



## **Ciara's Tots**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY224528
<b>Inspection date</b>	03 May 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Teresa Ann Clark
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<b>Registered person</b>	Ciara's Tots
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Ciara's Tots Day Nursery has been registered since 2003. It is situated in the Chorlton on Medlock area of Manchester. The nursery provides childcare for parents working and residing in the locality.

There are 4 base rooms where children are accommodated according to age and stage of development. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. The hours of opening are from 07.00 until 18.00. There are currently 37 children on roll. Of these, 3 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 staff including the manager. All of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept healthy because they are cared for in an environment where staff follow effective procedures and practices which help to prevent the spread of infection. For example, they clean the tables thoroughly before and after meals and ensure that the toilet areas are kept clean throughout the day. They consistently follow effective practices when changing nappies and give high priority to interacting with the children at these times to make it a positive experience for them. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines. The older children understand that washing hands gets rid of germs.

Children's health is well safeguarded. For example, several staff are qualified in first aid which ensures children receive appropriate care and attention in the event of an accident or emergency. Effective procedures are in place to prevent the spread of sickness and infections. Staff act in children's best interests if they appear unwell at nursery. Parents are contacted to collect children if they become ill whilst at nursery.

Children look forward to playing outdoors where they engage in a limited range of physical activities, such as peddling bikes, the use of the small climbing frame and throwing balls. Planning for physical play is not prioritised, which prevents staff from effectively monitoring children's physical progress. More meaningful activities are provided by a visiting play worker, who organises sports activities which challenge the children and promote their coordination in a fun way.

Children generally benefit from a healthy diet. They enjoy varied, nutritious midday meals which comply with all special dietary requirements to ensure that they remain healthy. Food is freshly prepared on site and attention is given to ensuring that fresh fruit and vegetables are offered each day. Sacks are satisfactory and include some healthy options. Staff work closely with parents during the weaning stage when new foods are introduced. Children are encouraged to feed themselves using appropriate cutlery, which fosters their independence. Fresh drinking water is available to children throughout the day to keep them well refreshed. Babies' needs are accommodated well as they are provided with food and drink in line with their home routines. However, babies are not always held whilst bottle feeding to ensure their comfort and safety.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop a sense of belonging within the nursery as they receive a warm greeting from staff and their friends when they arrive. Children's art work and photographs are attractively displayed to create a homely and welcoming atmosphere. Space within the playrooms is generally well organised, which ensures children can play in safety and comfort. There are sufficient resources and play materials to provide a broad range of activities indoors. Regular checks ensure resources and play materials are safe for children. There are insufficient outdoor toys to provide a range of experiences and physical challenges for children.

Resources and play materials are generally organised to promote children's independence skills. However, the home corners in all playrooms are not sufficiently resourced to be stimulating and inviting to children. There are several books which are ripped and in poor condition, so are not appealing to children. The nursery has appropriate furniture and resources to support the needs of young babies. For example, comfortable chairs, high chairs and travel cots. However, babies often sleep in low-level relaxer chairs which do not ensure they sleep comfortably or safely.

Effective measures are in place to reduce the risk of accidents to children. Routine building checks take place, staff regularly practice evacuation procedures and playroom doors are fitted with safety gates and finger guards. The premises are secure and staff are vigilant about visitors to the nursery.

The effective monitoring of visitors to the nursery ensures children are kept safe. Parents are also reminded not to leave the front door open or allow visitors access to the premises. Children are well supervised as staff position themselves appropriately around the room and outdoors so children are always in their sight. Children are beginning to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. They sweep up spilt sand in case they slip and move toys off the floor to prevent accidents. Older children act responsibly when using the stairs. They know to line up and hold on to the rail when climbing up and down the stairs.

