

Thames Tiddlers Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY408269
Inspection date 07/07/2010
Inspector Jeannette Waring

Setting address Shooters Hill Post 16 Campus, Red Lion Lane, LONDON,
SE18 4LD
Telephone number 02088 569437
Email burrows.claire@btinternet.com
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*.

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Description of the setting

Thames Tiddlers Nursery was registered under the present ownership in February 2010. The nursery originally opened in 1984 and has operated from several sites. It has been registered at the current site since August 2007 and was previously owned by the London Borough of Greenwich.

The nursery operates from a purpose-built, porta-cabin complex set within the grounds of Shooters Hill Post 16 Campus in Red Lion Lane on the Woolwich/Plumstead borders. It mainly serves children and families from the diverse local community, although some families travel some distance to attend. The nursery is part of the Shooters Hill Children's Centre and also has links with the Post 16 campus. The accommodation comprises two main play rooms. There is a small library room to the side of the two- to five-year-old room, and a sleep room to the side of the baby unit. There is also a milk kitchen attached to the baby unit. Each play room has a children's bathroom. In addition there is an office and a nursery kitchen. All children have access to outdoor play in the nursery garden. The baby unit has its own decked area accessed directly from the room.

The nursery is open each weekday from 8am until 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. It is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for a maximum of 36 children from birth to the end of the early years age group. Currently there are 47 children on roll who attend for a variety of days and session, 18 children receive funding for nursery education.

There are 17 members of staff who work directly with the children, 15 of whom hold a recognised childcare qualification; the remaining two staff are working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thrive in this vibrant, harmonious and welcoming nursery. They are safe, secure and happy and their health and well-being is generally promoted well. The well developed partnerships with parents and with other agencies are a key strength and are significant in ensuring that the needs of all children are met, including any additional support needs. Because staff know the children well they are able to successfully promote their learning and development and children make good progress in all areas given their starting points. Regular self-evaluation, which includes the whole staff team, allows the nursery to identify and prioritise areas for development enabling staff to make further improvements to a good quality service.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review hygiene routines to ensure that all procedures are fully effective and protect children from risk of cross-infection
- review the procedure for recording medication administered to children so that parents sign each entry
- review the formal planning for children's learning and draw on staff's secure knowledge of their key children's skills, abilities and interests focusing on what children need to do next to progress their learning

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust procedures ensure that children are safe and protected from harm. Rigorous recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of all new staff and students. An induction period supports new staff and regular supervision meetings ensure continued suitability. Regular safeguarding training and a clear safeguarding policy ensures all staff are aware of their responsibility for protecting children. Record keeping is generally good and helps to ensure children's safety and well-being. However, although procedures for administration of medication are clear with required permissions in place and doses accurately recorded, parents do not routinely counter-sign each entry, although staff ensure that they are informed at the end of the day.

Management and staff share a clear vision for the nursery. They routinely review practice and set realistic goals and action plans for change at the regular staff meetings. Staff are encouraged to evaluate activities and day to day practice and to share their ideas for improvement. In this way the team work together to make changes and bring about improved outcomes for children. For example, work on the outdoor play area, together with appropriate staff training and engagement with outside agencies has seen the introduction of the Forest School and the Soccer Tots programmes. Staff training needs are identified at supervision meetings and these take account of personal interests and the needs of the nursery. This very positive approach to personal development enables staff to keep abreast of current good practice and bring new ideas back to the nursery.

The nursery has developed excellent partnerships parents. This begins with a home visit by the nursery manager and child's key worker before child joins the nursery. This meeting allows staff to meet children when they are relaxed and comfortable. It also enables staff to complete enrolment forms with parents and together they begin to build a picture of a child's skills, abilities and interests. Good two-way communication is maintained through day to day discussions, contact sheets, opportunities to view children's progress files and twice yearly parents evenings, when parents meet with their child's key worker to review their progress. Initiatives such as the nursery lending library and Billy Bear (a bear who likes to go home with children at the weekend and has a journal which parents complete for him), enable parents to take part in nursery activities and to comment on children's progress at home. Parents are welcome in the nursery and often join in activities at the end of the day when collecting their child. Parents accompany children on outings and the annual trip to the seaside and summer sports day are

events eagerly anticipated by children and parents alike.

