



Techno Tots (Birmingham) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 250129 |
| Inspection date | 09 November 2005 |
| Inspector | Janet Ann Keeling |
| Setting Address | City Technology College, PO Box 1017, Cooks Lane , Kingshurst, Birmingham, B37 6NZ |
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| Registered person | Techno Tots (Holdings) Ltd |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Full day care |

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Techno Tots Day Nursery opened in 1991. It operates from purpose built premises, located on the campus at the City Technology College, Solihull. The nursery provides places for students attending the college and also serves the local community.

The nursery is registered to provide care for 116 children at any one time. There are currently 168 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes 22 grant funded three-year-olds and 4 grant funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of

sessions. The nursery has strategies in place to support children with special educational needs and for children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round, except for public bank holidays. Sessions are from 07:45 until 17:45.

There are 25 staff who work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the Local Authority Early Years Team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean and well maintained environment. Children are actively and consistently learning about the importance of good hygiene practices through very well established daily routines. For example, children begin to understand why they must wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Children's health is further safeguarded through the staff's current knowledge of first aid and their clear awareness of how to minimise the risk of cross infection throughout the nursery.

Children have access to a wide range of activities which effectively contribute to their good health and well-being. Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through regular access to both indoor and outdoor activities where they are encouraged and supported to develop new skills. For example, as children enjoy group activities with the parachute, learn to peddle bikes and throw and catch balls. Children enjoy the fresh air and explore their local environment as they regularly visit the Country Park, library and go on nature trails to collect leaves and look for mini-beasts.

Children actively learn about healthy eating through regular discussion with staff and through the completion of topic work. Children independently help themselves to drinking water throughout the day and are offered healthy snacks, for example, a variety of fresh and dried fruit. Children enjoy a nutritious diet which is prepared on the premises using fresh ingredients. Fresh fruit and vegetables are offered on a daily basis. Children's independency is fostered very effectively at lunch time as they collect their own cutlery and beakers before sitting down at the tables. Older children competently serve themselves to their meal and pour their own water, whilst younger children are actively supported by staff at meal times.

Babies and young children rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children calmly and comfortably fall asleep as they feel safe and secure in their surroundings. Children's health and dietary needs are competently met at all times because staff are fully aware of children's individual needs. For example, children's individual requirements are discussed fully with parents on admission, recorded and shared with all staff. Children's accident, medication and emergency consent forms are all fully completed and well maintained by the group.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe and secure in their immediate environment, for example, doors leading into the main building are locked at all times whilst visitors to the group are closely monitored. Safety policies and procedures are in place. Children are able to move around the inside of the nursery safely and freely as identified risks and hazards have been minimised, through the completion of risk assessments. However, children's safety is compromised when children and parents arrive and depart from the nursery because hazards in the car park area have not been minimised.

Children have access to good quality equipment and resources which are appropriate to their developmental needs and which are checked daily to ensure they are safe for the children to use. Children learn about safe practises whilst at nursery, for example, staff discuss safety with the children before using the climbing frame and remind children to walk and not run around the nursery. Children begin to understand about the dangers within their local environment and whilst out walking. For example, children learn about 'stranger danger', they follow the highway code and know why they must hold their partners hand and stay close to a member of staff whilst out walking.

Children benefit from the nursery having fire safety procedures in place which are clear and displayed around the nursery areas, however, children's safety is compromised as emergency vehicles are not always able to safely access the nursery building. Children are familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures which are practised regularly throughout the nursery. Older children are able to explain what they do when they hear the alarm ring, whilst babies and very young children are physically escorted from the premises, however, not all required fire safety equipment is in place for the effective evacuation of babies.

Children are protected from possible abuse or neglect because the staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities whilst protecting children in their care. Staff are well informed and confident in following the group's child protection procedures and have a designated child protection co-ordinator who would follow through any issues of concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, confident and actively enjoy their time in the nursery, children are eager to learn and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of stimulating and challenging activities. Children are able to build on knowledge and skills already acquired because staff know the children very well and because staff have developed positive links with parents and carers.

Babies and young children benefit from the staff's growing knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which enables staff to plan

first hand learning experiences based on children's individual needs. Babies receive positive support from staff who spend time holding, talking and playing with them. Babies develop their early communication skills as they engage with staff who respond to their non-verbal sounds during play. Babies have good opportunities to develop their senses as they explore a variety of objects and textures such as, ribbons, pasta, soft toys and brushes, and explore sound as they listen to soft music and shake a variety of musical instruments. Babies are encouraged and supported in their early physical development as they begin to roll, crawl and take their first steps.

Children aged two to three are beginning to develop very positive relationships with both their peers and adults. They show delight and enthusiasm at the range of stimulating activities made available to them. Children have good access to toys and resources which enables them to develop their independence and make choices. Children's learning is supported well through a good balance of both adult-led and child-initiated play.

