

Tiny Tows Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/01/2010
Inspector	Catherine Stormonth
Setting address	Towcester Infant School, Islington Road, Towcester, Northamptonshire, NN12 6AU
Telephone number	01327 354815
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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

Tiny Tows Pre-School has been in operation at Towcester Infants School for approximately 12 years. The group was previously situated at another premises in the town. It operates from one classroom at the school and shares toilet facilities with the school children. The children can also use other facilities in the school including the hall and outdoor areas. The pre-school serves the local area and most of the children move on to attend the infants school. There are currently 33 children on roll. This includes 22 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Staff have knowledge and experience to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The group opens five mornings a week with two afternoon sessions during term time only. Sessions are from 9:15am to 11:45am and 12:30pm to 3pm. Five members of staff work with the children. Three of the staff have Level 3 qualifications in early years care and others are at Level 2 and one is working towards Level 3. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the local education authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall the provision meets the needs of early years children effectively in a friendly and calm and inclusive environment. Children achieve well because staff have good levels of knowledge and expertise and use a good range of resources successfully. The extent to which children feel safe and well looked after is exemplary, reflecting excellent working relationships with staff, the utmost trust of parents and the good welfare and safeguarding arrangements. Children from all backgrounds and abilities are catered for in carefully planned sessions because the nursery is led and managed well. Its capacity to improve in the future is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the assessment and planning procedures further to ensure that the children's next steps are consistently fed into planning and that the structured activities meet children's individual needs to extend their learning and development
- continue to update equality policies to include recording systems for anti-racist and anti-bullying aspects.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Good leadership ensures children's care and welfare are given a high priority providing a very safe and welcoming learning environment. The way that

relationships are quickly developed between home and the pre-school are exemplary. Parents are very supportive of all that is done to enable their children to settle quickly and develop a thirst for learning through play. Attendance is good and children cannot wait to get started at each session. The parents spoken to said 'Tiny Tows is superb in every way'. Daily two way communications through diaries and informal chats are very helpful to enable parents to support their children's learning fully.

Leaders carefully evaluate the nurseries successes and recognise areas for development. Self-evaluation is good and senior staff are clear about ways to improve the provision, particularly in the development of key skills. For instance they are currently looking to purchase a wider range of resources to develop children's literacy for more structured activities.

Significant improvements since the last inspection include a tracking system for assessing progress and a more formalised recording of progress for all children in their Individual Learning Records. Leaders however, do not always fully monitor all learning objectives and outcomes on weekly planning for adult led sessions. This means some weekly planning does not consistently use developmental guidance to formulate specific learning intentions leading to appropriate outcomes for individuals to precisely meet their needs.

Children have equal opportunities to learn because staff work methodically to break down any obstacle which might make learning more of a challenge. Children who have been identified with learning difficulties are supported effectively because staff assessments are used systematically and early intervention strategies are working well. This can be seen when the setting follows speech therapy specialist advice where a child has speech delay. The setting is currently updating the equality and safeguarding policies to make sure the record keeping is included for anti-racist and anti-bullying aspects. Children are encouraged to respect and value the differences of others when they celebrate festivals such as Diwali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year. The safeguarding of children is good because effective policies are in place. Recent training has enabled the nursery to work even more closely with other agencies. All the necessary checks are carried out and students and others who are not vetted are not left alone with children. Risk assessments are carried out and recorded efficiently so that ways to minimise risks are carefully thought out. Fire drills and safety audits are completed regularly alongside those of the school.

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

Staff welcome all the children into a relaxed and inviting environment where they have the independence to express their curiosity and imagination well through spontaneous play. Children are enthusiastic and are eager to develop some basic skills in table top activities, some group games and other activities like singing and playing on the computer. Staff join in when appropriate to make sure children are making the progress they are capable of. The key worker system works well and there are some excellent trusting relationships. As a result, children's personal,

social and emotional development is improving rapidly and children say they always feel safe and happy.

Staff work well together and contribute to the planning of activities, This includes input on the six areas for learning and development for themes such as planets this week. Children are excited about their knowledge and understanding of planets and could talk about their learning. One said 'the planet Earth is the one I have my feet on'. Staff put emphasis on free play and are actively involved in the group games. Good quality resources are deployed effectively to enable children to choose their play and develop greater independence.

Children extend their vocabulary by sharing their thoughts and experiences throughout the session. Staff interact with children, engaging them in conversation and promoting their language and communication abilities well. Good opportunities are given for making marks or to write for different purposes, to recognise and write their own names and some key words and to use their phonic knowledge for linking sounds and letters. They all enjoy singing nursery rhymes and sang 'Happy Birthday' to a classmate very enthusiastically. They produce their own artwork alongside more structured activities for themed pieces such as the papier mache planets and the wall display of planet artwork and other pieces depicting snowy winter scenes.

Children demonstrate a developing understanding of numbers and shapes through daily routines, computer games, number rhymes, card and visual displays indoors and outside.

Good opportunities are provided to explore simple calculation when children recognise different quantities and sizes and to sort, count and calculate in games, puzzles and other number resources. Children are well supported in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding that help them make sense of the world and the environment. They have been growing plants and recently learning how snow melts in their hands and that water can turn into ice. Children learn about changes in the weather all year around. A selection of resources, including tools, computer, binoculars, magnifying glasses and electronic toys give children opportunities to develop understanding of how technology can help them in their everyday lives.

The children learn effectively about healthy eating because they are offered a wide variety of fruit and vegetables at snack times. They learn to adopt healthy lifestyles well, for example when they wash their hands before they eat, because routines are well established and children know the importance of good personal hygiene. They also get some good opportunities for their physical development in the newly upgraded outdoor accommodation and school playground.

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	2
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	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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	1
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

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

Met