The nursery is also committed to partnership working with other agencies in order to make sure that all children receive the support they need and to ensure that children have a smooth transition into school. For example, the use of transition reports ensures that good information on children's progress follows them into school, and in some circumstances arrangements are made for teachers to visit nursery to work with children who will be moving across. The nursery's special educational needs co-ordinator (senco) works closely with the area senco and has strong links with a range of other professionals, some of whom visit the setting to work with children and provide advice and support to staff. This ensures that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported. As part of the Shooters Hill Children's Centre the nursery links parents to activities at the centre. Children also enjoy the opportunity of watching plays performed by drama students from the Post 16 Campus where the nursery is located. These links help to establish a strong community feel in the nursery.

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

Children come happily into nursery, they are secure and comfortable in the warm, friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Children and staff reflect the diverse local community and the nursery actively celebrates this diversity. Displays and resources reflect positive images of a range of cultures and families. For example, photographs of the children with their close and extended families are linked to the family's country of origin on a large world map. Families are encouraged to share important events and celebrations with nursery and children enjoy celebrating a range of community festivals. Children also explore elements of their own and one another's culture through books and activities and, as a result, children learn to feel good about themselves and to value and respect others.

Arrangements for promoting children's health and well-being are generally good. Children learn about how to be healthy through a variety of activities, they are provided with appetising, nutritious meals which they enjoy, and they are encouraged to be active and to develop good personal hygiene routines. Staff follow nursery routines when dealing with children's personal care and these are generally good, although some inconsistent use of gloves when nappy changing and some children sleeping in close proximity to each other at nap times presents a risk of cross infection.

Senior staff have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the early learning goals and all staff know the children well. Staff are supportive and responsive when playing alongside children and they make meaningful notes on children's progress which are used to track their progress towards the early learning goals. The more formal observations and resulting focus activities are not always targeted on the areas where children need to make the most progress. This is because the observations, which link to these plans, are carried out at specific planned times and do not always provide the best insight into a child's thinking. However, key workers have a good understanding of their children's skills, abilities

and interests, general planning for learning is good, the activities provided are interesting and children play purposefully with them throughout the day. As a result, all children make at least good progress in their learning and development across all areas of learning. They make outstanding progress in their personal social and emotional development and in their communication, language and literacy skills. Support for children with additional needs is also particularly good. All staff work with the nursery special educational needs co-ordinator (senco), who works in close partnership with parents and other professionals to put in place effective strategies to ensure that children make as much progress as they can whilst at nursery.

In the baby room staff provide a warm, cosy and nurturing environment. Children show secure attachment to their carers and are confident when meeting new people, as long as their key person is in sight. Outdoor play is provided in a decked play area which has suitable shading to protect them from the sun. They enjoy using small slides and other apparatus in the shade of a gazebo. They also enjoy sitting on a mat to listen to stories and songs. Indoors they benefit from both spontaneous play and activities planned by staff who know them well. As a result, children's learning and development is well supported and they make good progress. Of particular note is how well children's communication and language skills are fostered and many children are good communicators by the time they move up to the older room.

In the room for children aged two to five years, the older children display high levels of confidence and independence. It is clear when talking to them that they are proud of their nursery. They enjoy talking about what they do in nursery and pointing out photos of themselves or pieces of their work that are displayed on the walls. Children sing the nursery song, which was written by the room leader, with huge enthusiasm. The free access to outdoor play allows children space to explore and investigate. The Forest School area, led by a trained member of staff, is of great benefit, here children learn about caring for the environment in a wild and exciting space. They learn to take risks in a safe space, to explore nature and to play with natural materials. The sessions also supports children's personal and social development and helps to hone their observational and listening skills. Similarly the Soccer Tots programme has had a great impact on children's learning. For example, staff have recorded how children improve their balance, hand-eye co-ordination and ball skills. It has also had a marked impact on children's social and listening skills, particularly for those children who learn best through active play.

Children behave extremely well, they are polite, friendly and caring. They know what is expected of them and are learning to be self-disciplined and how to behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others. Children with challenging behaviour are well supported and managed by staff who respond calmly and sensitively helping to restore calm to the nursery with a minimum of fuss. Children routinely make positive contributions to nursery life, they enjoy taking responsibility as they readily pack toys away, set the tables for lunch and help to prepare tea. They are also included in daily planning as they help staff select resources, set up activities and display their work.

Overall the nursery management and staff team work together to ensure that all

children have an enjoyable and positive experience at nursery where they can flourish as they play and learn together.

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	1
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	1
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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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