



## **Cray Tots Pre-School**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127131
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 September 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Mandy Mooney
<b>Setting Address</b>	Senior Citizens Club, Craylands Lane, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0LP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01322 382929
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<b>Registered person</b>	Cray Tots Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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](http://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 inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cray Tots Pre-school has been registered since 1995. It has sole use of a community hall in a residential area in Swanscombe. There is also a fully enclosed outdoor area available for outdoor play. The building is shared with a Senior Citizens' Club which operates at a different time. It is a voluntary group with a Pre School Learning Alliance constitution, managed by a committee of parents. The group is open from

09.15 to 11.45, Tuesday to Friday and in addition from 12:45 to 15:15 on Wednesdays during term-time only.

There are currently 29 children between 2 years and 5 years on the roll. Of these 10 children receive funding for nursery education. Children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language are fully supported.

Five staff work directly with the children, of these two hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a childcare qualification.

The group receive support from the Local Early Years and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is safeguarded by staff who have put in place suitable hygiene routines, for example, cleaning tables for snack time and by following effective nappy changing routines. Children are aware of the need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before snacks. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to exclude children with infectious illnesses and to care for children who become unwell during the session.

Children are provided with healthy drinks and snacks at refreshment time, however, they are not encouraged to take part in the preparation or serving of food and drink or to talk about the benefits of eating healthily.

Children have daily opportunities to take part in physical play activities, either in the large hall or in the outside play area. However, this is not well planned and consequently opportunities are not necessarily based on building upon children's existing skills. Children are able to use and manipulate a range of small toys, tools and equipment with growing skill and confidence.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children access a range of safe and appropriate resources. These are organised successfully, such as the breakfast bar, the role play and the book area, which provide children with interesting and varied choices which they are able to access independently. However, the storage of equipment in the large walk in cupboard is less successful. Many resources are stored in a disorganised manner and this results in staff not being able to access some resources to use with the children.

Children are kept safe by staff who are aware of security. Children are collected by named persons and if there is a change to the arrangements then a password system is used. Staff are vigilant during drop off and collection time, however, on

occasions, this procedure becomes confusing, as both parents and children move towards each other in a big group. This increases the potential for child to leave unsupervised. Staff are aware of the health and safety requirements, such as regular fire drills and staff encourage children to take responsibility in regards to keeping themselves and others safe, by involving them in tidying up at the end of the session.

Children's safety is safeguarded through the efficient use of documentation and staff are aware of their responsibilities, such as ensuring emergencies are planned for as far as possible. Staff have a sufficient understanding of, and are confident about dealing with child protection issues.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

All children arrive happy and eager to participate. New children are well supported by staff and as a result, settle quickly. Children have good relationships with staff who sit with them and encourage their play and provide opportunities for the development of their personal care skills. Children are happy and enjoy playing with their friends, particularly during the imaginative role play. All children participate well during snack times where they sit together and enjoy pleasant conversations. Children are familiar with the daily routine and move freely around the room, making choices about their play. However, the opportunities provided do not sufficiently retain children's interests and are not always presented in a way to encourage participation or to hold children's concentration. This results in children leaving activities and flitting between table top activities. Staff have recently attended training in the Birth to three framework and individual staff have been identified to take the lead on this, however it has yet to be implemented in the provision and so therefore is not reflective in what is being provided for the younger children.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children do not experience consistent opportunities to make good progress and extend their learning. All practitioners do not have an understanding of the Foundation Stage and plans do not ensure that all children have appropriate learning opportunities and these lack detail. The activities provided are not always relevant to the topic so that children experience inconsistent learning which is not reinforced through practical experiences. Activities and opportunities are not well planned and do not include any differentiation for the older or more able children. There is little evidence of evaluation of the activities, so therefore, it is unclear how the observations and assessments that are carried out in a very haphazard fashion, influence future planning.

Some activities successfully encourage children's independence and build the choices available to them such as small world play and role play, which children thoroughly enjoy and use their imagination well. This also encourages children to play together and to develop their cooperation skills. Children are developing caring relationships with each other. Older children are seen openly cuddling younger children. Children's independence skills are developing well. They have access to a breakfast bar, where they select their own snack and pour their own drinks. Other

areas are less successful, for example, the art and craft area, which consists of an easel, which has paints that are not attached to it and the book corner, which although recently reviewed, is not well used by children.

Children are able to recognise their own names from their name cards as they arrive, however, they have few opportunities to develop their writing skills or to extend their knowledge of linking letters to sounds. Writing materials are poor and uninviting and consequently children spend little time in this area. Children are able to count beyond ten and posters are displayed to offer visual prompts for counting, however, activities for children to extend their mathematical knowledge is limited and staff offer little support in regards to either providing opportunities to develop their knowledge or to consolidate their learning.

