

Townhouse Private Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY314152
Inspection date	29/04/2009
Inspector	Lynne Milligan
Setting address	80 Lawton Road, Alsager, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST7 2DB
Telephone number	01270 883383
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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 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

Town House Day Nursery is one of two nurseries owned and run by the provider. It opened under the previous owner in 1994 and operates from a large converted house in the centre of Alsager. Shops, schools and a local library are nearby, with access to a park. Entrance to the building is via a large driveway off the main road, with the setting based on two floors. Children have access to their individual group rooms on both floors with additional rooms available for various other activities and meals. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play-area. The nursery is open every weekday from 07:45 to 18:00, all year round.

The setting is registered to care for 47 children under five years. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 50 children on roll, all of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language. There are 16 staff who work with the children. Of these, 14 have appropriate early years qualifications. The setting also receives support from a qualified swimming instructor and employs a qualified cook.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children's individual needs are well met because staff take time to settle children and obtain detailed information from parents during the settling in time and use daily communication to ensure this is current. The nursery effectively promotes inclusive practice and children are encouraged to engage with each other throughout the nursery, whilst helping children to learn about diversity and valuing themselves and others. The provision demonstrates an enthusiastic commitment to maintaining continuous improvement through regular team meetings and working in partnership with parents and others involved in the care and education of the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure medication records are consistently completed, with specific regard to recording the date on which medication is administered
- develop further staff's understanding of whom they should report any concerns to and what to do if an allegation is made against them
- secure and monitor the links between planning and assessment for the younger children to ensure learning priorities identified fully support and challenge individual children and plan meaningful outdoor activities for younger children.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure systems to record the children's hours of attendance are consistent (Documentation).

04/05/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

A concise and well presented effective range of policies and procedures underpin practices within the nursery and these are readily available for inspection and shared with parents. The provider and manager provide strong leadership and management and work together to oversee the provision. There are effective processes in place for self-evaluation and planning is effective in addressing many aspects of the provision. For example, the provider has taken steps to make good improvements since the last inspection and practice has been improved to help older children further develop their independence at mealtimes as they help themselves and pour their own water. The manager has also begun to assess staff's understanding of the EYFS through regular monitoring visits, helping to further secure children's progress across the early learning goals.

Systems for monitoring the quality of the provision are effective with the exception of some documentation. For example, children's attendance records in most of the rooms are not closely monitored to ensure parents have signed their children in and out. Not all medication records are dated which leads to possible confusion as to when it was actually administered. The manager is supernumerary which means she is available to parents and can cover in the event of staff absence or breaks. The whole staff team demonstrate a positive approach to providing a stimulating and caring environment for the children and they share ideas and good practice amongst themselves.

Partnerships with parents and in the wider context are very good and are used effectively to support continuity and quality for children's care. The setting has begun to carry out home visits that help both parents and staff in assessing a child's needs before they start. Furthermore, those children that are due to move to primary school have their developmental files shared with teachers. Parents express their delight with the nursery, saying that they wouldn't go anywhere else. They are happy with the information they receive which includes, monthly newsletters, updates on their child's development and information to help them understand their role as their child's first educator at home.

Children are actively safeguarded because staff are experienced and skilled at supervising children during their time at the nursery. The process for ensuring the suitability of adults is rigorous and guarantees ongoing suitability. Most staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and reporting procedures. A small number of staff are not completely confident in their ability to identify who they would refer any concerns to outside of the nursery, including the procedure they would follow in the event of an allegation against themselves.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children happily enter the nursery and soon settle into the daily routine. They establish strong, caring and stable relationships with staff and other children and greet each other as they arrive. Older children actively seek out other children in their play. Children develop independence due to the effective arrangement of good quality resources and encouragement from staff. For example, low shelving units within every room that are clearly labelled both with pictures and writing, allowing them to select the toys and resources they wish to use. Children in the 'Tweenie', 'Toddler' and 'Pre-school' rooms access areas that are clearly defined, for example, a book area, construction area and mark making table. Babies enjoy a variety of toys that include books, rattles, bells and response/reactive toys at their level. They explore their environment freely and safely as staff encourage their physical development, as they reach and grasp for toys just out of their reach.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and this enables them to plan a good range of opportunities based on the six areas of learning. Staff in each of the rooms meet on a regular basis to plan for their group. Staff carry out a combination of observations based on children's free play and activities that are planned. Some of the assessments of the younger children's learning do not regularly specify their next steps which make it unclear as to how they have used these to inform future planning. In the pre-school, however, this is very effective and staff have a secure knowledge of ensuring observations and assessments inform future planning for each individual child. There are effective procedures in place to enable positive partnerships with parents. There are successful systems in place to enable parents to follow their child's learning and development by attending open evenings, having children's files near the entrance to each room, via information boards and through daily verbal feedback from key persons.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery. The flexible routine allows children a combination of interesting and enjoyable free play and adult-led activities. For example, children enjoy playing in the home corner, dressing up as a consultant and making marks on note pads, whilst others enjoy moving around the room making choices about what activities they would like to participate in. Older children are skilled at identifying letters and linking the correct sound to the letters. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of how to develop fun and interesting ways of reinforcing this, for example, through hiding large letters in the sand pit that represent the sound or by asking them to stand up after circle time if their name begins with the similar sound. Children develop a good awareness of caring for living things through planting and caring for grass heads and feeding the fish. They have access to good quality resources that portray a positive image of diversity, for example, dressing up clothes, dolls and books. Valuable opportunities for them to learn about themselves and others are offered as they take trips out to the local community, they take a train ride catching images on film of interesting signs or objects or whilst out on a nature walk. In addition some visitors come into the nursery as they encourage children to take part in rhythm time, whilst older children go swimming. Many interesting activities encourage children to explore their bodies as they draw skeletons on the floor, placing various organs in the right

place or as they make fingerprints, pretending to be detectives. Children are confident mark makers. They label their own work; including writing the headings for their displays of art work or current topics, further developing their writing skills. They create books, understanding the sequence of events and are skilled at knowing who the author or illustrator is as staff are skilled at sharing stories. Children access their outdoor areas, playing on the slides, trikes or in the sand pit. Staff in the pre-school plan meaningful and challenging activities for the older children.

Staff obtain important information regarding the dietary needs of all children and regularly review these needs to ensure children's dietary needs continue to be met. Meal times are sociable occasions with children enjoying a good range of healthy, home cooked food. Older children help themselves, with younger children supported by staff who encourage their independence a little at a time. Drinking water is available freely for all children to access as and when they require it and babies are regularly checked to ensure they are hydrated. The nursery is very clean and well organised, with good use made of the available space. Children remain safe in the nursery because staff deploy themselves effectively to supervise children. Security is a priority of the nursery, for example, a television system monitors all visitors to the nursery, with keypads and an intercom system at the entrance. Children learn to keep themselves safe through reminders from staff, such as asking children to wait patiently in line outside or whilst climbing the stairs for lunch. A daily visual assessment is completed in all areas of the nursery and full risk assessments are carried out and reviewed on a regular basis.

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?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
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?	2
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?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met