

Smarttots

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY375472

Inspection date

16/10/2008

Inspector

Jan Leo

Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Smarttots Day Nursery was registered by the current owners in 2008 to care for a maximum of 80 children under the age of eight years at any one time. It is one of three settings run by Complete Childcare Limited and operates from a listed building in the centre of Banbury. The nursery consists of four activity rooms for different age groups and an outdoor area on two levels. There is a kitchen on site where a chef prepares all the food for the children. Toilet and sleep facilities are also provided. The children use the whole of the ground and first floors while the manager's office and staff facilities are located on the second floor of the building. Inside, there are several changes in level necessitating steps within the property.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 67 children within the Early Years age range on roll and 19 staff who work with the children on a full or part time basis. Of these, 10 hold a nationally recognised qualification to level 2 or above, and seven are currently working towards a qualification. In addition, there is an external French teacher who visits once a week. The setting operates from 08.00 until 18.00 each weekday with earlier starts and later finishes by prior arrangement.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

All children enjoy attending because the staff operate a very effective key worker system to build extremely close bonds with the children from an early age. A very strong partnership with parents exists to help the staff continually review procedures and build on good practice. Robust observation and assessment helps staff plan and deliver an effective welfare and development programme for each child individually. However, the current system of recording planning for alternate weeks only, results in some areas of learning not being fully promoted for older children and no overview of the weekly objectives to inform all staff of children's next steps if their key worker is unavailable.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- plan a balance of adult led and child initiated activities every week to ensure consistency in learning and development
- promote all areas of learning equally by increasing access to the computer equipment and routinely including problem solving and numeracy in the daily activities for older children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting follows very clear and well thought out procedures in order to operate a safe, efficient and professional service for children and their families. Recruitment and vetting procedures are thorough and the quality of documentation is good with records being accurate and easy to follow. The staff are committed to improvement and willingly continue their personal development to extend their own skills and help raise standards. They work well as a team and there is a low staff turn over. As a result, the children get to know the adults very well and feel secure and welcome. The management actively encourages parental involvement as part of the operational review process. The parents' forum meets regularly to give everyone an opportunity to comment about the provision and ensure the nursery continues to meet the needs of all who attend. The staff use home/school diaries to pass information on about children's progress and they welcome input from parents about the learning and development programme. The setting is happy for parents to use these diaries as a means of liaising with other carers in their children's lives, in order to complement and enhance children's overall learning experiences.

The staff feel very well supported by management and consequently enjoy their work, creating a relaxed and friendly environment where children feel valued. All children get good quality attention, with babies receiving cuddles, smiles and a great deal of attention to create strong bonds and help build their confidence and self esteem. The staff thoroughly assess hazards, updating risk assessment and completing safety checks consistently to preserve children's health and safety. They have a good understanding of the child protection procedures and reference material is readily available to aid a referral if staff have concerns about a child.

The staff successfully identify strengths in their provision and work closely with management and parents to bring about improvements. Robust and very effective documentation supports the smooth running of the nursery but the volume of paperwork for monitoring and assessment of children's progress results in planning being a little unclear and unwieldy.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children benefit greatly from the detailed observations, monitoring and activity evaluations the staff complete. Staff tailor planning to include children's individual interests and progress from the previous week however, observations and planning currently alternate on a two week programme. As a result, there is no formal overall plan for one week in two. The key workers know their children well and consequently manage, without an overall weekly plan, to continue learning and development at a level to suit each of their key children. The staff record full details of children's achievements and suggested next steps and challenges in their individual folders for their families to see. All the necessary information is available to provide a consistently effective timetable for each child and this works well when all staff are present. The system is time consuming and cumbersome if replacement staff need to stand in at short notice.

The children have frequent opportunities for outdoor play and join in both adult led activities and free play enthusiastically. They have easy access to a choice of

resources to develop their games and they play very well together and alongside each other in all areas of the nursery. The staff promote health and safety routinely as children play to make learning meaningful. For example, children learn not to throw sand because it hurts if it gets into eyes, and they know the importance of wiping up spills to prevent slipping. One two year old independently fetched a toy mop from the home corner to wipe up three very small drips from the bottom of her cup, eager to help and copying what adults do. The staff frequently work with the children on the floor, showing them how things work and encouraging children to try things for themselves. Some competently build a train track with others watching what they do. After a short while they begin working together and no longer need adult help. The children sustain attention for some time working harmoniously with different friends throughout the day and becoming increasingly confident and sociable. They listen attentively to stories, share their opinions and ideas freely in conversation and have a keen interest in everything around them.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Good
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Good
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Outstanding
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Good
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Good
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Good
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Good
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Good

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.