Children have many opportunities to learn about the local community and different cultures through planned themes and visitors, for example, the current theme is 'animals' and as part of this children have been 'travelling' to different parts of the world, such as, Africa and India to look at the different animals and where they live. Visitors into the pre-school include, the local fire officer and health visitor. Children have access to three computers, which are well used. They are able to manoeuvre the mouse and follow the children's computer programs with increasing skill. Children have daily opportunities to use the outside play area, where they throw, kick and catch balls confidently. Children's large and small muscle movements are developing appropriately, however opportunities for children to practise these skills do not form part of the planning.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff actively promote anti-discriminatory practice; they provide a range of activities which help children to understand and explore their own ideas and beliefs and those of other people and encourage children to investigate the local and wider community. Children have access to a range of resources to reflect a positive image of different cultures in the community, for example, books and puzzles, however resources to reflect disability are limited.

The pre-school welcomes children with additional needs and the system in place for supporting children is effective in both identifying needs and also providing appropriate support to children and promoting inclusion. There is a named special needs coordinator, who is familiar with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and the procedures for accessing external support as necessary.

Children's behaviour is generally good. Staff portray a positive role model for the children. They respond to children's questions and are attentive to their needs. On occasions, children become disruptive as the routine does not retain their interest and this results in them displaying negative behaviour, such as, snatching and throwing. This generally occurs at the beginning of the session and results in staff spending a lot of their time dealing with the unwanted behaviour.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. This is

because sufficient provision is made to help children explore their own and other people's culture and children's natural curiosity and sense of wonder about nature and the wider world is actively encouraged. In addition, staff use positive behaviour management methods and this helps children to understand the reasoning behind the group rules.

Partnership with parents is inadequate. Parents are welcome in the group and some are represented on the management committee. A newsletter is produced on a termly basis to inform parents of the activities going on within the group. Some parents are aware of the early learning goals, as information is displayed on the parents notice board and some know that they can discuss their child's progress with staff informally. However, not all parents are confident enough to approach their child's key worker to ask how their child is doing. Because plans are not routinely shared with parents; staff do not actively seek parent's views about their children's needs and interests. There is no method in place to ensure that all parents are aware of the progress their child is making, the partnership is not good enough to ensure that it contributes to children's progress.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by an experienced and well-qualified group of staff. Sufficient systems for recruiting and induction ensure staff and volunteers are aware of what is expected of them within the group. Staff use the policies, procedures and some documentation well to ensure children are kept safe and healthy.

Staff are encouraged to attend training in different areas of childcare to enhance the provision. However, on a day-to-day basis, the organisation of children and the deployment of staff is not effective enough to ensure children are provided with planned activities to sustain their interest and enjoyment. Children are familiar with the daily routine, however, staff responsibilities are not clear and this results in staff spending time during the session preparing activities.

Leadership and management is inadequate. The manager takes overall responsibility for planning. This means that other staff are not developing their understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum enough and consequently are not confident in their understanding of how children learn and how to provide for children to ensure they progress. There are no systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision and this has an adverse effect on children's development and progress. Although staff are qualified and experienced they do not assess the impact of the activities on the children and how these can be improved. The lack of systematic planning and monitoring results in inconsistencies in children's learning. Many of the key issues raised at the previous nursery education inspection remain. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last Children Act inspection in 2003 several recommendations were agreed.

Record keeping has improved, as children's attendance is recorded and any change to the normal hours of attendance are identified, however adults are ticked in and times are not recorded. Accidents and incidents are clearly recorded and shared with parents. The complaints procedure is available and contains the regulators details. Challenges offered to children during everyday routines and opportunities for children to take part in small and large group activities remain an area for further improvement. These have been raised as recommendations.

There has been little improvement since the last nursery education inspection where three key issues were identified. These included increasing staff's understanding of the early learning goals and providing children with appropriate challenge and with activities to help them progress. Weaknesses still remain and as a result children's learning and progress are hindered, particularly in the areas of mathematical development and in communication, language and literacy.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

A complaint was raised on the 14/04/2005. This related to National Standard 6-Safety. When a child left the provision unsupervised at collection time.

Ofsted asked the provider to investigate and report back to within 10 working days. A report of the incident, the lost child policy, children's safety policy and non-collection of children policy was sent to Ofsted.

Ofsted considered that appropriate action was taken to improve procedures. No further action.

The provider remains qualified for registration.

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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):

- review and improve the procedure and organisation for the drop off and

collection of children

- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under 3, for example, through the use of the Birth to three matters framework
- review and improve the daily routine to enable children to participate in a range of play experiences, to include planned small and large group opportunities and ensure activities and experiences
- review and improve the deployment of staff to ensure children are appropriately supervised at all times and are supported to extend their play

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- review the staff group input into planning to ensure this encourages individual contribution and enables staff to further develop their understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and different approaches to teaching
- improve the system for monitoring children's progress, to ensure the information is kept up to date and is used effectively to meet the needs of all children. Ensure this information is shared with parents and that parents are given the opportunity to contribute to their child's learning
- revise the use of staff's observations on children's profiles to ensure the assessments made are used to help children move onto the next stage of learning

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)