

Tiny Explorers

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY290017
Inspection date	29/06/2010
Inspector	Anthea Errington
Setting address	RAF Boulmer, Portal Place, Longhoughton, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 3JN
Telephone number	01665 577390
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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 Explorers opened in 2004, previously known as Bumble Bees day care. It operates from a purpose built building in the village of Longhoughton, Northumberland and provides both sessions and full day care for children from the surrounding area. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register for a maximum of 50 children at any one time. There are currently 38 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. Fully enclosed outdoor play areas are adjacent to the building. Opening hours are from 7.30am until 6pm all year round, except bank holidays and two weeks at Christmas.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and inclusive environment where their learning and development needs are appropriately met. Most documents are in place and well organised. However, children are not sufficiently safeguarded as there is no record of risk assessments, which is a specific legal requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff members have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and provide children with a suitable range of activities to support their learning. Systems for regular observation and assessment of children are in their infancy and are beginning to show the progress children make towards the early learning goals.

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:

- conduct a risk assessment and record when it was carried out and by whom; regularly review the risk assessment, at least once a year, and include in the record the date of review and any action taken following a review or incident (Suitable premises, environment & equipment) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register). 13/07/2010

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- continue to make effective use of observations of children to assess the progress they are making towards the early learning goals, and plan time for regular observations of children who attend the setting on an irregular

basis

- plan an environment which is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers and words to support and develop children's literacy skills
- link the indoor and outdoor environments where possible so that children can move freely between them
- make sufficient time for staff to reflect on what has been observed about children to plan appropriate play and learning experiences.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff members have an acceptable understanding of their role with regard to safeguarding children and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about children's welfare. Parents are informed of the setting's safeguarding responsibilities in the child protection policy, and appropriate contact details are in place to report on any concerns. In addition, satisfactory procedures are in place regarding non-collection and lost children policies. However, children's overall safety is compromised as there is no evidence of the completing and recording of risk assessments, which is a specific legal requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The setting recognises the importance of continuous improvement and has recently completed their own self-evaluation document. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been met. Systems to observe and assess children, evaluate and monitor their learning and plan for their next steps are still in their infancy and do not always include dates. This makes it difficult to track children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff know the children well and try to ensure a range of age appropriate activities are provided. However, there is no formal planning as staff are not provided with sufficient time to reflect on what they have observed to enable them to provide activities to support children's learning and development further. Documentation is mostly well organised, readily available and stored securely to protect confidentiality. Children's play opportunities are maximised through the satisfactory organisation of space, time and resources. Staff members are committed to ensuring equality and diversity, and an inclusive service is offered to all. For example, all activities and resources are suitable for all children attending and are adapted to take into account individual children's ages and stages of development. Staff support children who speak English as an additional language well as they ensure, with parental support, that they are aware of key words in the child's home language.

Positive relationships with parents are maintained and verbal information is shared with them on a daily basis, as well as regular newsletters. Staff complete daily diaries for the younger children to keep parents fully informed of their children's routines throughout the day. Parents benefit from the good range of policies and procedures, which are available to them as well as the informative parents' notice board. Parents are positive towards the care and education their children receive and state their children are provided with good opportunities to socialise in a structured environment and always come home happy. Partnerships with other agencies supporting children's care and learning are very good. For example, staff

work very hard with local authority support workers as well as other professionals, such as speech therapists and social workers, to ensure children's overall needs are being met.

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

Children display warm and close relationships with the members of staff, which results in them enjoying their time at the setting. Staff members have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and provide children with a sufficient range of activities to support their overall learning and development.

A satisfactory balanced level of adult-led and child-initiated activities are provided, which provides the children with a sense of belonging and independence. They make confident, independent choices from the resources available to them. Children are showing some independence as they demonstrate their own self-care. For example, during mealtimes they attempt to feed themselves. Children make steady progress and develop well in their problem solving and numeracy skills as they practise their calculating and weighing skills. For example, they guess which foods will be heavier as they use the scales in the role play area. Children are becoming confident communicators and clearly make their requests known. They show great interest in books and thoroughly enjoy sitting with staff members to read their favourite stories. Young children enthusiastically point at the pages and discuss the pictures displayed. Children have some good opportunities to practise their mark making skills and have great fun drawing on the plastic shapes in the outdoor area. However, there is a limited display of letters and numbers throughout the setting to support and develop children's recognition of words and numbers. Children display great enthusiasm in the natural world and enthusiastically talk about the frog that was caught earlier in the morning. They are keen to recall the events and share their news with their parents. Children do have some access to the outdoor environment and enjoy playing on the small wheeled toys, climbing frames and slides. However, the indoor and outdoor environments are not sufficiently linked to ensure that children can move freely between the two areas and access the outdoors independently. Children have satisfactory opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills as they access and use programmable toys. Children are given sufficient opportunities to develop their creativity as they play with the play dough and paints. They describe the snakes they make with the play dough, stating that they are 'nice and soft'.

Children's welfare is mainly supported well by the setting. They are provided with healthy and nutritious snacks, and staff talk to them about the importance of exercise as they dance and perform the actions to their favourite songs. Children are beginning to develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe as they take part in occasional fire drills. Staff are very patient and responsive to children's individual needs and ensure they feel comfortable and secure in their care. Children are well-behaved and staff members demonstrate as good role models to them to reinforce and encourage positive behaviour. They skilfully use verbal and

non-verbal praise to encourage the children's good behaviour, the result being that children behave well in their care and respond positively towards them.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	4
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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 (Suitability and Safety of Premises and Equipment). 13/07/2010

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 (Suitability and Safety of Premises and Equipment). 13/07/2010