

Cots & Tots Private Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	316450
Inspection date	27 February 2008
Inspector	Susan Elaine Heap

Setting Address	Shawclough Primary School, Thrum Hall Lane, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL12 6DE
Telephone number	01706 656 260
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Registered person	Philip Leigh
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 satisfactory. 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?

Cots and Tots Private Day Nursery is individually owned. It opened in 1980 and operates from part of Shawclough Primary School, Rochdale. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.45 to 17.30 for 50 weeks of the year. All children have access to enclosed play area.

There are currently 57 children aged four months to under eight years on roll. Of these 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. There is a small before and after school facility which accommodates older siblings of children attending the nursery.

The nursery employs 11 members of staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from the spread of illness and infection because the staff effectively follow the setting's written health and hygiene procedures. For example, there are clear colour-coded systems for the use of mops in designated areas, such as the bathroom or for cleaning up bodily fluids. There are several detailed written policies in place which effectively promote children's welfare and the spread of infection is further reduced through the staff working cooperatively with parents to ensure children with infectious illnesses stay at home. Children learn simple good hygiene practices and routinely follow these, such as washing their hands before eating and after messy activities. Tissues are located all around the nursery to aid easy access and children are able to wipe their noses when required. The staff deal with children's illness appropriately, in accordance with the written nursery policy. Relevant documents are kept to record accidents and medication and maintain confidentiality. All staff hold a current first aid certificate and have received training in the use of an Epipen. These ensure that children's individual health, care and welfare needs are effectively promoted.

Children enjoy a balanced diet, which includes regular drinks and nutritious foods, such as fruit and vegetables daily. Mealtimes are pleasant, social occasions where children sit together and eat with their peer group and their key workers and engage in conversations which effectively promotes family time. Even the youngest children respond with eye contact, smiles, sounds and babbling as the staff mirror the sounds they make.

Younger children sleep according to their individual needs while older children who have a rest during the day sleep on large comfortable cushions and relax undisturbed. Staff stay with children and gently stroke their heads or pat their backs to help them settle. This ensures that they are safe and their physical and emotional needs are well met.

Children learn that physical activity is fun, and that it is good for their health. They participate in a wide range of physical play activities, both indoors and outdoors as this is well planned for daily. They move actively around the outdoor area, go for walks in the secret forest in the school grounds and enthusiastically join in movement sessions, such as musical chairs. Children enthusiastically ride bikes, trikes and cars or take part in physical activities in the school hall, such as balancing on beams. These activities help them develop their confidence and control in their movements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe because they are cared for in a child-friendly environment where potential risks are identified and minimised through the completion of daily visual risk assessments. There are a number of effective safety measures in place, such as written policies for lost or uncollected children, and finger guards to internal and external doors. Each child has their own password which is used on occasions when persons other than parents collect children. Children are learning to avoid accidental injury and keep themselves safe as the staff talk to them about safe practices. For example, staff remind them about not running in the room and how to use scissors safely. Through planned activities, such as playing with cars and trucks, they learn about road safety and to fasten their seat belts when travelling in cars. However, fire drills are

not practised regularly which means that children are not effectively learning what to do in an emergency.

Children are cared for in their own designated areas which are welcoming to the children as their creative work is displayed on the walls. They use a good range of safe, good quality toys and play materials. These include manufactured toys, games, construction kits, books and a wide variety of materials that support children's creative ideas, in addition to a selection of treasure baskets for babies and the younger children. Most resources are easily accessible to children and stored in low-level units or boxes which means that children have some opportunities to make independent choices in their play.

Children's welfare is well protected because staff have a sound knowledge of child protection and the procedures to follow. Two of the staff have recently attended safeguarding children training and the current policy has been updated to reflect the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. However, there is no written procedure within the policy for the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Staff submit to a formal vetting procedure and there is a designated child protection officer within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and enjoy the time they spend in the nursery. Relationships between the staff and children are very good. This contributes to children's feelings of security and sense of trust. Their communication skills are well supported as staff talk and listen to them. As a result, staff are familiar with their personalities, individual preferences and needs. The staff working with the younger children echo babies' babbling sounds which encourages their early communication skills. Babies are provided with boxes of toys and interesting objects which they can easily access and investigate, such as treasure baskets filled with metal or natural objects. Children are encouraged to explore the world around them using their senses as they touch and taste different foods or look and listen to the things they hear and see. For example, older children examine spiders under a magnifying glass while babies and toddlers enjoy splashing and pouring in the water.

They enjoy listening to stories and joining in with their favourite action songs which is further enhanced by the use of puppets or masks to make the activity more interesting. They display a strong sense of belonging as they move around the different areas with confidence and ease. All staff have a secure understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and how to implement the planning and assessment systems effectively. However, the next steps in individual children's learning are not always identified and sometimes observations of children are not always dated. This means that children's development is not always clearly recorded.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff display a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan a wide range of stimulating activities which effectively covers the six areas of learning. Children are developing well because activities are challenging, interesting and innovative and build on what they already know. For example, through careful planning staff develop children's interest in books and stories, such as 'Goldilocks and the three bears'. They develop these themes to support children's imaginative and creative development through making puppets and masks. Observation and assessment systems link children's progress through the stepping stones towards the Foundation Stage. However, the next steps in children's

learning are planned for the whole group and not for individual children's development. Children learn through a good balance of child and adult initiated activities and skilful questioning techniques are readily used to encourage and promote their learning. Resources to promote children's interest in mark making and creative and imaginative development are easily accessible though this is not as successful in the construction, sand or water areas due to limited space. As a result, sometimes there are missed opportunities for children to follow their own interests and ideas or initiate their own learning.

