

Overdale Tots

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY362775
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Inspector Robert Greatrex

Setting address Putnoe Lower School, Overdale, BEDFORD, MK41 8EN

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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).

Description of the setting

Overdale Tots opened in 1994 and was re-registered in September 2007. It operates from a ground floor classroom with good access for all within Putnoe Lower School in Bedford. Most children go on to this school, with which there are close links. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each weekday during term-time and sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 and 12:30 to 15:00, with the option of a lunch club each day. Children have access to a small but secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 43 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Children come from a wide catchment area, which includes the surrounding villages. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and is able to support children who speak English as an additional language. Overdale Tots is on the Early Years Register and is one of two pre-schools owned by Teaching Tots Ltd.

Of the seven members of staff, six hold appropriate early years qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children's development is at the heart of everything this good quality setting does. Activities are being planned using the new curriculum with children as the starting point so that learning is tailored to each child's unique abilities and needs. Consequently all children are fully included and achievement is good. Overdale Tots Pre-School works very closely with parents so that children flourish in the positive relationship. Staff are never satisfied, always looking to improve, although their evaluations would benefit from a more systematic approach. The new curriculum is being implemented well and staff are becoming more comfortable with activity planning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop a more systematic approach to evaluation so that the pre-school is very clear about what it does well and what needs to be done to improve further
- revise and refine planning so that it is a more useful tool for staff to know precisely what they are looking for children to achieve.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Pre-school and parents work very closely together in an excellent partnership which ensures that children settle quickly and easily into pre-school. Parents state that staff are very helpful if any child struggles to settle, and quickly help build the

confidence to succeed. Links to the school's reception classes are equally good. Parents feel valued and welcomed by staff, their views listened to and acted upon. 'Diaries' are a superb dialogue between children, their parents and staff that record children's interests and aptitudes and what has been achieved. Whether at pre-school or home, all achievements are recognised and used to plan next steps in learning. Parents are very pleased that what they do with their children at home is recognised and valued. There is a very real sense of partnership between staff and parents, with the children's development central.

Management is good so that all the required policies are in place and all staff follow the prescribed procedures consistently. Children's welfare is of paramount importance to staff and arrangements for safeguarding children fully in place.

Staff have embraced recent curriculum changes and are beginning to use an approach to activities that focuses closely on each individual child's unique needs. This is very beneficial to children's development. As staff become more comfortable with curriculum changes, and further develop the very good emphasis on an approach starting from each individual child, they next need to develop planning to reflect this. Staff recognise this and are already considering changes.

Although staff have a clear idea of many of the pre-school's strengths, and know what they want to focus on improving, the manager and staff's evaluation of the pre-school would benefit from a more systematic approach. Parents and staff are asked for their views, but they are not asked to consider all aspects of the provision, and broad questions illicit general responses that are of limited value in pointing the way forward.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff offer an excellent range of opportunities to give children a great deal of responsibility so that they develop an independence and a growing ability to think for themselves. Each day at 'snack time' a child is involved in selecting and preparing a sufficient quantity of food for the class. A good balance in activities gives children many opportunities to select tasks and equipment that allows them to pursue their own interests.

Children enjoy the varied and interesting activities they are given. Because staff develop independence and find many opportunities to encourage it, children's personal development flourishes and they become active and inquisitive learners. Staff make good links in learning so that preparations to celebrate Diwali include various tasks such as dance and lamp and sweet making. Enjoyment is there for everyone to see and all have the confidence to join in. An equally wide range of stimulating tasks are provided outdoors despite the limitations in size and covering of the area. Children approach these enthusiastically and show a real thirst for learning. They have a satisfactory regard for their own space and safety and a growing awareness of others. They behave well and respect each other. Social times and activities, such as the lunch club, are harmonious.

Staff use dialogue skilfully to develop and extend children's thinking. They ask open-

ended questions to provoke thought and usefully develop basic skills, for example by linking the number of sweets each child makes to the number of people in their family. Discussion as 'snack time' is prepared demonstrates a good and growing awareness of healthy eating.

Children are developing a good understanding of diversity and recognising cultural differences because the curriculum recognises and celebrates different faiths, traditions and celebrations. Whatever children's backgrounds, they are quickly made to feel comfortable.

Thorough and detailed records and assessments are kept to check on children's progress, development and welfare. Meticulous information is detailed and shared with all staff and parents, so everyone knows what is planned for each child and who is their key worker.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is 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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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 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 the last inspection.

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.