Children are well protected because staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of their roles and understand the procedures they must follow if they suspect children's safety is at risk.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are settled, happy and content in the care of the supportive staff team. The small setting allows the staff and children to build strong and secure relationships. The effective key person system enables children to receive daily care from familiar adults who know them well. This contributes significantly to children's self-esteem and sense of belonging. Children quickly engage in activities on arrival and are secure in the routines of the nursery. They enjoy attending the nursery, where the staff create a fun atmosphere and plan a balanced range of activities to promote children's all round development. Younger children confidently seek company and cuddles from staff. Older children are pleased to see staff and give

them hugs and kisses on arrival. Children who are settling are given lots of individual attention, cuddles, eye contact and gentle tones and reassurance, which helps them feel secure.

Staff have attended training for Birth to three matters framework and are using their knowledge to provide more sensory experiences for children. They enjoy exploring natural materials in the treasure basket and experiences such as sand, water, dough and paint to promote their sensory development. Babies have a spacious indoor area and have some opportunities for outdoor play experiences. They show curiosity as they stretch out for objects and one child shuffles across the floor to explore the small tunnel, showing pleasure and delight at his achievement. Young children's early speech patterns are developed as staff respond to babies' babblings and sing songs and rhymes. The use of the framework is still in the early stages and staff are not yet using it for planning and assessment for the younger children.

#### Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals because they enjoy a suitable range of activities planned to promote their learning. The staff have a satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan activities linked to the six areas of learning. The organisation of the learning environment does not sufficiently encourage children to explore, experiment and make decisions for themselves. They are not able to access all areas of the curriculum to develop their play and learning. There are scant resources in the imaginative play area, which inhibits children's creativity and limits chances for self-initiated play. Children do not have easy access to writing materials to practice their mark making, and maths resources are out of children's reach. Observational records are completed every 3 months which are shared with parents and monitor children's development. However, these records are not effective in tracking children's progress through the stepping stones and do not identify gaps in children's learning. As a result, staff are unable to use these records to inform the planning for children's next steps in learning.

Children are confident within the nursery environment and generally have a positive approach to learning. They show interest in activities and display good levels of concentration in painting, sand play and using the computer. One child spends a considerable length of time exploring different ways of filling a bottle with sand. Children enjoy taking on responsibilities such as sweeping up and wiping tables after lunch. They ask staff 'Can I have a brush please?'. They are vigilant about sweeping up spilt sand and comment 'I missed that bit I will do it after lunch'. Staff and children enjoy each other's company and they frequently laugh and giggle together. Children show great excitement when trying to frighten the staff with the dinosaurs. They develop an enjoyment of books, listen well to stories and are able to re-tell familiar stories. They particularly enjoy stories with rhyme and join in when prompted, for example, 'The Room on the Broom'. Children are confident speakers they talk about their work and make their needs known 'I'm painting a castle' 'I want to write' 'I want to do something else'. They recognise their names and the names of their friends. They sound out familiar letters such as 'Kicking K' and are beginning to form some letters.

Children count confidently to ten and recognise some numbers up to five. They learn about measure and compare size through activities such as 'My growing up book', where they measure their hands and feet over a period of time. They complete puzzles and jigsaws that help them learn about shape. However, they are not practicing their counting skills or developing their early problem solving skills through everyday activities and routines. Children use their senses to explore dough, sand, pasta and jelly. They observe change through baking activities and care for their growing sunflowers. Children know that plants need water and sunshine to make them grow. They observe the weather each day as they complete the weather chart. They learn about people who help us, such as fire fighters, police, doctors and dentists. Children have a wide repertoire of songs and rhymes, such as 'Over the meadow' which they sing with enthusiasm. However, they have few opportunities to explore musical instruments to learn about sound and rhythm. Children are keen to express their ideas through art work. They explore mixing colours, use a variety of techniques and paint observational pictures of fruit and sunflowers.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

All children and their families are warmly welcomed into the nursery. The children attending the nursery reflect a wide range of cultural backgrounds. They learn about the wider world through planned activities and walks in the community. There are some resources and equipment which promote equality of opportunity but these are limited, particularly in the rooms for children under 2 years. Children's individual needs and requirements are known because staff work effectively with parents during pre-placement visits. Skilful and sensitive inclusion of children with special needs helps all children learn to accept the needs of others. Children who have English as an additional language are well supported because staff find out simple words and phrases to help communicate with them. As a result all children feel valued and included.

