

Tiny Explorers

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY290017
Inspection date	09/11/2010
Inspector	Anthea Errington
Setting address	RAF Boulmer, Portal Place, Longhoughton, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 3JN
Telephone number	01665 577390
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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 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 the voluntary part 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 satisfactory.

Staff members demonstrate very caring and supportive relationships to children and their families. They work hard and have developed their understanding well of the Early Years Foundation Stage and plan activities in line with the areas of learning. However, there are limited opportunities for children to develop their information and technology skills and limited resources to promote an understanding of equality and diversity. The setting has generally improved their practice by addressing actions and recommendations raised at the last inspection which sufficiently supports continuous improvement of the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- support further children's learning in using a wide range of information and technology resources
- provide further opportunities to help children become aware of, explore and question differences in ethnicity, cultures, religion, language and disability issues
- develop further risk assessments to ensure children's safety in all areas of the premises

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Management and staff members have a secure understanding of their role and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children in their care. They principally provide a safe and secure environment through the satisfactory system of risk assessments. However, risk assessments are not robust enough to highlight possible risk areas within the setting. A clear safeguarding policy is in place which is shared with parents and suitability checks have been completed on all staff members to further protect children. There are well-maintained systems in place to

record attendance as well as effective recording systems for medication administration and accidents. As well as this children take part in regular fire drills and ensure clear floor space by tidying up activities. This teaches them simple but effective ways to keep safe.

Documentation is well organised and required records are in place, readily available and stored securely to protect confidentiality. The setting clearly recognises the importance of continuous improvement and has sufficiently met actions and recommendations from the previous inspection. For example, detailed observations are now in place to plan effectively for children's learning. A detailed self-evaluation document ensures the setting is aware of its strengths and areas for improvement. The setting displays a satisfactory attitude towards equality and diversity and staff work very hard to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment which ensures both children and their parents feel welcome. Children's play opportunities are maximised through the very good organisation of space and the availability of interesting resources.

Parents receive a good range of information with regard to the setting. For example, policies and procedures clearly outline the service provided and parents are kept informed of their children's progress on a daily basis through regular communication with staff members with the use of daily diaries and regular discussion. The daily exchange of information, informative notice boards and regular newsletters all ensure effective two-way flow of information between the setting and home. Children's learning and development files are well organised and clearly show the progress children make in their learning and development. Partnership with other agencies continues to be good, and staff members are fully aware of the benefits of sharing relevant information to ensure continuity of care.

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

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the learning, development and welfare requirements and use their invaluable knowledge of each child to ensure children's learning opportunities are maximised. Well-presented and detailed plans as well as observations and assessment of children's progress support staff in providing a broad range of activities within the areas of learning.

Children confidently select from the good quality resources available for their use and staff members fully interact with them. An effectively-balanced level of adult-led and child-initiated activities are provided which provides the children with a real sense of belonging and independence. Children make steady progress in their problem solving and numeracy skills and learn of shape and measure as they establish which small world figures will fit into the dolls house. Young children and babies have great opportunities to learn about shapes and practise their mark-making skills as they run their fingers through the soap mixture on the table top. They confidently communicate stating 'look at the big and the tiny bubbles' which supports their understanding of shape and size further. Children are given plenty of scope to develop their imagination and creativity as they happily engage in role

play activities.

Staff are very skilled in adapting activities in order to support and build on children's interests. For example, whilst singing a favourite song, staff enthusiastically support the children as they collect the resources and arrange themselves into a make-believe bus. Children display great pride in their achievements as they receive meaningful praise from members of staff which greatly supports their confidence and self-esteem. Children are beginning to develop their reading skills as staff skilfully encourage interaction with the story they have chosen. For example, children identify well known characters and turn the pages over in sequence as they follow the story read to them. Children have access to the outdoor environment on a daily basis and enjoy the freedom it brings to them. They display great interest in the natural world as they gaze and discuss the colours of the visible rainbow.

Outings into the local environment help children learn of their own community. In addition they are given good opportunities to discover places of historic interest such as Alnwick Castle. An adequate range of resources and activities are in place to contribute towards children's learning of the wider world as well as programmable toys to support their information and technology skills. This is an area for further development. Children are provided with good opportunities to learn of the importance of recycling and with staff support identify the correct bin to place waste materials in. The setting is fully committed and takes all reasonable steps to ensure that children's welfare needs are met. Children behave well in the setting and respond positively towards staff members who have realistic expectations in accordance with each child's age and stage of development. Children are provided with healthy and nutritious snacks which comply with their dietary requirements and learn about keeping themselves healthy as they happily wash hands before food is provided. Access to individual towels helps to prevent any spread of infection. Children demonstrate their feeling of being safe as they approach staff for comfort and reassurance. They are beginning to learn to keep themselves safe as they help to pick up toys to ensure clear floor space and by practising road safety whilst on outings.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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	3
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	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
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 voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met