

Tiddlywinks Day Nursery & Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY283577
Inspection date	16 November 2007
Inspector	Justine Leong
Setting Address	Springfield Parish Centre, St. Augustine Way, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 6GX
Telephone number	01245 463245
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Registered person	Penny Ann Perry
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?

Tiddlywinks Day Nursery was registered in 2004. It operates from two rooms within a new community centre in the Springfield area of Chelmsford. A maximum of 28 children may attend the provision at any one time. The group opens five days a week, term time only. Sessions offered each day are from 09:00 until 12:00, 13:00 until 16:00 or 09:00 until 16:00. All children share access to a secure outside area.

There are currently 60 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery serves the local community. The setting would support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and currently supports several children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted and they are developing an awareness of good hygiene practice as they follow stringent routines at the setting. Regular hand washing before eating snack or lunch is part of the children's daily routine and they independently line up to walk through to the bathrooms. Children are increasingly independent when washing their hands and staff provide equipment such as steps to enable children to reach the sinks. Tables are thoroughly cleaned with disinfectant spray before food is served.

Children are kept safe from illness as there is a comprehensive sickness policy in place which includes exclusion times for common illnesses. Staff regularly remind children to cover their mouths when they cough and inform them that this will stop germs from spreading. Any accidents occurring at the setting are well documented in the accident record and this is signed by parents. There is a well-stocked first aid box available and four members of staff have appropriate first aid training, helping to ensure children's health is protected in the event of a medical emergency.

Children have valuable daily opportunities to enjoy fresh air and physical activity as they access the secure garden. They play with a range of toys and equipment, appropriate to their age and level of ability. Children are developing physical skills including movement and coordination as they play with the bicycles, hoops and balls provided. Staff make good use of all available resources and encourage children to practise their balancing skills as they walk carefully along the white lines painted on the ground. Children also benefit as staff are able to utilise the large hall attached to the setting for physical play if the weather is too bad for them to go outside.

Children sit together at snack time to share a range of healthy foods. Staff ensure children acquire habits which promote a healthy lifestyle as they offer fruit, toast and breadsticks and drinks of juice or water. However, children do not have constant access to water to ensure they do not become dehydrated. Hot meals are provided for children who stay for lunch and these are freshly prepared on site each day. Menus are shared with parents and include a broad range of healthy meals such as roast chicken with vegetables, pasta and salads. Staff are flexible when providing meals and are willing to accommodate individual children's requirements, helping to ensure children's needs with reference to food and drink are well met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and child-friendly environment that offers all necessary facilities to promote overall development safely, indoors and outside. They play in one of two bright and spacious rooms and frequently have the opportunity to move freely between the two rooms to select what they would like to play with. Children play with a wide range of safe and suitable toys, many of which are stored to allow children to access them independently. All resources are thoroughly cleaned on a regular basis and checked for signs of damage.

Security at the setting is given high priority and visitors are thoroughly vetted and have their identification checked. Staff are aware of potential hazards and take positive steps to minimise risks including using gates to restrict access to the kitchen and socket covers on low-level plug

sockets. Fire precautions are in place including fire alarms throughout the building and a fire blanket in the kitchen. Staff regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure with children to ensure everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe as staff remind them of rules such as not running inside and using clay cutting tools carefully. Children have valuable opportunities to learn about road safety during walks in the local area as staff take them to the zebra crossing and explain how to use it to cross the road safely. Children's welfare is protected as staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary, according to the 'Local Safeguarding Children Board'.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle quickly, supported by caring staff at the setting. Children enjoy their time at the setting and make good all-round progress. Children aged under three years are well supported as staff have a thorough understanding of young children's needs. They have a clear understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use it effectively to support and extend children's learning. For instance, children play with a range of imaginative resources including home corner and shop equipment and staff encourage them to use appropriate language to interact with one another.

Children make connections to their own experiences and use their existing understanding to complete activities. During a cutting and sticking activity staff encourage children to consider what clothes they wear to keep them warm during the winter. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide resources and plan interesting activities based on children's interests, helping to maintain focus and motivation.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn and progress through the stepping stones. All staff play an active role in planning and devise long, medium and short term plans to enable children to make good progress in all six areas of learning. An effective key worker system is in place, ensuring children are regularly observed and comprehensive developmental records are maintained. However, assessment is not used to inform planning and ensure children make as much progress as possible.

