

Tiny Acorns

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Angela Ramsey

Setting address

17 Dalrymple Road, LONDON, SE4 2BQ

Telephone number

02086943553

Email

tinyacorns@tiscali.co.uk

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 Acorns has been registered since 2006. The nursery operates from a terraced house in a mainly residential area, in the London borough of Lewisham. There is access to a fenced outdoor area, which is fitted with safety surface.

A maximum of 25 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 7pm throughout the year, except public holidays and one week at Christmas.

There are currently 34 children aged from three months to five years on roll. The setting does not receive funding for the provision of free early education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight members of staff including the cook employed. All with the exception of one member of the childcare staff hold a relevant childcare qualification. The nursery receives support from the local Early Years Partnership. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The staff team provide a happy welcoming environment where all children are highly motivated, well cared for and valued as individuals. Staff are well informed of children's starting points which are obtained through observations and discussions with parents. This enables staff to plan for children's future learning and planning is mostly highly successful in supporting learning across each of the six areas of learning. The management and staff team evaluate the provision effectively and have a clear understanding of how to make continuous improvements. There is a strong and positive partnership with parents and other agencies to make sure that the individual needs of the parents are fully met.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the provision of activities and experiences that help children to learn to value diversity and differences.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of how to protect children, and recognise that this is their first priority. They are vigilant, aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have any concerns. There is a clear safeguarding statement and a named person responsible for ensuring that safeguarding concerns are dealt with promptly, appropriately and sensitively. A good range of policies and procedures are in place and implemented well in order to promote all aspects of children's health and safety. Effective risk assessments are in place these include daily and more detailed room checks which ensure that staff take action to eliminate and manage identified risks within the nursery, on outings and in the out door play area. Rigorous vetting procedures for staff and students promote a good level of safety for children. Staff are motivated with regards to their own professional development and are provided with opportunities to attend training.

Partnerships with parents are good. Parent meetings are arranged to discuss children's developments and achievements. Regular newsletters and information on the parents' notice-board keep parents abreast of up and coming events. Policies and procedures have been devised and serve to promote the welfare, care and learning of children and to inform parents of procedures. Daily feedback sheets inform parents about their child's care and the activities they have enjoyed. Parents are also encouraged to record their comments which creates a good two-way sharing of information.

Inclusive practice is promoted ensuring that all children have their welfare needs met and achieve well. Effective links with parents/carers and external agencies or services such as speech and language therapists ensure children receive the support needed. Staff have also established effective links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage which ensures continuity and coherence. The staff team reflects the diversity of the local community and children are able to learn about different faiths and cultures through being able to listen to stories and music. Children are also able to dress up in cultural outfits. The staff team view equality and diversity as important and agree this is an area that would benefit from further improvement because although they plan for various festivals they have not given full consideration to other activities that can further assist children in learning to value diversity.

The staff team has high aspirations for the service they provide and continual improvement is viewed as a priority. All the recommendations set at the last inspection have been complied with. The staff team uses Ofsted's self-evaluation form as a working tool and regularly reviews and updates the information. In this way they accurately identify the strengths and weaknesses in the provision and plan for improvement to ensure that positive outcomes for children are always in the forefront.

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

All staff have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage which enables them to promote good practice. Children thrive and make good progress in this stimulating environment. Each group room is organised to allow children easy access to resources promoting self help skills and independence. Staff are clear about what they want children to learn and make activities lively and engaging. Staff are confident and use open-ended questions that challenge and extend children's learning by encouraging them to think for themselves. The staff team plans and evaluates enjoyable activities, which both support and challenge children's development. Each child is assigned to a key person whose responsibility it is to ensure observations are completed and that these observations are used to plan for children's next steps in learning. Photographs of the children engaged in various activities are also used to illustrate the learning opportunities offered to the children. Children's achievements are recorded under each area of learning and the next steps are planned for. This ensures that children are sufficiently challenged and their individual needs for learning are met.

Babies and toddlers form warm trusting relationships with staff. They willingly approach staff for cuddles, reassurance and support. Staff talk to the children whilst they are occupied in activities, encouraging their language skills. Younger children become competent learners as they explore resources through their senses. For example, babies and toddlers enjoy investigating interactive toys. They push buttons on toys, open and close flaps and work out that one action has an affect on others. Babies are able to explore water and be creative. They show developing physical skills as they use spatulas to apply glue to paper. Toddlers enjoy experiences such as exploring corn-flour and water.

Opportunities to play outdoors are a regular daily feature weather permitting. Children practise their physical skills as they ride wheeled toys around the play area. Climbing frames enable children to take safe risks and practise their balancing skills. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is enhanced as they are able to enjoy the sensory garden as well as planting and care for their green beans and herbs. Children in the pre-school room are also provided with a good range of stimulating resources and activities. During role play children pretend to be doctors and nurses. The doctors and nurses perform 'operations' to a 'patient' who has a broken arm and leg. One of the doctors delivered a 'baby'. Staff also become involved and one plays the part of a patient suffering from 'tummy ache'. The doctors and nurses write prescriptions and book appointments. Such an activity enables children to use their imaginations, build upon first-hand experiences and use writing or mark making for different purposes.

Opportunities for children to be healthy include the provision for children to help themselves to drinks of water to ensure they remain hydrated. The cook prepares meals that are nutritionally well balanced. Meals are prepared on the premises and include copious amounts of fruit and vegetables as well as homemade dishes such as, fish pie. Children eat their meals in their group rooms. Babies meals are pureed and younger children are encouraged to feed themselves although staff are on

hand to assist, as required. Staff sit with the children and meal times are a sociable occasion. Children behave well and understand the nursery rules. If reminders are required staff deliver these in a calm and patient manner. The pre-school children are encouraged to settle any disputes for themselves.

Children's good health is well promoted. For example children have daily opportunities to participate in outdoor play. Younger children also have a nap during the day. Children learn good hygiene practices as they wash their hands before meals, after using the toilet and after outdoor play. Staff raise children's awareness of good hygiene practices and healthy living by teaching them about the importance cleaning their teeth after lunch. Staff wear protective clothing such as aprons and disposable gloves when changing nappies.

During this inspection the inspector had the opportunity to speak to a parent who expressed very positive comments about the staff and the care her child receives at Tiny Acorns. As one child was leaving the setting with her parent she said 'I wish I could live at nursery'.

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	2

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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