. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 67 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 40 children receive funding for early education. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The provision serves the local area.

The nursery employs eight members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children lead a very healthy lifestyle whilst in the setting and have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise within the provision's fully enclosed outside area. They are able to play outside under the group's covered area throughout the year, use a challenging range of outdoor apparatus and practise their balance and movement skills through enjoyable activities such as walking along a line of foam bricks or attempting to 'hoola hoop'. Children increase their fine motor control and hand to eye coordination through activities such as pouring their own drinks at snack time, using scissors, experimenting with the computer mouse or manipulating small balls whilst playing 'four in a row'.

Children help themselves to a selection of healthy snacks, such as sultanas or grapes at any time during the session. In addition, they decide when they wish to access the cafeteria-style daily snack time, where they choose from a further range of nutritious options. Allergies or dietary issues are discussed with parents as part of the registration process. These discussions are recorded, made available for easy staff reference and accommodated. Parents are advised of the storage arrangements of children's lunch boxes and urged to provide freezer blocks. Children can help themselves to drinking water at all times, which helps to ensure they are consuming fluids in sufficient quantities to meet their varying needs.

Children are learning good hygiene practices and self-care skills as part of the daily routine. For example, they realise the need to wash their hands after toileting or before eating. They benefit from the staff's knowledge of first aid and their understanding of the correct procedures to follow if accidents occur or children require medication. There is a range of measures to promote children's health and to protect them from those that are unwell. For example, written parental permission has been obtained for seeking emergency treatment and the sick child policy, together with information about contagious illnesses or notifiable diseases, is included within the parents' welcome pack.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are clean, well maintained and of an appropriate temperature. Colourful wall displays and well-presented notice boards help to create a welcoming environment for children and parents. Children's safety is promoted by staff that take positive steps to help keep children safe and avoid accidents. For example, the premises are secure, a gate prevents children accessing the kitchen area, fire exits are unobstructed and staff are well deployed throughout the provision. Children are starting to gain an appreciation of how to keep themselves safe through purposeful events including tidying away toys to reduce trip hazards and making sure they keep away from the coned off area of the decking in case it becomes slippery. In addition, staff have a clear understanding of the importance of taking additional measures to promote children's safety when on outings. However, children that have recently joined the provision have not taken part in a fire drill and as a result, their safety may be at risk.

Children help themselves to a wide range of age appropriate toys, many of which are stored on low-level shelving to encourage independent exploration. Children benefit from the staff's understanding of safety issues concerning the purchase and ongoing maintenance of equipment. As a result, they are able to play with clean, well-maintained toys that are safe and suitable.

Children's well-being is safeguarded by staff that have a good understanding of child protection issues, confidentiality and the correct procedures to follow if concerned about a child. Parents are made aware of the provider's responsibilities through the child protection statement that they are asked to read and sign as part of the registration process. This is an effective way of ensuring parents' understanding.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are enthusiastic, confident and eager to explore the well-arranged resources. They have ownership of the setting. Children are regularly involved in the planning of activities and on a daily basis make decisions for themselves concerning the resources they wish to explore. Children have a good relationship with the caring staffing team and are building positive friendships with their peers. They have regular opportunities, such as when taking turns to ring the register bell, clearing their crockery at snack time or putting on coats for outside play, to develop their independence and self-care skills.

Younger children, who have not yet reached the Foundation Stage, attend separate afternoon sessions. Staff prepare detailed plans for these sessions, following the Birth to three matters framework. They complete regular written observations and assessments of the children, which they use when planning for their next stages in learning. In addition, staff produce written 'what I did at pre-school' sheets explaining the activities and resources children have experienced during their initial sessions. This supports the 'settling in' of these very young children and helps to build the partnership with parents. All children are fully included, have the chance to participate and to achieve.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. There is a highly effective, comprehensive planning and assessment system in place, which ensures there is a balanced focus on all the stepping stones and all aspects of the curriculum. Staff undertake regular, targeted and spontaneous observations of the children, which they use to complete ongoing assessments of their progress. They then use information obtained from assessment, together with parental input in planning activities to promote individual children's future progress.

Children confidently express their thoughts and ideas. For example, children spontaneously tell staff, 'I'm going to Disneyland this afternoon' or 'on a Tuesday I have about 25 lollies'. They are learning to link sounds to letters and have regular spontaneous and planned opportunities to listen to stories. Children develop their awareness of familiar words in print through practical activities, including self-registering and finding their name cards at snack time. Children have opportunities to practise their early writing skills, although staff have a tendency to label their artwork. This prevents children from having the regular challenge of making marks for a purpose. Children increase their awareness of shape, space and measure through activities including experimenting with water, playing with 'Russian Dolls' and building towers with construction materials. They have opportunities to count, such as when selecting a pre-agreed number of pieces of fruit at snack time or calculating the number of fish in the playgroup fish tank. Children learn about addition and subtraction through practical means including singing number rhymes. They gain an awareness of numbers as labels through activities such as completing number puzzles or exploring magnetic numbers. However, during some large group activities such as when counting the children present or the correct number to

place on the daily calendar, staff sometimes have a tendency to give children the answer to questions they have posed and thus prevent them from being suitably challenged.