Children's behaviour is good overall, most children share toys, take turns with equipment and play co-operatively together. Children are actively praised and encouraged by the staff for their effort and achievements, children's self-esteem is carefully fostered. However, in the pre-school room children's challenging behaviour is not always managed consistently by staff. Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. Children speak confidently and share their news with their friends and staff. Children listen carefully to each other and show care and concern for their peers. Children benefit from effective settling in procedures where children and parents are encouraged to take an active role in the group.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teaching promotes children's learning towards the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning, however, the programme for mathematical development is limited. The staff are caring, patient and supportive of the children; they have high regard for the children as individuals and know them well. Staff encourage children to share, take turns and to take part in group activities. They also help children to understand the need for self-discipline, as a result, children are generally well behaved. However, staff do not always manage children's challenging behaviour consistently, consequently, this can have an impact on the children's learning. Planning is thorough, activities are varied and learning outcomes for focused activities are clearly identified. Interaction between the staff and children is positive; adults encourage children's thinking, questioning and exploration. New assessment and progression files have been recently introduced for all children, they are in their early stages of implementation, but show promise. Although, at present information gained from assessments is not effectively linked to future planning.

All children have equal opportunities for learning; they are assigned to key worker groups and this ensures that staff know the children well and are able to meet their individual needs. As a result of the wide range of interesting, stimulating and first hand activities provided by the staff, children make good progress overall. The children benefit from the staff's constructive questions, which encourage them to

express their feelings and develop their ideas and interests. Children have many opportunities throughout the day to talk openly and freely. Children who have special educational needs are very well supported in the group.

Children are enthusiastic, confident and interested in all the activities available to them. Children are eager to learn and settle quickly into the group, children's relationships with adults and their peers are positive. Children learn about their own and other cultures as they celebrate festivals throughout the year; they express their feelings and manage their self-care needs effectively. Children engage easily in conversation; during group discussion time children participate enthusiastically, they listen carefully to adults and to each other, and talk about past and present experiences. For example, children shared their experiences of bonfire night, many children talked about the colours and sounds that the fire works made, whilst another child spoke about the fire engine and how it had been rescuing people. Children listen attentively at story time and many are able to recall the story lines, they learn how print carries meaning and more able children are able to write recognisable letters. Children have regular access to a wide range of books; many of them show a keen interest in books and use them independently, carefully turning the pages and discussing the illustrations with each other.

Children are beginning to use mathematical language as they engage in a range of activities, such as water play, where they talked about the jugs being full and empty and whilst engaged in an outdoor bike race, where the children peddled with great excitement and enthusiasm to gain first, second and third places. Children engage in number rhymes and songs such as five current buns. Children confidently named shapes such as square, triangle, circle and had opportunities to sort, match and compare objects in a variety of contexts. Children show good control and co-ordination as they move confidently and safely around the nursery building. Children have access to a secure outdoor space where they are able to develop their climbing, peddling and balancing skills; for example, as they negotiate the climbing frame, peddle bicycles and kick balls. The children use a wide range of small equipment, including scissors, paintbrushes, glue sticks and pencils which they handle with increasing control.

Children develop an awareness of healthy eating through topic work and regular discussion with adults and their peers; for example, whilst engaged in snack time children talked about their likes and dislikes of various foods, and staff explained why certain foods were healthier than others. Children have daily opportunities to paint, draw and make collages using a suitable range of media including chalk, felt pens, pencils, fabric and malleable materials. Children use their imagination in activities such as painting and various role-play situations; for example, children excitedly played dentists in the role play area and enjoyed the 'splash' painting activity. Children show an interest in technology as they have access to a computer, although it is not used regularly by the children. Children have good first hand opportunities to look after living things such as plants and animals, as they grow sun flowers and helped to care for the baby chicks. Children explore sound effectively through playing a range of musical instruments and listening to a variety of musical sounds. They enjoy singing and maintain a good sense of rhythm when joining in rhymes. The children make good progress in all areas of learning except in mathematics where children's learning is not fully extended.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed throughout the nursery and are valued and respected as individuals. Children's needs are competently supported by staff who know the children very well and who respond sensitively to their needs.

Children are fully included in all activities and their differences are acknowledged and supported. Children are able to access a good range of activities, toys and resources which actively raise their awareness of diversity and promote their understanding of others. For example, through access to role play equipment, books, posters and by welcoming visitors from the local community. Children's understanding is further promoted as they complete topic work on Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas, and through positive discussions with the staff. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is competently fostered during these activities, with the staff acting as positive role-models for the children.

Children's behaviour is good overall. Children are fully aware of the group's boundaries and expectations for good behaviour. Children are learning to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Although, at times a minority of children in the pre-school room present challenging behaviour which has an impact on children's learning within the group. Children's understanding of right and wrong is further developed as they respond to gentle reminders from staff, to care for their environment, resources and each other.

