

Inspection of Top Tots Daycare

Poplar Grove, South Bank, Middlesbrough TS6 6SU

Inspection date: 14 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Staff in this nursery do not always prioritise children's health and well-being. Not all children are well stimulated and the development of some children is limited by low-level interactions and lack of engagement from some staff. For example, some older children go for sustained periods of time without interaction from staff and spend time wandering around the room and waiting by the exit door. That said, some staff do engage well, such as by spending time helping children to complete an alphabet puzzle. This helps children to develop their patience and concentration, as well as their literacy skills.

Children show physical skills and spatial awareness. For example, they ride on bicycles outside, navigate space and show enjoyment as they laugh with their friends. Children develop their social skills, such as when they sit together for mealtimes. Staff help children to develop their independence. For instance, they teach children to use cutlery, so they can feed themselves. However, staff do not always support children to learn how to stay safe and healthy in different weathers. For example, they do not ensure children are appropriately dressed for outdoor play in cold weather.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Staff do not use risk assessments and daily checks adequately in the nursery. For example, items in the baby room, which pose a risk of falling on a child, have not been stored safely and a broken safety gate has not been repaired. Multiple cleaning products containing chemicals are stored in reach of children. Despite some of the items, such as cleaning products, being immediately removed during the inspection, there is a pattern of poor risk assessment. This means that children's safety and well-being are not consistently promoted.
- All rooms in the nursery have staff present with a paediatric first-aid qualification. All staff members are aware of the procedures to follow if there were to be an accident or injury in the setting. However, the first-aid boxes are not stocked with all the necessary equipment that would be required in a first-aid emergency. Although the manager has identified this and ordered equipment, there has been a significant period of time where staff would not have been able to provide suitable first aid. This demonstrates weaknesses in the leadership and management of the setting.
- The manager and staff describe their curriculum as being responsive to children's individual needs and interests. Staff are able to describe the developmental stages and next steps for their key children and seem to know them well. However, in practice, the quality of care and support that children receive is inconsistent. For example, despite being aware of the acute emotional needs of some children, staff choose not to respond to them for a considerable

amount of time. This causes unnecessary and avoidable distress for children. Staff do not consistently attend to children's physical and practical needs in a timely manner. This prevents children from fully accessing all the opportunities on offer in the nursery.

- The quality of staff's interactions with children is variable. Where staff engage well, children learn how to join in with activities. For instance, in the toddler room children learn to sit together on the carpet and join in with the words and actions for a variety of nursery rhymes, showing their enjoyment through enthusiasm and smiles. Outdoors, some staff role model how to persevere with tasks, such as by joining in with toddlers who are digging and exploring in the sandpit. However, at times staff do not prioritise the needs of the children and, instead, choose to talk to each other rather than interact and meet the needs of the very youngest children.
- The curriculum lacks detail. However, staff place a key focus on children's communication and language. Some staff promote this in their practice. They join in with role play led by children in the home corner and model language as they eat pretend meals together. However, not all staff are skilled in supporting children's developing language. For instance, they ask lots of questions without giving children enough time to think and respond. The manager has identified this and has made plans to provide more training to staff.
- Children who speak English as an additional language or with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not benefit from enhanced support for their communication and social skills. The manager has identified strategies to support these areas and intends to support staff to implement them in the near future.
- The nursery has had some recent changes to management. Staff report that there has been an unsettled period before the current manager returned to her post in January and feel that the nursery is now improving.
- The management team shows an understanding of some of the areas in which the nursery needs to develop. For example, the manager and deputy manager have identified weak practice regarding the quality of some staff's interactions with children and have started to address this within team meetings.
- The management team has safe recruitment measures in place when employing staff. It uses supervision sessions to support staff in developing their skills further. Staff use additional funding to purchase resources, such as construction toys, which are chosen to support the developmental needs of the children who receive the funding.
- On the whole, behaviour in the nursery is calm and most children are able to follow the nursery routines and behavioural expectations. Toddlers and some older children demonstrate focus and engagement in activities of their own choosing, such as playing with small-world animals or the sand and water trays. Where children need some support with behaviour, staff are swift to respond. Older children show independence in pouring their own drinks and tidying away their things after mealtimes. This helps to prepare them for their transition to school.
- Parents state that the nursery staff are approachable and that they receive clear, regular communication. They appreciate the support they receive from the

nursery and feel this has helped their children to progress, for example, with potty training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

A weak approach to risk assessment has created a culture where the safety and good health of children has not been promoted. Staff do not always prioritise the welfare of children and, in some instances, have not engaged thoroughly enough with parents to support children's health and development. The designated lead for safeguarding understands her role and responsibilities, including how to respond to an allegation against a member of staff. Staff are able to demonstrate their awareness of the signs and symptoms of different types of abuse. They can describe the procedures to follow if they were concerned about the welfare of a child.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
undertake thorough risk assessments of the environment and daily routines to ensure that the health and safety of children is promoted at all times	21/03/2023
ensure that first-aid boxes contain all the necessary equipment for use with children and that all contents are in date	21/03/2023
prioritise children's individual emotional and physical needs in order to promote children's welfare	28/03/2023
improve staff's interactions to ensure that all children receive high-quality support in their learning and development.	16/05/2023

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

- continue to develop the curriculum, in particular the approach to supporting

children's communication and language skills

- improve the support for children who speak English as an additional language and children with SEND, to ensure that they make good progress in their communication and social development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY281726
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10282344
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 10
Total number of places	62
Number of children on roll	62
Name of registered person	The Priory Day Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP524033
Telephone number	01642 456277
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2019

Information about this early years setting

Top Tots Daycare registered in 2004. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, seven staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Dani Taylor

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with staff and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of staff's practice with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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