

Tree Tops

Butley Drive, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 3EB

Inspection date	06/11/2014
Previous inspection date	11/11/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Parents are complimentary of the partnerships formed with their child's key person. These trusting and open partnerships ensure children are secure and their care needs are consistently met.
- All staff working with children undertake the required suitability checks. Staff have a suitable understanding of child protection and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. In this respect, children are safeguarded.
- Staff promote children's communication and language development well. The regular use of sign language effectively supports all children's emerging communication skills.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from strong support, due to clear, professional links with other specialist agencies and parents.

It is not yet good because

- Children's progress is not always assessed accurately, which leads to a lack of appropriate challenge for some children. Staff do not always recognise spontaneous learning opportunities to extend children's learning.
- Self-evaluation is weak. Management does not yet monitor staff performance rigorously enough and this leads to inconsistencies in the teaching practice.
- The safeguarding policy does not cover the use of mobile phones and cameras or the procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main playroom, the role-play room and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the supervisor.
- The inspector held meetings with the management team of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation and registration documents.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Kerr Cobbett

Full report

Information about the setting

Tree Tops opened in 2009 and operates from a purpose built premise located within the grounds of Woods Loke Community Primary School in Oulton Broad, Suffolk. The setting serves the immediate locality and surrounding areas. It is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the setting. The pre-school provision is open each weekday, from 9am to 3.15pm, during term time only. The out of school provision is open from 7.45am to 8.55am and from 3.15pm to 6pm during term time. The out of school club is also open 8.30am to 5.30pm during school holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 47 children, aged from two to five years, on roll. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare register. There are currently eight members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 2 to level 6. The setting receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure that the safeguarding policies and procedures include an explanation about the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and covers the use of mobiles phones and cameras in the setting, to ensure that this information is shared with parents
- ensure that staff supervision is effective in raising the quality and consistency of teaching by improving the coaching and support for staff, to promote children's progress in their learning
- improve the process of the assessment and tracking of children's attainment to ensure that activities are challenging and matched to individual children's ages and stages of development so that they make good progress.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- maximise children's progress by recognising and developing the spontaneous learning opportunities that occur in their everyday play, extending their creative and critical thinking skills
- develop and review the self-evaluation process to clearly identify and prioritise areas for improvement.

Inspection judgements**How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

The setting provides a friendly and welcoming environment where the children are suitably stimulated to gain a satisfactory range of skills in readiness for school. Staff demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the seven areas of learning. The environment is well organised for children to develop their skills through exploration and investigation. This means children are showing signs of being active learners. They are able to access resources independently to support their interest in their play. As a result, children show enthusiasm for learning and are keen to take part in the activities on offer. However, teaching practice is variable and not all staff recognise or maximise the opportunities that arise from children's spontaneous play. For example, a child tries to sweep up a puddle of water with a dustpan and brush. Staff focus on reducing the risk of the child getting wet rather than extending this learning opportunity to encourage children to consider the properties of water. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are included alongside their peers with appropriate support from

the staff team. Staff recognise their individual learning needs and support them to join in activities at their own pace, in close liaison with parents and other agencies. Children are generally happy and settled at this setting. This is because staff take time to gather information from parents, relating to children's individual routines and preferences, before they start.

The environment is welcoming and detailed plans demonstrate the setting's awareness of continuous provision. This ensures that a wide range of stimulating activities is available during both sessions. Some recent reflective practice has enabled the staff to review the environment. This has resulted in the role-play area being developed to encourage early literacy skills through imaginative play. Staff provide opportunities for arts and crafts where children enjoy painting their hands and exploring using all their senses. There are also opportunities for children who are less confident, to be part of smaller group activities, which supports their personal, social and emotional development. However, the current lack of tracking to monitor children's development means they are not always effectively supported or challenged to reach their unique potential. Consequently, children make steady, rather than good, progress towards the early learning goals.

