



Tom Thumb Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY312715
Inspection date	16 October 2006
Inspector	Fran Fielder
Setting Address	12 The Avenue, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 3YA
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Registered person	Claire Louise Townsend
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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.

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?

Tom Thumb Nursery has been operating for 21 years and was taken over by new owners in 2005. It operates on three floors of a converted house close to the town centre in Eastbourne, East Sussex. A maximum of 63 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 throughout the year. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 113 children aged from one to under eight years on roll. Of these 31 receive funding for nursery education. The Nursery supports a number of children with special educational needs and some children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 staff including a cook/housekeeper. Of these, seven staff members hold appropriate early years qualifications and five are training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment where cleanliness is encouraged. Staff follow good routines and ensure all tables are properly wiped after each activity. Children wash hands after visiting the toilet and before meals. Staff explain why they need to wash their hands. This helps children understand the need for good personal hygiene. Staff monitor hand washing and give good support to those who are learning independence. There are paper tissue dispensers in each room so children can wipe their nose themselves. All staff hold a current first aid certificate so any accidents can be dealt with quickly.

Mealtimes are social occasions and children eat well. They receive nutritious snacks such as fresh and dried fruit, breadsticks and rice cakes. They enjoy freshly cooked meals that help them develop healthy eating habits. Drinking water is always available. Staff take into account all dietary needs to ensure children remain healthy.

Staff follow babies' individual sleeping and feeding routines. This provides continuity of care. Lovely interaction with caring staff promote babies' emotional well being. Staff encourage babies to express their feelings and support their growing independence. Babies and toddlers receive good support from staff while learning to control their bodies and building physical skills.

All children have access to a secure outdoor play area. Children run around easily changing direction to avoid obstacles. They practise climbing and balancing. Older children show good control when riding wheeled toys. Some are able to negotiate obstacles while travelling backwards. A selection of mark making tools such as chalks, crayons, pencils and brushes help develop children's fine motor skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle well. There are informative posters, photographs and displays of children's work that make the nursery very welcoming for children and adults. There are three floors and each age group enjoys a well-organised environment that allows them to move around and play safely. Children have easy and safe access to a wide range of good quality toys and resources. These are appropriate for the children's age and stage of development. There is enough safe and suitable furniture to allow children to play, work and eat in groups.

Regular risk assessments ensure all areas of the nursery are clean and safe for children. A daily visual check ensures the speedy removal of any broken toys so they do not harm a child. Staff check the safety of the outdoor area before children play. The large play equipment is secure and well maintained ensuring it is suitable for children's use. Good staff interaction and the effective use of visual aids helps develop children's awareness of safety within the setting. For example, staff explain the need to walk carefully downstairs holding on to the banister rail.

They reinforce this by using a yellow lollipop shaped card to remind children and keep them focussed.

Staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow if they have any child protection concerns about a child in their care. Regular discussion and training keeps staff focussed on safeguarding the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and gain independence because staff are supportive while children learn new skills. Babies and toddlers enjoy lots of positive interaction with their key worker. Staff work well with babies and toddlers to support early communication skills. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan meaningful activities for babies and children under three. Young children enjoy activities that stimulate their senses but the range is quite narrow.

Staff encourage children of all ages to play together and share. Lots of praise and encouragement develops children's self-esteem. All children enjoy plenty of opportunities to develop their social skills. They approach adults confidently when they need support and express their needs well. This shows how children trust the adults who care for them. Staff are supportive when caring for babies offering comfort when they are upset.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A well-balanced curriculum ensures children have a wide range of experiences that supports their learning in all areas. The evaluation of activities show how well children achieve. However, plans do not include differentiation to ensure challenge and support for all. Good observations show staff have a good understanding of the stepping stones.

Children enjoy taking responsibility for different jobs such as watering the plants, feeding the fish or sweeping the sand. This helps them understand how to care for their environment. Children enjoy each other's company and develop good relationships with peers and adults. Children behave well and learn good manners.

Children enjoy listening to stories because staff read expressively to bring the story to life. The print rich environment helps children understand that written language conveys meaning. Children self register and easily recognise their name and staff encourage children to write their name on their work. Children express their ideas and experiences well using good vocabulary. They sing the alphabet song and are beginning to link sounds and letters.