Children enjoy designing and building with a good range of construction materials. Through activities such as the daily calendar, children start to gain an awareness of past, present and future. Children confidently use information and communication technology such as a computer and a laptop as part of their play. They are involved in a range of interesting opportunities to widen their knowledge of their local area. They visit Finkley Down Farm, take part in Wroughton carnival, visit the library, post letters and go to the nearby shop to buy bread for snack time. They welcome meaningful visitors to the setting, such as a police officer with his police car, a parent playing a guitar and a member of Guide Dogs for the Blind with a guide dog. Children have regular child centred opportunities to explore a good range of media and materials, such as when making play dough, experimenting with three-dimensional craft or painting with toothbrushes. Children enthusiastically sing a growing repertoire of action songs and rhymes from memory. They thoroughly enjoy immersing themselves in imaginary play. For example, two children become absorbed looking at tool merchants' catalogues whilst wearing their hard hats in the role-play carpentry shop.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are acknowledged and treated as respected individuals. They benefit from the staff clearly understanding their differing needs and appreciating their varying home circumstances. Children are able to access a good range of resources such as dolls, games, dressing up clothes, books and computer programmes to broaden their awareness of diversity. Children attending with additional needs receive very good support to assist them in fulfilling their potential. Good liaison is established and maintained with parents and relevant health professionals to ensure consistent, individualised care planning is achieved.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children appear confident and increasingly independent. They are gaining social skills as they learn to share resources, such as when building a train track and to take turns. Children take part in a variety of practical, age appropriate activities to increase their awareness of a range of cultures and festivals. For example, they make flags on Saints' days, have the chance to see Indian wedding dresses brought into the setting by a parent, learn about the festival of Vaisakhi and eat Chinese food with chopsticks as part of Chinese New Year celebrations.

Children behave well as appropriate for their age and stage of development. They benefit from staff that act as good role models, use praise effectively and have a good understanding of positive strategies such as the 'tidy up flower' for promoting children's helpfulness and positive behaviour.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are given a comprehensive welcome pack and information about how to access the group's policies and procedures, prior to a child commencing in the group. They are kept up to date with setting events through regular newsletters, well-arranged parents' notice boards and informal discussion with staff at either the beginning or end of the session. Parents are invited to submit their own ideas of topic related activities, which are then used by staff when planning. Parents are valued as their child's primary educator. They can take home their child's assessment records to study and insert their own written comments. They are asked to share with staff what they know about their child to aid initial and ongoing assessments. In addition, there are twice yearly planned opportunities

for parents and key workers to review children's assessments. Parents are invited to share their skills and are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning, both at home and in the provision.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care, development and learning is promoted by a well qualified, highly motivated staffing team that works very well together and regularly undertakes targeted early years training to help support their professional development. High staffing ratios help to ensure children receive lots of good quality attention. The group is well organised. For example, the group's yearly business plan is displayed for easy reference, regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. The group has installed low-level washbasins and shelving units to aid children's growing independence, whilst staff provide capes and boots in order that all children can experience the enjoyment of splashing in puddles on a rainy day. All legally required documentation is carefully maintained and securely stored.

The leadership and management are good. The group greatly benefits from the drive, commitment and ability of the playleader. She effectively oversees the daily running of the provision, is constantly evaluating the group's practice and carefully monitors the key worker assessments completed by her staff. The committee meet on a regular basis and there are effective channels of communication with the pre-school staff. The group regularly welcome Swindon early years consultants to the setting and use their professional input to support the development of the group. The setting has established links with the adjacent infant school to assist children in their transition into statutory education.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last combined inspection the group was given recommendations and points for consideration to help support the development of the group. The education report suggested a review of the organisation of whole group times so that less confident children are encouraged to participate fully and more able children can be sufficiently challenged. In addition the setting was asked to make more effective use of practical everyday routines, in order to give children more opportunities to count, further develop their understanding of simple number operations and to recognise their written names. The care report recommended developing the role of key workers, so that each child is allocated to a key person who is mainly responsible for their daily well being and exchanging information with parents. In addition, the group was asked to inform parents who provide lunch boxes of what can be stored safely.

Each child is now allocated to a designated key worker who is mainly responsible for their well-being and parental liaison. Parents who provide lunch boxes are advised of appropriate storage arrangements. Children have daily opportunities to recognise their name in print. Through planned daily 'show and tell' time less confident children have the chance to build their confidence in speaking in a familiar group. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care and education offered to the children.

However, children do not consistently have suitably challenging opportunities to count or use simple number operations as part of daily whole group routines.

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 include complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- ensure emergency evacuation drills are practised regularly, particularly when new children start in the provision

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):

- ensure children have suitably challenging opportunities within the daily routine to write for a purpose and to develop their counting and mathematical problem solving skills.

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