Children are well behaved and polite in response to the expectations of staff, who are positive role models for children. They eagerly help tidy away toys and volunteer to clean the table after lunch.

Children show care and concern towards others as staff adopt a calm approach to promote respectful relationships. Emphasis is placed on sharing and being kind. Frequent use of praise supports children's efforts and fosters their self confidence. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents and carers are made to feel welcome in the nursery and are generally well informed about their children. They have access to policies and procedures and receive regular newsletters. They are kept informed about their children's development through regular observational records. The staff use clear written daily record sheets for all children, which informs parents about daily care issues such as feeding, nappy changes and sleep times. Comments also include information about play activities. In addition, staff and parents

exchange information verbally at the beginning and end of each day.

A shared reading scheme is also in place which allows children to take home a book to share with their parents. However, parents of children in receipt of nursery funding are not provided with sufficient information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Effective settling in procedures, which are flexible, accommodate children's individual needs and help them become familiar with the staff and nursery environment. Parents speak highly about the nursery provision. They appreciate the friendly welcoming staff who make time to speak to them about their children. They feel confident to share concerns and make suggestions. As a result children are cared for in accordance with parents' wishes and receive continuity and consistency of care.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a positive and happy environment. They benefit from a long serving staff team who are well organised, enthusiastic and conscientious. This ensures children receive consistency of care throughout their time in the nursery. Staff follow children's interests and deploy themselves well to support children in their play. This enhances children's self-confidence and contributes to them feeling relaxed and secure in the nursery. Appraisals, regular meetings and good access to training ensures that staff are well supported in their professional development. Children's welfare is fully safeguarded as recruitment and vetting procedures are robust to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. The nursery has all the required policies and procedures in place, which are understood by staff. These are implemented well in practice and contribute to the safety and welfare of children.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The management team are competent and work well together to ensure the nursery runs smoothly. There are systems in place to identify areas for improvement and action plans in place. There is a rolling programme for staff to attend Birth to three matters training, which is already having a positive impact on the care of babies, who have a wider range of sensory experiences. However, there is no system in place to monitor the education provision to ensure continued improvement. As a consequence there are gaps in the provision which limits children's progress towards the early learning goals.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The previous inspection recommended the introduction of a key worker system; observation records to be used to plan activities for children's individual needs; resources and activities to promote equality of opportunity; parents to be provided with policies and information about children's progress. Additional recommendations included fresh drinking water to be available to children; fire drills and risk assessments to be carried out; and finally to introduce an induction system and set up individual staff files.

The nursery has introduced a key worker system, parents have access to the nursery policies and receive regular written reports about children's development. Fresh drinking water is available to children in their individual water bottles with name tags. The nursery carries out regular fire drills and risk assessments are in place. There are files for each member of staff, which include all relevant information, and staff receive an induction when they commence employment at the nursery. These improvements contribute to the safety and well-being of children.

The observation and assessment systems are still ineffective in planning to meet children's individual needs. The nursery continues to lack resources and play materials which promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. These issues have been raised as recommendations at this inspection.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There has been one complaint since the last inspection. This related to National Standards 7: (Health), Standard 6: (Safety), Standard 11: (Behaviour) and Standard 12: (Partnership with parents). Ofsted asked the provider to investigate the complaint and are satisfied with the action taken. The provider remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **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):

- review current sleeping arrangements for young babies and ensure they are held whilst bottle feeding
- continue to develop staff's knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework to enable them to plan activities and experiences to support children's play and learning and use observations and assessments to inform the planning
- increase the range of resources and activities to promote children's



awareness of society and the wider world.

### **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):

- improve the planning and assessment systems to ensure there are clear links to the stepping stones and make effective use of assessment records to plan for children's next steps in their learning
- review the organisation of the learning environment to ensure children have easy access to resources and activities and improve resources in the home corners, book areas and outdoor area (also applies to care)
- develop a rigorous system for monitoring and evaluating the success of the educational provision to ensure continued improvement and children's progress towards the early learning goals.

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