Children play with a wide range of appropriate toys and resources and participate in activities that are of interest to them. This enables children to remain engaged and motivated to learn. They are increasingly able to resist distractions and concentrate on the activity until it is completed as staff create a calm and productive learning atmosphere. Staff have high expectations of children and encourage independence. For example, children are encouraged to attempt to put on their coats to go out to play before asking staff for help.

Staff make effective use of time and resources and provide a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The daily routine provides some opportunities for children to select their own activities further helping to develop independence. Staff use effective teaching methods such as questioning to support children's learning and provide some challenge, although this is not consistent throughout the provision.

Children are developing good communication skills. They use speech to organise and explore real and imaginary experiences, ideas and feelings and staff listen attentively to them, helping to foster self-esteem. For instance, children and staff play together in the shop, discussing what they need to buy and how much it will cost. Children have some access to a range of fiction and non-fiction books and enjoy sharing books with others. They listen well during story time and participate enthusiastically during singing sessions.

Children say and use numbers in familiar contexts and staff effectively use daily routines as a valuable opportunity to encourage counting skills. Staff encourage children to count how many people are present at registration time and offer support to enable individual children to count plates and cups at snack time. Children use language to describe and compare shape, position and size as they play with the large construction bricks, deciding whether a tower they have built is taller than themselves. Children are developing an understanding of information and communication technology. They access resources including calculators, electronic toys and a digital camera, helping to support their learning.

Staff provide a stimulating range of opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They plan activities that encourage children to explore their environment and use all their senses to investigate why things happen and how things work. For example, children learn about autumn and then visit their local environment and collect fallen leaves. On returning to the nursery, children use the leaves to create imaginative leaf prints in clay and staff encourage them to consider why the leaves fell from the trees.

Children have access to a range of art and craft resources including paints, colourful paper and crayons. They use these to create imaginative pictures and collage and are developing good dexterity with a variety of small tools such as scissors and paintbrushes. Children also use their imagination when participating in activities involving musical instruments. They enthusiastically join in with matching music to movement and are beginning to sing simple songs from memory.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and happy at this setting due to the welcoming staff and child-friendly environment. They are becoming aware of the wider world and developing respect for others as staff encourage children to share and take turns. Each child has a name label that is displayed to show they are present and they sing a morning song every day to greet each other, helping to develop a secure sense of belonging.

Children are cared for in an environment that positively celebrates children's differences and similarities as they access a range of resources including dolls and books that are representative of diversity. They also have valuable opportunities to celebrate a variety of festivals including Diwali, Christmas, Easter and Chinese New Year, developing a good understanding of children's own culture and the beliefs of others. The provision has effective arrangements for supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure inclusion. They work closely with parents and external agencies to ensure individual needs are met and every child can reach their full potential and play a productive part in the setting.

Children are increasingly responsible for their own behaviour and staff further this by encouraging children to tidy away toys and resources when they have finished playing with them. Staff are consistently polite and respectful, providing positive role models for behaviour. They know each child well and use appropriate behaviour strategies including frequent praise.

Consequently, children understand what is expected of them and they behave well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit as staff have developed close working relationships with parents and actively encourage them to visit the setting to discuss any issues arising. Parents are informed of the educational programme as staff discuss what the children will be learning at the beginning of each term and staff are currently considering new ways to share information with parents. Parents receive regular updates on children's achievements as staff create folders of work each term which identify progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very well cared for and educated by a dedicated and motivated team of staff, most of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The provider implements effective recruitment and induction procedures to ensure all staff have substantial knowledge and understanding of child development in order to meet individual children's needs. Effective staff deployment and appropriate group sizes enhance children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take part in the setting.

Children's care, learning and play are well supported by the comprehensive policies and procedures within the operational plan. All documents are in place to support the smooth running of the nursery and these are regularly reviewed and stored securely. Written parental permissions are in place to ensure children are cared for in line with their parents' wishes.

The leadership and management is good. The manager and deputy work closely together and frequently monitor the provision to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This is achieved through regular staff meetings, during which all staff are encouraged to share ideas and suggest ways to improve their practice. The manager carries out yearly staff appraisals and actively encourages staff to identify training needs and undertake training to address them. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the setting develop the range of resources reflecting positive images of disability. It was also recommended that the policies and procedures be updated to ensure they are in line with National Standards and that at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate be on the premises at all times. These areas have now been addressed, helping to ensure children's care and education are promoted.

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):

- ensure children have constant access to fresh drinking water.

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):

- identify next steps in individual children's learning to inform planning and ensure children are provided with sufficient challenge.

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