

Little Tinkers

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY375779

Inspection date

19/10/2009

Inspector

Chris Mackinnon

Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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.

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Description of the setting

The nursery was registered in 2009 and is located in a recently converted barn near Five Ashes in East Sussex. The setting is easily accessible, by steps and a ramp from the car park. The premises provide a main play area, with a separate younger children's room and an outdoor play deck and garden. Children also have access to farm animals, and organised activities in the adjacent grounds and fields. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 42 children may attend, aged up to eight years. Up to 42 children in the early years age group, may attend, with no more than 12 aged under two years. The setting currently has 68 children on roll, and all are in the early years age group. The setting is in receipt of funding for nursery education. There is a staff team of nine, and most have early years qualifications, with two currently training.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting is well organised and managed, with a trained staff team and individual children's development is successfully supported. Children enjoy a highly organised and stimulating learning environment, with an excellent range of play materials and resources providing many good learning opportunities. Staff successfully plan and provide an organised and engaging range of play themes and activities, and children's learning progress is effectively encouraged and maintained. Staff are confident in their approach to self-evaluation and the setting demonstrates a consistent approach to continuous improvement. The setting builds close partnerships with parents and other carers, and uses inclusive practice effectively to promote equality and ensure children are safeguarded.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop observation and assessment to support children's next steps in learning

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is well led and managed and staff are effectively deployed throughout the play areas. Staff are also clearly aware of their roles and responsibilities, with the supervisor closely supported by a deputy, and other leading staff who oversee the different age ranges attending. The staff team is well trained and experienced, with many staff qualified to early years level three and above. Several staff are also in a position to pursue their training to degree level, and possible early years professional status. The setting has a clear understanding of the need for

safeguarding and maintaining children's safety and welfare. The security of the setting is consistently monitored and key persons make sure individual children's care needs are met and promoted. Child protection procedures are effectively organised within the setting, with clear written guidance available and staff who are suitably trained, with a high level of safeguarding awareness.

The setting demonstrates a consistent approach to improvement and maintaining good standards of care. Staff continually assess the effectiveness of activities of the play programme, and monitor how the play environment is supportive to children's learning. Staff also regularly make appraisals of how children respond to the activities, and their progress with learning. The setting follows a clear development plan, and has conducted a full self-evaluation of its practice. Staff work effectively with parents and other carers, and take care to establish close relationships that contribute to children's welfare and learning. Staff key persons also get to know the family backgrounds of all the children in their care, and through regular contact and access to detailed records, parents can easily see how their children progress. The setting also has sound links with local pre-schools and junior schools, which helps to maintain children's welfare and continuity of learning.

The setting provides well organised learning and development for children, with a range of prepared play areas, that effectively support the needs of the different ages attending. Children have a well organised range of activities, and staff show good skills with directing play and extending learning. Staff are also aware of the importance of fostering child-led play and helping children to follow their own ideas. The setting has several significant strengths within its practice, particularly with the organisation of a stimulating play and learning environment. Much care has been taken to ensure all the play areas are attractive and able to stimulate interests of the children attending. Another clear strength, is the wide range of well chosen play resources and learning materials included, particularly with access to visual material and learning about nature and the outdoors. Overall, the management and staff team show a clear commitment to the successful organisation of the setting, and take full advantage of generous space available and the richness of the countryside setting. Children enjoy a wide range of experiences and successfully achieve and make progress with their learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The setting has well planned activities that successfully support children's learning and development. The planning looks ahead over several months, and includes a range of well devised learning themes and projects. The main plan is then organised into specific activities that focus on the children's early learning goals, and the presentation of appropriate resources. Staff key-persons are also involved in the planning, and children's individual interests and learning needs are also effectively considered. Staff take care to ensure children engage in the play and learning activities, to support their enjoying and achieving. Often children choose to do their own active learning, by creating games and inventing play. Children also greatly enjoy being part of small groups, where they can join in and play and

learn together. Each age group has appropriate support, within the nursery, and younger children particularly enjoy exploring tactile toys and small world play resources. Older children are also successfully encouraged to achieve, with a good range of role play, art-crafts and assembly projects, which supports their thinking and inventiveness. The observation and assessment of children is soundly organised within the setting's learning programme. Key persons monitor their children's progress and development, using clearly organised progress books for each child. Staff also take frequent observational notes of individual children's achievements, with photos also used to show children's involvement with play and learning. The methods for recording children's progress has recently been revised within the setting, and although now clearly established, the development of children's next steps in learning is noted as an area for improvement.

The setting's well prepared play areas offer children access to many interesting resources, and provide opportunities to develop skills for the future. The use of the computer is an essential part of learning, and is used well within a range of learning activities, that promotes children's awareness of shapes, sizes and numbers. Children also have opportunities to look at books, and have regular story times, to promote their interest in reading and the printed word. Children's skills with reasoning and problem solving is also consistently explored. For example, children enjoy working together in the assembly play area, creating their one roadways and building structures with mega blocks. Children's skill with communication and language is also well explored within the setting, with a mark making area provided, where children can develop their writing skills and confidence with letters. Opportunities for creative development are also prevalent, with painting and printing provided in the nursery's creative area. Many expressive games and dressing-up activities are also successfully encouraged, and children make much good use of the nursery's generous selection of role play resources and materials.

Staff successfully help children to feel safe and included within the setting. Staff also follow clear procedures to keep children secure, and the setting has a well organised range of safety measures, particularly concerning children's access to nearby farmland and animals. The setting has a particularly well maintained and thorough risk assessment process, which ensures children are kept from harm and their welfare consistently promoted. Staff give close consideration to encouraging children's confidence, and are able to calmly manage their behaviour. Children are effectively helped with sharing, and taking turns and are also involved in tidying up. During group activities, and at snack-times, children also develop their social skills, and are encouraged to be aware of others. Throughout all the activities, children are successfully guided to co-operate and play together. For example, during circle times and story sessions, children are well supported by staff, and successfully encouraged to sit and listen together. The setting plans well to be inclusive in its practice, with a range of activities well organised to promote children's understanding of equality and diversity. A range of other culture festivals are included in the play programme, and children have many visual reminders and prompts within the play environment, to be aware of people's differences.

A predominantly strong aspect of the setting, is the provision of a well prepared and stimulating learning environment. Much good use is made of the play space

and resources within the setting, to support and widen children's knowledge of nature and the wider world. Much good use is made of items brought in from the nursery's surroundings, with children able to learn about bee keeping, animal life-cycles, and have creative play with natural materials. Staff successfully promote children's health and development, with an awareness of healthy foods and eating, is well included in the play programme. Staff also successfully promote children's awareness of health, with a range of activities based on learning about our bodies and how we grow. Children benefit greatly from the setting's easy access to outdoor play and learning. Children's physical development is consistently supported with much free-flow play available, within the main play area, and on the nursery's decked area. A children's garden also provides opportunities for learning and activities, and children enjoy walks to nearby fields to learn about the farm animals that are kept nearby.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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