

Smith's Wood Children's Centre/Wood 'N' Tots Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	250120
Inspection date	17/03/2010
Inspector	Teresa Marie Taylor
Setting address	Wheatfield Close, Smith's Wood, Solihull, B36 0QP
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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

Wood 'n' Tots Nursery registered in 2004. The Centre was set up as a joint venture between NCH Action for Children, the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the local authority. It operates from Smiths Wood Family Partnership Centre, situated in Smiths Wood, Solihull. The nursery operates from two main playrooms in a separate building within the grounds. A maximum of 50 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open for 49 weeks of the year from 7:30am to 6:00pm. There is a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 45 children on roll in the early years age group of whom 32 receive funding for early education. The nursery is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and also those for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs eight members of staff. Of these nine hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Children are reasonably settled in the nursery environment where they are generally supported by the staff. Children are provided with a wide range of play activities, however they receive insufficient staff attention to ensure their safety or their progress in all areas of learning. Permanent staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and actively encourage parents to be fully involved in all aspects of their child's care and learning. Appropriate partnerships with parents ensures information relating to individual children's progress and needs is shared effectively. The nursery has well-written policies and procedures, undertakes appropriate planning and is developing assessment and self-evaluation systems but the deployment and understanding of staff means these are ineffective in operation. Systems of review have not identified weaknesses in practice. The nursery does have a secure commitment to continuous improvement.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure all members of staff understand the safeguarding policy and procedures (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) (also applies to the 26/03/2010

- compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register)
- ensure all children are provided with meals that are healthy, balanced and nutritious (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 19/03/2010
 - demonstrate that there are effective systems in place to ensure practitioners and other people who have regular contact with children are suitable to do so (Suitable people) (also applies to the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register) 18/03/2010
 - ensure staffing arrangements are organised to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children (Suitable people) 18/03/2010
 - ensure the premises and equipment are organised in a way that meets the needs of the children (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) 18/03/2010
 - ensure necessary steps are taken to promote the good health of children and prevent the spread of infection with specific reference to nappy changing (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 18/03/2010

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Permanent staff have a strong commitment to safeguarding and an appropriate understanding of procedures to keep children safe. All permanent staff undertake regular safeguarding training to keep up to date and they fully understand the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. However, the reliance on agency staff to maintain ratios is having a major impact on the safety and protection of the children as their understanding and implementation of safeguarding is poor. Policies, procedures and documentation for the effective and safe running of the setting are well organised but not effectively implemented as the supervision and management of agency staff is poor. There are sound recruitment and induction procedures in place for the recruitment of permanent staff. However, records to evidence the suitability of temporary staff are less robust. Parents are provided with copies of all the nursery policies and staff ensure parents understand them. The permanent staff successfully promote all areas of equal opportunities and inclusion, ensuring children are given a broad understanding of the wider world but the deployment of staff detracts from children's learning opportunities. The indoor and outdoor environments are subjected to thorough risk assessments to ensure any potential hazards to children are minimised but a lack of supervision impacts on safety. A regular checking and cleaning schedule aims to ensure children are kept safe and the risk of cross infection is minimised. However, the management of nappy changing leaves children open to the possibility of cross infection or illness as not all staff are aware of personal hygiene issues regarding coughing or the safety of cleaning materials.

The permanent staff have a clear vision for the future of the setting and have identified areas for improvement. These include encouraging parents to be more

involved in children's learning journeys, to improve staff understanding of early speech and language skills and to encourage parents to understand the importance of a healthy diet and outdoor play for all children. Permanent staff regularly undertake additional training courses in order to continue to develop and improve outcomes for children and they are fully supported in this by the management team. The permanent staff are committed to continuous improvement. They are proactive in obtaining the opinions of both parents and children. The nursery appropriately addressed the recommendations from the last inspection, they have improved their documentation to support the efficient and safe management of the provision with particular reference to the special needs policy, although current staffing does not support the implementation of the policy. Full risk assessments have been undertaken which include all areas children have access to and all permanent staff have increased their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents have access to daily discussions, children's individual learning journeys, news letters and the nursery operates an open door policy encouraging parents to be fully aware of all aspects of their child's day and to observe the play and activities provided for their children. The nursery has secure established relationships with the adjoining children's centre, are now involved with the local cluster group and are developing stronger relationships with the local schools. The nursery have clear procedures in place to liaise with other agencies to support children with special educational needs or disabilities to ensure their individual needs are met.