Some staff help children to develop their communication and language appropriately through the use of sign language during daily routines. Children also benefit from daily access to books and group story times. Staff plan small and large group singing sessions and engage the children in choosing their favourites songs and rhymes. As result, some children have made progress in communication and language development. However, staff do not effectively use their observations of children to accurately assess their current level of development. This results in some activities lacking sufficient challenge for more able children. Parents have a positive relationship with the staff. They are able to share information and receive updates on their child's care routines through daily conversation when they drop off and collect their children. Parents are encouraged to help their child find their name for self-registration and receive on-going information about their child's learning through parents' open events. Here, they discuss their child's progress. Furthermore, they receive their child's progress records regularly, where they can contribute to their child's development.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Staff work closely with parents to ensure each child's move from home to the setting is a positive experience. Parents are encouraged to complete an information form about their child's likes, dislikes and current routine, which helps staff to understand and meet their individual care needs. The flexible settling-in procedure means children, who may need longer to settle into the setting, are emotionally supported to do so. New children receive reassuring cuddles and are encouraged to sit alongside staff as they play, to build their confidence. Parents are aware of who their child's key person is and feel confident in approaching the allocated key person, if they need to. The setting supports the move to school effectively. Staff are gradually developing such approaches with other early years providers in the local area. Staff consistently praise children, which means children feel valued, promoting their self-esteem and confidence.

Staff provide a well-organised snack time, as they sit with the children and support the development of children's social skills. Staff engage children in conversations, using spoken language, and signing, which children readily copy, to communicate their needs. This encourages all children to feel valued and confident. Children's individual dietary needs and requirements are effectively met, as staff liaise well with parents as part of the registration process. Children develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe, such as when staff encourage them to consider their own safety when using a knife to put spread on their crackers. They independently wash their hands and pour their own drinks. Children carefully carry their plates to the washing up area and independently wash the items they have used. This develops children's self-help skills and promotes confidence, supporting them well in preparation for their move on to school. All children have daily opportunities for fresh air in a well-resourced enclosed outside area. Staff support children's emerging understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle that involves physical exercise, by participating in active play in the garden area.

Children's behaviour is, in the main, good because it is mostly managed effectively. Staff act as positive role models, offering praise and encouragement for children's efforts and achievements. Staff also effectively support children who find coping with boundaries difficult. For example, staff use sensory experiences to calm children and help them to focus, such as when torches and lights are reflected on the ceiling of a quiet area. However, some younger children, who require more adult interaction in their play, can, at times, go unnoticed for short periods as a result of the variances in the quality of teaching among staff.

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

The management committee have not made sure that they meet their legal responsibility to ensure their safeguarding policy and procedures include an explanation about the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made about a member of staff. The policy also does not cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting. Staff are aware of the known signs and indicators of abuse and neglect and know what action to take to report such concerns. Furthermore, staff have attended relevant child protection training and completed suitability checks. As a result, there is little impact on the safety of children but parents are not fully informed of the setting's safeguarding duties and responsibilities. Children play in a safe environment because staff complete daily safety checks of the premises, in addition to regular risk assessments of the environment and resources. Staff manage arrivals and departures well. This ensures that children cannot leave unaccompanied. Additionally, staff are always aware of who is on the premises. Children's safety is supported through the appropriate implementation and recording of accident and medication procedures. All staff hold current paediatric first-aid certificates. The management committee understands the procedures to support the safer recruitment of staff working with children, including a basic induction process and Disclosure and Barring Service checks for staff and committee members.

The manager is dedicated to improving the setting provision. However, the self-evaluation process does not have a strong enough focus placed on what needs to be done to make sure the setting is fully meeting the requirements of The Early Years Foundation Stage. Therefore, it has limited impact on improving children's learning and development. Monitoring of staff performance through supervisions and coaching is not rigorous and leads to inconsistency in teaching practice. For example, those with good teaching skills are not yet used as positive role models to mentor those staff who need to gain more knowledge around the characteristics of effective learning. Management have developed a recording process that analyses progress across the seven areas of learning. However, this is not currently working effectively as the monitoring of children's progress throughout the setting is not yet accurate. This is because individual's records do not reflect the progress children may have made over the summer break. Staff are supported to attend training, relevant to their roles, and many staff members are completing higher qualifications to fulfil their role. For instance, staff are currently attending training with regard to the changes to supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Such training is having a positive impact because the staff value partnership working, particularly for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work closely with other professionals to support children, and their families, effectively.

The management committee, the manager, and the staff team aspire to continually improve the provision for children who attend. The setting has sought feedback from parents and children as part of their self-evaluation process. The management and staff team recognise the value of working in partnership with other agencies or settings, in order to contribute to children's learning and development. Parents speak highly of the setting and value the friendly, welcoming staff and environment.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY391031
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	879100
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	47
Name of provider	Tree Tops Committee
Date of previous inspection	11/11/2009
Telephone number	07504793247 01502 585555

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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