

The Children's House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY349641
Inspection date	09/02/2011
Inspector	Sheena Bankier

Setting address	59 Prince of Wales Avenue, READING, RG30 2UJ
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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

Little Tots Nursery, previously known as The Children's House, has been operated by Little Tots Nurseries Ltd since 2007. It is a private nursery which follows the Montessori ethos. The nursery is situated in the west of Reading. The nursery meets the needs of families in the local community and the intake of children reflects the diversity in the area. The nursery operates from the ground floor of a 1920's house and has an enclosed garden.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They are registered to care for 44 children between the ages of two and eight years. There are currently 98 children on roll in the early years age group. Nursery education funding is available for eligible children from three years of age. The nursery supports children with special educational needs, and children who speak English an additional language. The nursery is open from 8.00am to 6.00pm each weekday for 48 weeks per year. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are a total of 13 staff who work with the children and the two owners regularly work alongside them in the nursery. Nine staff and both of the owners hold recognised childcare qualifications. Seven staff are training to gain or further their qualifications. There are also four visiting teachers who take the children for cookery, gardening and music sessions.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thrive and make very good progress in relation to their starting points at the nursery. Resources are overall, very well considered. The nursery demonstrates a high commitment to sustaining effective continuous improvement. Documentation is mainly comprehensive. Excellent partnerships are in place with parents and others.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- promote and value different languages by displaying words in home languages used by children in the nursery
- review the provision of books to ensure there are daily opportunities for children to independently access a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books
- review and update documentation to maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and their responsibilities to children's welfare. The nursery enables staff to access safeguarding training to underpin their knowledge effectively. The safeguarding policy has clear procedures to follow in the event of concerns or allegations arising, although it is not fully up to date with current terms and information. Rigorous checks, practices and risk assessments promote children's safety, good health and wellbeing extensively. Children develop a good awareness of their own safety through reminders from staff, such as, to walk carefully.

The nursery makes effective continuous improvement. The nursery owners are actively involved in the operation of it, working alongside the staff regularly. They provide a very positive role model to their staff team. The nursery involves staff, parents and children in evaluating its service and practice. This enables the nursery to identify improvements accurately, which are well chosen and targeted. Staff regularly attend in-house and other training to increase their good practice. They carry out their roles and responsibilities efficiently and actively focus their attention on the children.

The nursery meaningfully embraces the individuality of the staff, children and families. They celebrate a wide range of different religions, cultures and languages very successfully, overall, for example, the nursery invites children's families in to visit who offer experiences, such as, food tasting, traditional outfits, or sing songs in home languages. Words in English are on display in all areas of the premises, along with a small amount of other languages in some areas. A wide range of resources are mostly directly available to children. Books are plentiful and staff use these effectively with the children throughout the day. The book area does not always have a large supply of books for children to independently access.

The nursery engages extremely well with parents and a wide range of professionals. As a result, children's care and learning is highly consistent, promoting optimum outcomes. Comprehensive information is available to parents, for example, through the nursery website, notice boards and newsletters. Staff are always available to speak to parents and are extremely approachable and welcoming. Subsequently excellent partnerships are in place with parents and others.

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

Children are happy and settled at the nursery. They quickly settle on arrival and confidently decide what to do. Named pegs, drawers and artwork on display make the environment both welcoming and inviting for children. This very positively develops a strong sense of belonging. Children demonstrate a very secure understanding of the routines and expectations of the nursery, for example,

children know to put the resources back after using them. They quickly recognise the music for tidying up and respond accordingly. As a result, children successfully contribute to the care of the environment. Children form good relationships with each other and adults. They are confident to approach adults and engage with them happily, chatting and asking questions. Staff know children well as individuals enabling them to support children purposefully. Staff provide good role models to children, and the older children provide a very sound example to the younger children. This effectively encourages positive behaviour.

A wide range of experiences, activities and play experiences extends children's progress very well in relation to their starting points. Staff provide meaningful and purposeful interaction and innovative learning experiences for children, for example, they ask excellent questions to support children's thinking skills. Staff underpin and extend children's understanding and recognition of number, colour, shape and letters through excellent large and small groups of children, and individual activities. This enables children to develop significant skills for the future. The well-planned accommodation successfully embraces the six areas of learning in and out of doors. The nursery utilises its own and local facilities to substantially enhance children's learning and development, for example, visiting the local park and post office, and visits to the forest school site. As a result, children explore and investigate different environments, increase their physical skills during varied activities, and extend their knowledge and understanding of the world they live in.

The high ratio of staff to children ensures children have plenty of time and attention and close supervision. Children with English as an additional language, and children with special educational needs receive very good support. The nursery obtains key words in home languages of children and uses these to support effective communication. Resources, such as, picture communication and a visual timetable, significantly increase children's communication and understanding of routines. Staff make ongoing records of children's progress through short and in-depth observations, photographs and children's own work. They regularly summarise children's progress and identify the next steps in children's learning and development. This very effectively tracks children's progress. Staff share information about children's progress and the next steps they identify. This results in consistency and continuity in promoting children's outcomes. Parents regularly access their children's progress records and can contribute to these.

Children show exceptional independence, for example, children confidently fetch water to add to a bowl to make a 'birthday cake'. They visit the toilet independently, and change into their coats and outdoor footwear with little or no support. Children select resources from the low-level storage units, enabling them to make their own choices and initiate their own play and ideas. Children actively participate in meal and snack times, for example, helping to cut up fruit, or collecting their plate and cutlery. Children follow excellent hygiene routines. Posters provide additional reminders to children regarding the importance of good personal hygiene. Wipes and tissues are easily accessible for children to manage their own self-care. Staff ensure the environment is clean and hygienic through regular cleaning routines. They take thorough precautions to prevent cross-infection, for example, by wearing disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies. Food provided by parents is safely stored and a temperature probe checks

food has reached a safe temperature when reheated. The nursery very effectively promotes a healthy lifestyle, such as, through activities and discussions, books, role play, and growing fruit and vegetables in the garden and the allotment, which the children harvest and eat.

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	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	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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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