

# Tiny Toons Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123865
<b>Inspection date</b>	02 November 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Linda Lacey
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Tiny Toons Pre-School opened in 1994. The group operates from two rooms in a scout hut in Cheshunt. Children share access to a secure outdoor area. The pre-school is open every weekday morning from 09:15 until 12:00 and on Monday and Thursday afternoons from 12:30 until 14:30. There is a lunch club on Fridays from 12:00 until 13:00.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. Currently there are 48 children on roll, of whom 27 are funded for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight staff. Of these, six members of staff, including the manager, hold relevant early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because the pre-school has good procedures in place. All medical records are maintained appropriately. Children are excluded if suffering from an infectious illness so as to protect others. In the event of an accident, children are well cared for as staff maintain up to date qualifications in first aid. They are attentive to matters of hygiene and ensure that children are cared for in a clean environment. They take particular care with food hygiene and follow guidelines displayed in the kitchen. Children have an increasing awareness of good hygiene practice. They use tissues independently for wiping their noses and dispose of them in a small bin. Staff teach them to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating snacks. These procedures contribute to keeping children healthy.

Children are becoming aware of a healthy lifestyle through being offered a range of healthy snacks. They enjoy a variety of foods such as fresh fruit, salad vegetables and breadsticks which are donated by parents. Staff take opportunities to talk to children about which foods are good for them. They are encouraged to bring healthy foods to the weekly lunch club. Children with special dietary needs eat appropriately as all adults are made aware of their needs. Children have access to drinking water throughout the session in order to reduce the risk of dehydration. Consequently, children are well nourished.

Children have very good opportunities for physical activity. They enjoy fresh air and exercise outdoors whenever possible and have fun running around or doing 'keep fit' exercises. They participate in organised indoor activities which help them to develop new physical skills. For instance, they develop co-ordination and learn to negotiate space as they ride wheeled vehicles around the hall. Outdoors they explore a variety of equipment, such as balls, hoops and ride-on toys. These activities help children to keep fit and healthy.

### Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. The premises are spacious and bright, with attractive displays around the walls. Resources are arranged invitingly around the room so as to engage and stimulate children in free choice play. There is a good range of toys, games and equipment, all of which are checked regularly for safety. Staff carry out an annual risk assessment, and daily safety checks, to help ensure that children are safe at the provision. Action is taken if necessary to minimise risks. However, the daily safety checks are not recorded. If any risks are not highlighted for attention this may result in a potential risk to children's safety and security.

Staff have good procedures in place for the promoting children's safety. They pay particular attention to children's security at the beginning and end of sessions. They always supervise children when going out to the toilets in the reception area. Children are able to move around and explore safely as staff make sure the floor areas in the hall are clear of hazards. They have improved the security outdoors with the addition of a new fence and gate. Children keep safe on walks in the adjacent school grounds as these are well organised. They practise a fire drill regularly so that they know what to do in case of an emergency.

Children are developing a good awareness of personal safety. They move around the setting freely and safely, avoiding running so that they do not hurt themselves. They are reminded of how to play safely and learn about safety in particular situations. For example, in the autumn term staff remind them about firework safety. Staff have a very good understanding of safeguarding issues. They keep a record of any concerns regarding child protection and seek advice when necessary. All staff have access to information which explains what to do if they are worried about abuse. They take care that children only leave the setting with a known adult. Therefore, children are well protected.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are very settled and happy at pre-school. They show much interest in the resources and activities on offer and develop close relationships with staff. They gain self-confidence as they show and talk about items of interest they have brought in. They engage confidently in discussion and approach staff readily if wanting to ask a question. Staff provide an excellent choice of activities which encourage children to explore independently or with others. For example, children enjoy experimenting with dry pasta and seeds, selecting bits of paper and materials to stick on paper or playing imaginatively with toy vehicles and dinosaurs. They often become very absorbed in their play, showing great delight when making new discoveries.

Staff make extremely good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework in planning the provision of activities for young children. They are particularly aware of children's developmental needs and provide many opportunities for them to engage in role play, and to be imaginative and creative. They interact effectively with children in their chosen play to promote learning and develop communication skills. Their involvement in different play situations enhances children's enjoyment,. For example, children initiate a role play situation which develops and moves from the 'home' to the reading corner. Children respond positively to staff when encouraged to join in an activity, for example, play dough, painting or jigsaws. Through engendering an interest in children, staff are able to focus their learning and support the development of individual skills. Children thrive in a stimulating setting in which they can engage in a variety of learning experiences.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff plan an interesting selection of activities for each week based on a variety of topics. These cover all six areas of learning within the Foundation Stage. The plans are particularly user-friendly and show what children are expected to learn in each area. A key activity is planned for each day and provides an extra focused learning experience. Staff make close observations on children's progress and transfer these to individual assessment sheets. However, the system is a little complex and cannot easily be used to guide future planning with regard to meeting individual children's needs.

Staff explain clearly to children what is on offer during each session. They make excellent use of group times to offer additional learning, for example, teaching children to recognise numbers and letters, and to use their fingers to help them count. They extend children's knowledge and understanding by asking questions which challenge children to think. They are particularly adept at helping children to learn through additional aids, for example, sets of picture cards for use with number rhymes. A busy and purposeful momentum is maintained throughout the session resulting in a quality learning environment.

Children are beginning to persevere at tasks and demonstrate good levels of concentration. They explore in a 'print rich' environment where there are many labels and pictures which raise their awareness of written language. They enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with adults. In different role play situations they are encouraged to extend their own spoken language in conversation and story telling. There are particularly good opportunities for children to explore mark-making using a variety of different tools. When exploring picture cards they learn to recognise the shapes and sounds of associated letters of the alphabet. As a result children are developing useful skills for early reading and writing.

Children are learning to use mathematical language and when taking part in creative activities they find out about different shapes. They have a good knowledge of numbers and are learning to use these to add and take away as they join in number rhymes at circle time. The daily repetition of numbers and songs helps to reinforce children's learning and consequently they are developing very good numeracy skills. They learn about the seasons and living things through the different topics covered each year. They are encouraged to use their senses to explore and represent, for example, painting pictures of vegetables. In cooking activities they find out how things change, as when making bread at harvest time. As a result they become increasingly aware of their environment.

In organised activities children have opportunities to use their imagination creatively as they paint freely or to learn new techniques, for example, leaf printing. They develop skills for modelling as they explore junk materials and construction equipment. They have fun making music with instruments and join in familiar songs enthusiastically. When reciting nursery rhymes they develop a sense of rhythm which helps them to use language creatively. They extend their physical skills as they explore large equipment, such as a climbing frame and parachute, or take part in music and movement sessions.

Overall, children are making very good progress in all areas of learning.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children feel valued and included because staff have an excellent understanding of how to promote equal opportunity. Through offering a wide choice all children are able to select equipment and resources which are manageable for them and offer a relevant learning experience. They make sure that children do not feel left out of any activity, for example, when dressing up at Halloween. Children enjoy an individual welcome at registration time and are made to feel special when asked to give their news. Staff remind children of the daily routine using a picture board so that those who need a visual aid feel included too. Consequently, children develop a real sense of belonging and learn to respect the needs of others in the group.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are exceptionally well supported. The manager is proactive in meeting the needs of these children, ensuring that one-to-one help is given where necessary. She has arranged access to extra resources through a toy library. There are comprehensive systems in place for devising individual learning plans and recording children's progress. Staff help children to learn through free choice play, as well as in organised activities, offering appropriate support, for example, through the use of sign language. They keep scrap book diaries for each child which provide a useful record of their time at pre-school and help all involved to move children on in their learning.

Children's behaviour is very good. They are aware of their boundaries within the setting because there is a set of simple rules. Staff have appropriate strategies in place for managing behaviour and reinforce positive behaviour through much verbal praise. Children sit well at group times and are attentive to adults. They learn about diversity in society through taking part in activities planned around festivals and celebrations, for example, Chinese New Year. The pre-school works closely with parents and carers, offering clear information about their policies and procedures in an attractive brochure. Newsletters keep them up to date with planned topics and social events. They enjoy involvement in a variety of community activities, such as sports day and 'Red nose' day. Parents are highly satisfied with the care provided for their children.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of nursery funded children is good. They receive detailed information about the Foundation Stage and six areas of learning. The weekly planning is on display so that parents and carers can see what children will be doing at pre-school and support them in their learning. When children first start, staff request information on their early stages of development and this provides them with a baseline from which to work. They have an innovative system of half-termly reports which keep parents up to date with their children's progress and offer an opportunity to respond. Children benefit greatly from this close working partnership.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The pre-school's policies and procedures work successfully in practice to promote the outcomes for children. All the necessary policies are in place and reviewed regularly. The attendance registers are well maintained and information on children is easily accessible. Staff are aware of their responsibilities and work extremely well as a team, ensuring that children are included and supported effectively. The written plans and assessment files are kept up to date and readily available. A collection of background information is on hand to help staff in their record keeping and printed labels around the hall act as a reminder of how children learn through each activity. Staff have begun to collect evidence, in the form of photographs and pictures, to show the range of learning experiences on offer. Their documentation provides an excellent framework for promoting high quality care and education.

Staff are committed to the ongoing improvement of the provision. There are good procedures in place for the induction of new staff and regular appraisals contribute to their continuing professional development. They gain worthwhile experience through rotating jobs and taking turns to organise activities. Attendance at training courses is organised so that children benefit fully from staff's acquired knowledge in many different areas. For example, they have recently attended training in Inclusion, Behaviour Management, Food Hygiene and Mathematics. They are happy to take new ideas on board and develop them to help children in their learning, for instance, creating sets of visual aids.

Staff are very resourceful in their use of available space and time. They have found ways to offer more choice through the use of storage units and developing learning areas, such as the reading and home corner, so that they are attractive and inviting for children. The daily routine works very well in practice with smooth transitions between free play and group times. Staff make good use of the small back room and outdoor area to provide extra activities. They also make use of extra time at the lunch club to provide interesting activities, such as icing biscuits.

Their commitment to the well-being and enjoyment of children has a significant impact on their care. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager is proactive in evaluating and monitoring the provision in order to continually improve the programme of education. She is hands-on with the children and acts as an excellent role model, supporting and motivating staff effectively. She is at present working with an advisor to find the most effective ways to promote learning, for example, in the presentation of written plans and recording of children's progress. Her development plans are well documented and show how new ideas are to be introduced. She has good links with local schools. Her leadership plays a key role in the provision of good quality nursery education.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous care inspection the pre-school was asked to review their organisation of snack time. Children now enjoy the opportunity to get together in small groups which encourages them to engage in conversation and learn social skills. Staff promote children's independence through asking them to pour their own drinks and hand out snacks. Therefore, snack time is a useful learning experience for children.

At the previous nursery education inspection the pre-school was asked to include relevant learning outcomes in the written planning and to extend the partnership with parents and carers. The written planning now includes clear learning outcomes for children. Parents receive detailed information about the nursery education and are able to exchange information on their children's progress at regular intervals. These improvements have contributed to the ongoing development of the programme for education.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure daily safety checks are carried out and recorded so that all potential risks to children are minimised.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review the system for assessing children's progress within the six areas of learning in order to guide future planning more effectively.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)