The permanent staff actively promote the uniqueness and individuality of each child. They provide a wealth of age-appropriate activities and resources to ensure all children can participate in all play opportunities regardless of gender, background, ability or disability but staff deployment does not support effective learning opportunities. Staff encourage children to be proactive in their own learning and to search out and explore all of the resources available. All children and families are highly valued and their views and ideas respected and acted on.

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

Children are making some progress as they enjoy a wide range of activities. They are settled but often not relaxed as they receive insufficient support from staff. This reduces their potential for learning and development. Well-organised planning shows a good range of creative learning experiences designed to keep children involved and eager to learn but staff deployment does not support the planning. Information is obtained about children's starting points and the developing system of written observations and assessments of children's progress show the majority of identified individual needs are met.

Older children are very confident when exploring the environment both indoors and out. They often play a full and active role in their learning, they make choices and decisions but require greater staff support to make the most of the opportunities available. A range of activities and resources help them to understand the wider world as they explore the natural environment through their woodland area, discuss other cultures, abilities and disabilities, celebrate festivals

and try a range of different foods. They are mostly given clear rules regarding behaviour with permanent staff being good role models. However, the indifference of temporary staff and their lack of attention to the youngest children is a cause for concern. The youngest children are frequently left to their own devices and the level of accidents and lack of concern for their safety requires immediate attention. Children do express their feelings and sometimes ask for help when they need it but the youngest children require more support. Older children play both independently and together, understand why they need to share or take turns and have good communication skills which enables them to develop skills for their future. They make progress in their communication, language, problem solving and number skills as they enjoy a range of interesting experiences. For example, the theme is 'The Rainbow Fish'. Staff have constructed an indoor fishbowl, child sized. The children have flippers, masks, a range of fish and pond animals and have completed fish drawings and paintings to decorate the fishbowl. Staff support this with additional play activities to encourage the children's thinking and language. A member of staff asked to buy a fish for dinner, the child explained she couldn't as it would swim in her mouth. The staff asked if she could have it as a pet and then discussed how to keep the fish and how much it would cost. At another activity to make biscuits, children were asked about the texture of the ingredients before mixing, soft, white and then weighed out the ingredients, more of (flour) less of (sugar) and were asked to find the numbers corresponding to the weight required. They then mixed the ingredients, discussed the change in texture, rolled out the dough and used cutters to shape the biscuits. However, the large number of children meant they got bored waiting for a turn and the individual learning was lost. The youngest children have little access to writing or drawing materials and the amount of equipment within their room limits their ability to develop crawling and walking skills in safety. Small motor skills are encouraged through the use of a computer mouse, a wide range of writing and drawing activities for older children and encouragement to put on and take off outdoor clothes and Wellington boots when playing outdoors. Planning includes resources to be used and is linked to the six areas of learning.

Children's safety is not well supported overall and accidents particularly in the baby room and outdoors are frequent. Due to the lack of sufficient committed and motivated permanent staff children are placed at risk. Permanent staff are very committed to children's safety but are unable to supervise children effectively as there are too many in particular areas of the nursery at any one time. There is clear affection between the children and the permanent staff. Older children show their understanding of keeping themselves safe through their good behaviour, consideration of each other and show they understand safety rules such as not tipping up chairs or moving around the room carrying pencils or scissors.

Children are beginning to understand about a healthy lifestyle as they make informed choices about what they eat as they choose from a selection of fruit at snack time. Staff discuss healthy eating both at snack time and during activities with displays available for children to refer to. Children know that physical exercise is good for them as staff discuss the effects of exercise and how it makes them grow and become strong. However, meal times are not effective. With the youngest children temporary staff failed to understand the nursery policy on children learning to feed themselves and older children who did not want the main

meal were not provided with an alternative and were told their pudding would be reduced as they had not eaten their dinner. Children have access to an excellent range of outdoor play resources including a woodland and nature area. However, the desire to provide free flow outdoor play is not realistic given the staff numbers and children's accidents, which had the potential to be serious, were totally avoidable.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	4
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	4
The extent to which children feel safe	4
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	4
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Welfare of the children being cared for) 26/03/2010
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability to care for children, or be in regular contact with children) 18/03/2010

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Welfare of the children being cared for) 26/03/2010
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability to care for children. or to be in regular contact with children) 18/03/2010