Children count confidently and recognise numbers that are important to them. Constant reinforcement of numbers on daily basis help children recognise and understand the concept of number. Children recognise the properties of simple 2D shapes. For example, they know that squares have four edges and four corners.

Children investigate using their senses. They collect natural objects such as leaves and create autumn pictures. Children use telephones and calculators confidently during role-play and know their purpose. Children learn about their environment and the wider world through topics such as 'Animals and their Habitats' and 'New Year around the World'. Visits from the fire brigade and ambulance crew means children learn about the people who help us in the community.

Children have the opportunity to play musical instruments and experiment with sound. Free painting and drawing allows children to express themselves creatively. They have access to a wide range of materials and experiment making collages and models.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There are good systems in place to support children who speak English as an additional language. Staff learn some key words in the child's home language and gradually build children's vocabulary in English. Staff encourage parents to share their culture within the group. This means children develop a positive attitude towards differences and learn to respect other cultures. Topics such as Holi and New Year around the World help children understand how people celebrate the same events but in different ways. Activities are adapted to allow all children to gain from the experiences.

Children behave well and learn to work together from an early age. They take turns to carry out jobs such as sweeping the sand, feeding the fish and being the leader. This gives children a sense of responsibility and encourages them to care for their environment. Staff acknowledge children's efforts such as being helpful, sharing and being polite by putting a photograph of the children on an achievement tree. This makes children feel good about themselves. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive good information about all aspects of the nursery. They enjoy friendly but professional relationships with the staff who make themselves available to talk to parents when they collect their children. Parents complete a questionnaire at the beginning of term that allows parents to highlight their children's achievements at home. This helps staff meet individual learning needs. Formal systems for feedback allow parents to discuss their children's development in more detail.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There are good vetting and recruitment procedures in place so that all staff caring for children are suitable. Staff organise space well both indoors and out. This ensures children gain fully from all activities. However, children do not always have immediate access to activities as staff set these up at the beginning of the day when children are present. Staff deployment is effective and means children are well supervised at all times. Children are well grouped and the key worker system provides appropriate support and care throughout the session. All mandatory

records well maintained to ensure the safe and effective management of the setting in order to promote children's welfare.

Leadership and management are good. The clear aims for the provision reflect a commitment to improving the quality of care and education. There are annual appraisals that identify training needs and staff are encouraged to enrol on relevant courses. This supports staff in their role and ensures they have the latest and most relevant information available.

Staff work well as a team in all rooms and receive good guidance to enable them to their job effectively. Monthly meetings allow them to discuss planning and individual needs of the children. The manager monitors the teaching through observation and discussion. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the nursery agreed to improve hygiene routines so that children have access to clean soft-play materials and floor areas. They were asked to renew risk assessments and to develop the organisation of play and activities for children over five years.

There are daily, weekly and monthly tasks that ensure all resources and areas are both clean and safe for all children. Regular risk assessments inside and out identify potential hazards. These are quickly addressed to ensure children's safety at all times.

The organisation of play and activities for children over five years is now good. Children have access to a range of play opportunities that include board games, computers, painting and a variety of craft activities. Staff plan according to the children attending and know what they enjoy. Staff become involved in children's play and allow a free choice of all available resources.

At the last education inspection, the previous owners were asked to improve the availability of resources to develop children's creativity. They were also asked to carry out appraisals on the manager and to increase some staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning.

The new owner carries out appraisals on all staff members each year. This helps to identify staff's strengths and training needs. All staff who work with children in receipt of nursery education funding have completed training. The observations made on the children indicates that staff have a good knowledge of the stepping stones. This enables staff to plan a curriculum that covers all areas of learning and meets children's developmental needs. This increased knowledge allows staff to make resources freely available so children can explore and develop their creative skills.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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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):

- introduce a wider range of activities for babies that involve the use of all their senses
- organise the setting up of rooms so children have access to a range of activities as soon as they arrive

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):

- ensure short term planning includes differentiation so that all children's individual learning needs are met

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