An effective partnership with parents contributes to the children's well-being within the nursery. Children's individual care and educational needs are fully discussed with the parents before the child starts at the setting, enabling staff to be fully aware of children's needs. Children's progress and achievements are shared with parents each day. The staff welcome informal contact with parents at the beginning and end of the day; they share information about the children's activities and achievements on a regular basis, and parents are able to view their child's development file at any time. Parents and carers have access to a range of information regarding the group, including a prospectus, policies and procedures, the educational programme, current topic work and daily planning.

Staff actively encourage parents to take an interest in their child's early education, through informal discussions, topical information sessions, regular newsletters and parents evenings.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation and the focused leadership and management of the group. There is a comprehensive operational plan to support children's care, learning and welfare which is supported by well-written policies and procedures, however, whilst most nursery staff are aware of the relevant policies and procedures, agency staff are not. Staff deployment is generally good throughout the

nursery, with systems in place to check staff/child ratio's throughout the day, however, at times the checking system fails to support the required ratio's.

The premises are welcoming with a bustling atmosphere, the nursery is well organised and promotes children's learning and play for all children from birth through to pre-school. Children benefit from qualified and experienced staff, who follow an effective induction programme and who are committed to on-going training and development. Staff have regular opportunities to reflect on their own practice, through regular staff meetings and appraisals.

Leadership and management is good. The staff work well as a team and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss daily issues and the planning and assessment of children's learning. The manager and staff have worked effectively with the local authority early years team who provide support and guidance throughout the year. Staff are encouraged to attend relevant training courses to further enhance their knowledge of the early years curriculum and new initiatives in childcare. Managers are pro-active in monitoring and observing staff practice throughout the nursery and are fully committed to continuing to develop the early years provision.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend the provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting were asked to; ensure Ofsted were notified of all staff changes, make sure the daily registration system was accurate, extend the range of resources that promote positive imagery of diversity, ensure fire procedures are displayed, make sure that sleeping babies are regularly checked and records maintained, ensure accident records are fully completed and update the child protection policy.

Since the last inspection the setting has put systems in place to ensure Ofsted are informed of all significant changes. The daily registration system now records the time of arrival and departure of both staff and children ensuring that records accurately demonstrate which children and staff are present. The range of resources which reflect positive imagery of diversity have been extended and are fully accessible to the children. Fire procedures are now displayed in all areas ensuring parents, staff and visitors are effectively informed about emergency evacuation procedures. Sleeping babies are checked regularly and written records are now maintained. Accident records are now fully completed, discussed with parent and parents signatures obtained. The child protection policy has been updated and now complies with the National Standards Guidance.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been four complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

In June 2005 concerns were raised with Ofsted regarding the care and play

opportunities for babies, children's dietary needs and partnership with parents. These concerns relate to National Standards 3 care, learning and play; National Standard 8 food and drink and National Standard 12 partnership with parents. Ofsted contacted the provider and received a detailed response to the concerns in relation to the relevant National Standards. The report demonstrated that the provider was meeting the National Standards and the supporting criteria. The provider remained qualified for registration.

In August 2005 concerns were raised with Ofsted regarding staff/child ratios, supervision of children, security of the premises, the quality and provision of food, feedback to parents and complaint management. These concerns related to National Standard 2 organisation; National Standard 6 safety; National Standard 8 food and drink and National Standard 12 working in partnership with parents. An unannounced inspection was carried out by an inspector and agreed five actions in relation to; the effective deployment and staff, security of the building, incident recording, complaint records and developing the partnerships with parents. The provider detailed in writing the steps taken to improve practice and meet the requirements of the agreed actions. The written action responses were satisfactory and the provider remained qualified for registration.

In August 2005 concerns were raised with Ofsted regarding the daily attendance register, staff/child ratios and feedback to parents. These concerns related to National Standard 2 organisation and National Standard 12 working in partnership with parents. Ofsted carried out an unannounced inspection to investigate if the National Standards were being met. Ofsted agreed three actions in relation to staff/child ratios and the deployment of staff, the daily registration system and improving communication with parents. The provider detailed in writing the steps taken to improve practice and submitted supporting evidence that demonstrated that the relevant National Standards were being met. The written action responses were satisfactory and the provider remains qualified for registration.

In October 2005 concerns were raised with Ofsted regarding staff/child ratios and the supervision of sleeping children. The concerns related to National Standard 2 organisation. Ofsted investigated through correspondence with the provider. The provider's written report addressed the areas of concern and submitted supporting evidence to demonstrate that the relevant National Standards and supporting criteria were being met. The provider remains qualified for registration.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- make sure that hazards in the car park area are minimised, and improve fire safety precautions, by ensuring that emergency vehicles are able to access the building safely and that appropriate equipment is in place to support the evacuation of very young children and babies
- ensure staff/child ratio's are maintained in all rooms at all times and ensure that all staff including agency staff are fully aware of the nursery's policies and procedures.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- maximise children's learning by improving the programme for mathematics and continue to develop the newly implemented assessment and progression files to ensure information gained is used to inform future planning in order to support children's individual learning needs
- develop the staff's knowledge of behaviour management to ensure children's behaviour in the pre-school room is managed consistently and effectively.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk