

Smart Tots

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Smart Tots Day Nursery was registered by the current owners in 2008 to care for a maximum of 80 children under the age of eight years at any one time. It is one of 10 settings run by Complete Childcare Limited and operates from a listed building in the centre of Banbury. The nursery consists of four activity rooms for different age groups and an outdoor area on two levels. There is a kitchen on site where a chef prepares all the food for the children. Toilet and sleep facilities are also provided. The children use the whole of the ground and first floors while the manager's office and staff facilities are located on the second floor of the building. Inside, there are several changes in level necessitating steps within the property.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 69 children within the early years age range on roll and 18 staff who work with the children on a full- or part-time basis. Of these, 16 hold a nationally recognised qualification to level 2 or above, and two are currently working towards a qualification. In addition, there is an external French teacher and music and movement teacher who visit once a week. The setting operates from 8am until 6pm each weekday with earlier starts and later finishes by prior arrangement.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting works with a good understanding of each child as an individual which allows caring staff to meet their learning and welfare needs effectively. Children play and learn in a well-organised environment where they have many opportunities to be independent and make choices. A very strong partnership with parents, in which key persons play an important part, enables staff to build on good practice to ensure that children make progress. This approach is also supported by reflective self-evaluation which gives the setting the capacity to improve outcomes for children. Staff undertake effective assessments and observations on children but this information is not always used robustly to track progress towards early learning goals.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- refine the use of assessment information to more effectively track children's progress towards early learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has concise and well written policies and procedures in place, which ensures that it is managed safely, efficiently and in the interests of all its users. Children are safeguarded as well trained and knowledgeable staff consistently implement effective procedures. The provider uses thorough recruitment and vetting procedures and all staff show a strong commitment to working with children. Children's safety is promoted as they play in an environment where hazards are minimised through the use of effective risk assessments. This provides them with opportunities to take risks and be independent, which builds their confidence and ability to make decisions. As a result, children decide where they want to play and explore, which often includes using well resourced outside play spaces. Children's good health and well-being is promoted by staff, for example, in cases of illness, minor injuries or when considering their personal hygiene.

The provider and manager use effective self-evaluation to inform them of what they do well and what they may want to improve. This involves all staff and parents value the opportunity to provide feedback which they are confident makes a difference to how the setting operates. The manager leads a team of dedicated professionals who all play an active part in formulating and implementing action plans. There have been improvements made since the last inspection. The setting has an outstanding partnership with parents which is an important factor in its work with children. In addition, the setting promotes wider partnerships to support children's ongoing learning and development.

Children play in spacious, attractive and stimulating accommodation. They are able to access resources that promote their all round learning and development. Staff respond well to children's needs as they promote free play or take a more direct approach when leading activities. This allows staff to make timely interventions to enhance children's understanding and learning. The setting promotes inclusive practice at all times as children are treated as unique individual each with the capacity to build on what they can already do. Children with special educational needs or those who use English as an additional language are very well supported in the setting. Staff allow children to understand about their diverse world through well planned activities and children particularly enjoy the opportunity to work with a visiting French speaker on a regular basis.

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

Children make progress as they take part in age-appropriate learning activities that are both child- and adult-led. The setting uses effective systems to gain an understanding of the starting points of children and staff undertake regular observations to evaluate their progress. This assessment information is used to plan children's next steps in learning and is shared with parents. This ensures that children face play opportunities that reflect both their level of achievement and

their interests. Written development records collate assessment information accurately though insufficient use is made of this when tracking children's progress in a systematic way. Staff support the choices made by children well. As a result, children of all ages select resources that they want to play with such as puzzles, large construction sets or musical toys. Children make use of role play and dressing up resources which results in imaginative play as they create scenes and activities. The setting has recently reorganised how children access ICT equipment, which ensures that it now forms an important part of children's learning and development. Children use a range of sensory equipment while in the setting which provides the youngest children with stimulation and the motivation to become more mobile. Children respond well to adults as they support their free play or when in adult-led activities. This allows adults to have conversations with children, ask pertinent questions or offer advice and guidance. Children enjoy sharing books with adults and after a group activity relating to shapes children explore their room to discover and identify a range of different shapes. In addition, children are able to play outdoors and take part in messy play which is used to make displays of their work. The setting has a very good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of how young children learn through play and first hand experience.

The setting promotes children's welfare very well. All children are safeguarded and have an understanding of their own safety and that of others. Children's behaviour is good as they share and include each other in their play. There are very positive relationships in the setting which staff manage expertly. Staff allow children to have an understanding of the varying needs of other children, for example, even though children are broadly grouped by age they will show a range of skills and abilities. In addition, children are able to apply themselves for appropriate periods of time and understand that different activities require different responses, for example, in a group activity or when involved in enthusiastic outdoor play.

The setting promotes outcomes for children very well. Children are very happy as they make choices, invent games or interact with adults. Children explore their learning environment freely and feel safe and secure in their relationship with adults. This promotes conversations and allows a good understanding to exist which underpins the purposeful learning atmosphere within the setting. Children learn about healthy lifestyles and choices as they enjoy all forms of exercise and find out about healthy diets. Most children enjoy challenges and the expectation that they will take some responsibility for their own play. Children generally acquire skills and abilities which are appropriate to their age and their progress ensures that most children are prepared well for future learning needs.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
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	2
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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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