

Tots Junction

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	316467
Inspection date	28 February 2008
Inspector	Cynthia Walker
Setting Address	Grimshaw Lane, Middleton,, Manchester, Lancs., M24 2AT
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Registered person	Dawn Walters
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Tots Junction is privately owned and was registered in 1998. It operates from a single story building in Middleton. There are three playrooms for the children, a central bathroom, nappy changing area, a kitchen, an office and a staff room. A secure outdoor play area is available and offers play on both hard and grassed areas. The nursery serves the wider community. The group opens Monday to Friday 07.30 until 18.00, all year round.

The group are registered to care for 37 children under five years. There are currently 33 children who attend the group during the week, of these, 10 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are systems in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities and the group supports children with English as an additional language.

There are seven full time staff and a manager who works directly with children and a cleaner is employed at the nursery. All the staff working with children hold an appropriate early year's qualification. The group receives the support of the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well nourished with meals which are freshly cooked on the premises and are reflected in the four weekly menus which include a variety of fruit and vegetables. The nursery has recently achieved the highest level in the 'Golden Grin Award', to promote healthy eating for the children. During lunch and snack time children enjoy good social interaction. The children's dietary needs are discussed with parents and efficiently recorded to ensure the individual needs of children are met. Children are able to access fresh drinking water throughout the day.

Children enjoy physical activity by daily access to the outdoor area. This is reinforced for the older children by 'Welly Wednesdays' where children bring their wellington boots and splash in puddles, go bug exploring and experience activities, such as, blowing bubbles. There are weekly exercise sessions and music and movement, which includes dancing with scarves and ribbons. Children develop their hand-eye co-ordination as they persist in trying to get a range of balls through the basket ball net. They confidently manoeuvre wheeled toys around the area and children skilfully negotiate space as they run and chase each other around. Photographs highlight children using and controlling a parachute. Children's physical development is supported by resources which include a variety of wheeled toys, a climbing frame with a scramble net, soft play materials, balancing cups, rockers and tunnels.

Children are developing an understanding of personal hygiene as they wash their hands before their lunch and snack, explaining that they are washing away the germs. However, although staff encourage children to wash their hands after going to the toilet this is not always effectively monitored. Children are developing a good understanding of oral hygiene as they enthusiastically clean their teeth after lunch. Staff follow appropriate procedures whilst changing nappies, though, the hygiene for tables used for children eating is not consistently maintained. Staff demonstrate that children are cared for appropriately if they have an accident or need medication because they follow suitable procedures. Information from parents about their daily routines as children begin their care enables staff to sensitively encourage children to have appropriate rest or sleep. Detailed procedures support children if they become ill.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, safe and secure environment where most risks have been identified and minimised. Detailed procedures are in place to identify any hazards which have occurred on the premises, although, there are no clear procedures to highlight potential hazards within the nursery. Children are learning about keeping safe through clear explanations on why not to run inside the nursery and whilst practising simple road safety in the outdoor area. Regular fire practises reinforce the children's understanding of fire safety.

The nursery is welcoming to children with colourful displays throughout all the areas children use. Although there are some restrictions on space the rooms are creatively arranged to allow children to move spontaneously and independently around all areas of play and learning. Children are accessing a suitable range of resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development and actively support learning. Resources are well arranged to enable children to make spontaneous decisions about the resources they are going to use.

Children are effectively safeguarded by staff that have a sound understanding of child protection procedures which are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in nursery and arrive happy and eager to participate. Staff have a sound understanding of the needs of children under three and plan an interesting range of activities and experiences. Staff are completing focussed observations and spontaneous observations to identify the children's progress and use this information to identify future learning. However, although key workers have a good understanding of individual children's abilities this information is not linked to the planned programme of activities. Younger children develop warm and trusting relationships as they cuddle happily with staff as they sit closely on cushions listening to stories.

Babies develop their skills as they enthusiastically throw small balls around the room and then attempt to roll them across the floor. Children explore their senses as they make hand and feet prints for their Mother's Day cards, looking in astonishment as staff paint their feet. Photographs highlight baby's involvement in a wonderful messy painting session, sensory play and chalking. Children are finding a voice as they repeat the words, such as, cow and cat as staff reinforce their language skills whilst reading a story. Staff interact well with the younger babies as they use facial expressions and body language to respond and gain the babies attention. Toddlers enthusiastically participate in singing a variety of songs matching the actions to the words of the songs. They enjoy the sensory experience of sand as they empty and fill a variety of containers which is extended by staff that support children in making a sand castle and count to three before removing the container. Children are fascinated with the toy dinosaurs and use good imagination to introduce smaller models to a larger dinosaur and repeat, 'mummy, mummy' to it. Displays with the toddler room reflect the children's participation in interesting projects involving jelly making, exploring ice cubes and using a thermometer.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure understanding of the early learning goals and plan a balanced range of activities and experiences which supports children's learning and helps them make good progress. However, planning does not include adaptations for the lesser and more able children. Staff use a variety of observational methods to identify the children's learning which include focussed and spontaneous observations. Although the key workers have a good understanding of their individual children's learning needs their next steps for learning are not clearly identified and used to inform future planning. Teaching stimulates children's interest and extends their learning, although, activities involving larger groups of children for sustained periods of time puts some restriction on the children's spontaneous and independent learning. The staff's sensitive support and effective questioning challenge and enable children to achieve in all areas. Their infectious enthusiasm encourages children's active involvement in a good variety of experiences to promote learning. Staff provide an interesting environment with constructively arranged resources which enable children to progress.