Children show interest in the activities on offer and concentrate for long periods as they play in the home corner making cakes with play dough or making labels in the mark making area. They listen well to the pre-school leader's clear direction at times of change, such as tidy up time or when playing musical chairs. They are confident in their play and communicate well with their peers and visiting adults. Children develop a sense of community through learning about different cultures, beliefs and abilities through the activities and resources available to them and in their discussions with staff.

They have good opportunities to learn about weight and measure as they mix play dough or take part in baking activities. They are able to match shapes and sequence as they sort squares, diamonds, triangles and hexagons into groups and show good imagination as they use key shapes, such as triangles and hexagons to make a flower. They count objects and are beginning to recognise and name numbers through the introduction of number rhymes and visual aids. For example, they have made puppets for favourite songs, such as 'Five little speckled frogs', 'Five currant buns' and 'Five little ducks went swimming one day'.

They have access to a well resourced book area comprising of comfortable cushions, a media player, puppets and an extensive range of books. They enjoy listening to their favourite stories, such as Hansel and Gretel and often return to a favourite activity again and again, such as leaving breadcrumb trails in the secret forest. Children have opportunities to mark make in the designated writing area and carefully select from the wide range of resources available to them, such as pens, crayons, pencils, erasers, tracing paper and sellotape. They enjoy making labels and tracing their names and using sellotape to fix these to their clothes. Children can readily identify the letters of their name and know which is at the beginning or end.

Children explore and investigate using their senses as they taste different fruits while they are blindfolded and they have to guess what it is. They talk about the taste, smell and texture. They have opportunities to learn about the natural world and how to care for living things through topics, such as mini beasts and make bird feeders to hang outside. They are able to access a range of equipment which develops their understanding of technology. For example, they know how to turn the compact disc player on or follow a simple computer programme.

Children have daily opportunities to develop their physical skills as they play on the outdoor equipment or explore a variety of musical instruments both man made and those they have made themselves out of water bottles and glitter. They use a good range of large and small equipment, such as scissors, pencils, paintbrushes, glue spreaders, rolling pins and pastry cutters to develop their fine motor skills. They explore a good variety of media, such as sand, water, paint and glue or design their own models out of boxes and cardboard tubes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a good sense of belonging in the nursery which helps them to settle and feel secure. They are happy when they arrive and they know where to hang their belongings. Children benefit from suitable activities and resources which introduce them to diversity and the world around them. For example, they learn about different cultures and beliefs and respect others through celebrations and discussions of other festivals, such as Eid and Chinese New Year and tasting different foods.

Children are valued as individuals and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to providing an inclusive environment for all children who attend. As a result, children with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported through regular contact with their parents and other professionals. Children behave well and are consistently praised for their good behaviour and their achievements which develops their confidence and self-esteem. A simple visual timetable and a traffic light system work effectively in the pre-school room to remind children of what happens next and when it is tidy up time. This ensures that they have time to finish what they are doing before changes happen. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are made to feel welcome at the setting. There is a wealth of written information available for parents, such as policies and procedures, monthly newsletters and daily diary sheets are used for younger children. A complaints procedure and a system to record any complaints is in place and readily available to parents. Parents receive daily verbal feedback about their child's development and are able to view their child's development records at any time. Staff in the pre-school room have developed a toy library with story and toy sacks for parents to borrow which means that parents are provided with opportunities to extend and contribute to children's learning. Each day the pre-school leader displays an activity sheet of what children have done that day and how this links to the six areas of learning and their overall development. As a result, parents are well informed of their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are settled in the relaxed and friendly environment because they benefit from positive relationships with their key workers. They benefit from consistent daily routines for eating, rest and sleep and their individual needs are well catered for. Staff and students are deployed effectively which ensures children are well supervised and supported at all times. The majority of staff have childcare qualifications which means that children are cared for by a staff team who have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities in helping children enjoy and achieve.

Most aspects of documentation are in place, such as children's records and parental consents, and policies and procedures within the setting are reviewed annually. However, the safeguarding policy does not include the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. This is a breach of regulations.

The leadership and management are good. There are robust recruitment and selection procedures in place and key staff have designated responsibilities. For example, one member of staff has responsibility for the induction of students while another monitors the delivery of the nursery

education. The manager takes a full and active role in the provision as she works alongside the staff and priority is given to staff development and training to develop staff knowledge and skills. For example, all staff have attended 'Birth to three matters' framework training and the pre-school leader has recently attended the 'Letters and sounds' workshop. This ensures the continual improvement and development of the quality of care and education provided. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to: develop staff knowledge and understanding of equality issues and develop resources which reflect all aspects of diversity; develop staff knowledge of child protection procedures; ensure staff ratios are adhered to and provide children with more opportunities to play outdoors. These have all been completed and have improved the quality of children's care, safety, learning and play.

At the last education inspection the setting was asked to: develop the current planning systems; extend resources in mathematical development and role play; improve opportunities for children to explore sand, water and paint independently; provide parents with information about the Foundation Stage and develop systems of sharing children's ongoing progress. These have all, in the main, been completed successfully and improved the quality of the delivery of the nursery education. However, although opportunities for children to explore sand, water and paint have been improved, further development in this area has been identified following this inspection to allow the successful delivery of continuous provision.

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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The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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 fire drills are practised regularly
- ensure the safeguarding policy includes the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

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):

- improve observation and assessment systems to include planning the next steps for individual children's play, learning and development and ensure that observations are dated to clearly show children's progress (also applies to care)
- improve the layout of resources to ensure children are encouraged to make choices and develop their independence.

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