

# Smarty's Toddler Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

218486

**Inspection date**

01/08/2011

**Inspector**

Parm Sansoyer

**Setting address**

2 and 4 Taverners Drive, Little Stoke, Stone, Staffordshire,  
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**Telephone number**

01785 817974

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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

Smarty's Toddler Nursery is one of three nurseries run by Smarty's. It opened in 2001 and operates from two converted houses, near to Stone town centre. A maximum of 32 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children aged from one to five years on roll. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel to work. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery employs seven full-time and three part-time staff. Seven of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Five staff are working towards a qualification.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well due to the warm and caring staff approach and the positive relationships fostered with their parents and carers. Children benefit from a varied range of experiences and appropriate range of teaching methods and systems, which are mostly used well to help children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Fostering each child's personal, social and emotional development and helping children adopt a healthy lifestyle are the key strengths of the setting. Children are appropriately safeguarded as most of the staff team have a secure understanding of child protection issues. Systems to evaluate and monitor the setting's effectiveness in its provision for the children's welfare, learning and development are developing.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- plan and provide a broader range of resources and experiences across all areas of learning both indoors and outdoors, and develop further the planning to ensure the learning intention of activities is clear to further extend children's learning
- improve observation and assessment systems to ensure consistency in recording and use of information to help plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child, to fully exploit learning
- develop further all staff's understanding of up-to-date safeguarding issues
- lead and encourage a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion, to help fully identify the setting's strengths and priorities

for development that will improve the quality of the setting for all children.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Clear and well-written policies and procedures are in place in relation to safeguarding children and there is a relevant designated member of staff with overall responsibility. Many of the staff have a secure understanding of the safeguarding policy and the procedure to follow if they are concerned about the children's welfare in relation to abuse or neglect. However, some staff do not have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding issues and how to implement the safeguarding procedure. There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure adults caring for children or having unsupervised access to them are suitably qualified and experienced. All the required records, policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed. Children are kept safe because staff supervise the children well and appropriate written risk assessments of the environment indoors and outdoors, and daily visual checks, help identify and eliminate risk.

Staff have a satisfactory knowledge of the learning and development and requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They plan a varied range of activities and use a reasonable range of teaching methods, which helps children make steady progress in their learning and development. However, the educational programme does not always offer a broad enough range of experiences across all areas of learning to achieve a good balance of adult-led and freely chosen play to help further support learning. Many activities are interesting, inviting and mostly enjoyed by the children. However, the learning intention of some activities is not always clear and therefore, learning opportunities are not always fully extended.

All adults are deployed well to support children's care needs. An effective assigned key worker system means adults know the children well and mostly use the environment and resources well to help support children's enjoyment and individual needs. Consequently, children are broadly content and willing to take part in activities. Staff make regular observations of what the children are doing but all staff do not always consistently record and use this information to help plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child, to fully exploit learning.

The setting is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers and has established effective partnerships between staff, parents and their children. Sensitive settling-in arrangements help children, parents and staff to get to know each other. The positive relationship with parents and carers means they are kept well informed about the provision and their children's care and achievements. Partnerships with feeder nurseries and other agencies are effectively established, to help support transition and continuity of care.

Staff clearly enjoy being with the children and work well together and this supports the relaxed and caring environment for children. Since the last inspection there has been a change in the person in charge, who is appropriately qualified and experienced, and along with the senior management team, clearly motivated to

help improve outcomes for children. Leaders and managers communicate ambition and drive and secure improvement satisfactorily. However, they do not fully lead and encourage a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion amongst the staff team, to help fully identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development, in particular in relation to raising children's enjoyment and achievement.

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

Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well. Children are confident within their environment and enjoy the routine, they seek to do things for themselves and easily move from one activity to another, showing appropriate levels of involvement in their play. The extent to which children make a positive contribution is good. Staff know the children and their families well, developing close and caring relationships. Children develop a strong sense of belonging and emotional health and well-being and are supported well to increase their independence during meal times. Children are praised and their efforts are acknowledged. Appropriate behaviour is consistently reinforced in a positive and age-appropriate manner and therefore children are well behaved.

Children increase their language as they spontaneously interact with adults, who mostly engage them well in conversation and promote their language and communication skills. Daily circle time and general discussion during activities and play allows children the opportunity to chat freely about what they are doing and their interests. For example, the older children enjoy circle time as they sing a range of action songs, learn the days of the week, months of the year and about the weather. Children begin to develop a fondness for books, songs and music, which are mostly used well to support the children's enjoyment. Many children freely choose to colour, draw and make marks using a range of writing materials, such as chalk, pencils and brushes with water.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing. Children have some planned opportunities to explore about and find out about plants and creatures in the natural habitat. For example, children show a keen interest in searching for insects and have observed the life cycle of a butterfly. Some first-hand opportunities to plant and care for their own potatoes, herbs and onions contributes to their understanding of the importance of eating healthy foods. Themed activities about a variety of festivals helps children begin to learn about their own and others' cultures.

Children's problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy is developing. Children enjoy a variety of construction toys and puzzles to increase their problem solving and reasoning skills. They begin to count, sort and match during their play and learn about early calculation as they participate in singing number rhymes.

Children have regular opportunities to develop their creativity. They begin to explore texture as they roll, cut and shape dough. They also have a varied range

of opportunities to explore texture as they play with sand, jelly, paint and shredded paper. They have a varied range of opportunities to use their imagination and adopt roles through a variety of role play resources and small world toys, which the children enjoy.

The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles is good. Staff and children follow effective hygiene practices to prevent the spread of infection. Children benefit from healthy, nutritious meals and snacks which are freshly prepared on the premises. Children benefit from the access to the outdoor environment where they have the opportunity to challenge, test and extend their physical skills. Children begin to develop a sense of how to stay safe within the setting and respond well to gentle reminders of how to care for one another, resources and the environment. Children become active and inquisitive learners, which contributes well to helping children develop satisfactory skills for the future.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
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	3

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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

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

Met