Children have a positive attitude to learning and use their initiative and take some responsibility for their own learning. They have good levels of concentration and maintain sustained interest at activities, such as, the computer and completing jigsaws. Children communicate well and use language to negotiate whilst playing with the small world and share experiences from home as

they recount what they had for breakfast. Their involvement in the nursery's book lending scheme stimulates their interest and develops their confidence and understanding of the written word. Children confidently count to five whilst singing number rhymes and estimate how many flying saucers are left from the interesting resources used to support the activity. They confidently identify shapes such as a pentagon and a hexagon and displays reflect examples of intricate patterns completed by the children. Children confidently use the computer and share their skills with other children as they skilfully control the mouse. They are developing an understanding of the natural world as children ask to water some flowers which they had planted in large pots in the outdoor area earlier in the week. Staff explain that children had recently visited a local opticians which resulted in turning the role play area into their own opticians. Children confidently respond to the register in French by saying 'Bonjour' and 'Je m'appelle' and are able to count to ten in the language. The introduction of the 'magic carpet game' stimulates the children's imagination as they point out sharks in the sea and take care not to lose their belongings over the edge of the carpet into the sea. Children enthusiastically participate in singing a range of songs with all children being actively involved by selecting a variety of resources including, sausages from the pan or holding flying saucers as they fly around the world.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing a positive attitude to others through the provision of a range of resources which include books, dolls, dressing up clothes, displays and display materials. The introduction of activities, such as, food tasting, projects around the world and celebrating Chinese New Year further enhance children's understanding of diversity. The nursery are actively working with parents of children whose first language is Polish and are developing a list of simple words to help integration into the setting. The introduction of simple French at register and as a weekly activity introduces children to different aspects of the world. There are appropriate systems in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Discussions with parents as the children begin their care establish individual needs to ensure appropriate care can be given. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well in response to the calm and consistent response from the staff. They are confident within the routines of the nursery and respond well to the expectations of staff particularly at tidy up times and mealtimes. Children have developed a positive attitude to each other as they play co-operatively at activities, such as, the doll's houses. Younger children show affection for each other as they gently hug each other during play. Older children show others how to use aspects of the computer and pour water for other children. They share resources at activities, such as, jigsaws and take turns whilst smelling different items. The use of 'Euan the dog' enables children to show caring as they take the dog home for the weekend with parents recording this in a special diary. Younger children are developing self-assurance from close and effective relationships.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are actively welcomed into the nursery and receive effective information through newsletters, an information pack and notice boards in the hall. The ongoing needs of the children are met through daily diaries for children under one year and informal sharing of information at the end of the day. At the end of the year parents receive a virtual scrap book which is a disc containing photographs of their children's involvement in activities throughout the year. However, there are no formal procedures for parents to access

their children's assessment records and monitor their achievements. Parents receive a topic letter which highlights how these activities and learning can be extended within the home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All the required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place. Detailed recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to determine the suitability of staff members to safeguard the children attending the nursery. These are reinforced by a clear operational file, and policies and procedures which are linked to the National Standards. There is a positive attitude to training as annual appraisals identify training needs, with staff attending a variety of short courses and training within the nursery. Space within the nursery is effectively organised to enhance the play and learning opportunities for children.

Leadership and management is good. A clear management structure enables the staff to work as a competent and enthusiastic team. There are clear procedures in place to monitor the quality of the provision and a system is in place to evaluate the overall programme of activities. The nursery liaise with advisors from the Local Authority to improve the quality of education for the children.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was given one action in relation to the medication records. They were also given a number of recommendations relating to the access to the kitchen, the security of the premises, the supervision of children at mealtimes, written consents for swimming, permission for emergency medical advice or treatment and the storage of toothbrushes.

At the education inspection the key issues highlighted were the staff's knowledge of the foundation stage, the links between observation and planning, increased emphasis on mathematics, the role play area, the links between reading and writing materials, the opportunities to build junk models and the use of dance to stimulate children's imagination.

Staff demonstrate that children are cared for appropriately if they have an accident or need medication because they follow suitable procedures. Each child's toothbrush is stored in an individual container to promote good hygiene. A safety gate is in place across the kitchen with clear displays to exclude children from the kitchen and procedures for parents to access the nursery have been reviewed. Staff sit with children at mealtimes and supervise them closely in the period after their meals and written consents are in place for swimming although children are not attending at present. All these points promote the safety of children in nursery.

Staff have a secure understanding of the early learning goals and plan a balanced range of activities and experiences which supports children's learning. Although the key workers have a good understanding of their individual children's learning needs their next steps for learning are not clearly identified and used to inform future planning. Planned activities and opportunities within the daily routine support the children's mathematical skills. There is a designated role play with appropriate resources to develop the children's imagination and reading resources are accessible in different learning areas. Writing materials are accessible to enable children to make marks and write their own names. Children enjoy creating models from a range of junk materials and dance and music and movement is included in the weekly programme of activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 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.

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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):

- ensure good hygiene practices are maintained to stop the spread of infection
- review the risk assessment procedures regularly
- ensure the individual children's future learning is used to inform the planned programme of activities.

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 assessment programme to ensure the children's next steps for learning are clearly identified and formally linked to future planning; and ensure planning reflects the needs of the lesser and more able children
- review teaching methods to increase children's opportunities to spontaneous and independent learning
- improve the opportunities for parents to be informed about their children's achievements.

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