

The inspection of educational provision for children before compulsory school age

Nursery report on:

Tiny Beginnings Day Nursery

Registered Nursery Education Inspector: Linda Vittle

Date of inspection: 4th February 2008.

Contract number: T/058/07N

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Report on the inspection of nursery settings in the non-maintained sector

Name of nursery: Tiny Beginning Nursery

**Address: The Storehouse
Howell's Place
Monmouth**

Post code: NP25 3ED

Telephone: 01600 772850

**Person responsible for day-to-day management
Kate Guy Coombes and Bridget Reeves**

Position Managers.

About the inspection

This inspection took place as part of a national programme of inspections of the educational provision for children before compulsory school age in Wales. It was commissioned by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales.

The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings so that providers can improve the quality of education offered and help children achieve their full potential. Another purpose is to inform parents and the public about the quality of nursery education. A copy of the inspection report must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the nursery and should be available on request to other people.

Inspectors have used a five point scale to record all judgements. Grade definitions are:

- Grade 1** good with outstanding features
- Grade 2** good features and no major shortcomings
- Grade 3** good features outweigh shortcomings
- Grade 4** some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
- Grade 5** many important shortcomings

1.0 Context of the setting

Context of the nursery setting

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Tiny Beginnings is a privately owned day nursery which opened in 1996 under the name of Scallywags. The present owners, both experienced teachers, reopened the nursery in 2006. It operates from the old storehouse, previously a furniture warehouse, situated in the market town of Monmouth. The children come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds which are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged.

The Nursery caters for up to 42 children aged from 0-5 years and is open from 8.00a.m to 6.00p.m for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently seventeen 3 year old and nine 4 year old children on roll and twenty receive funding. During the inspection nine 3 year olds and six 4 year olds attended the morning session and five 3year olds and five 4yr olds the afternoon session.

There are 7 full time and 9 part time staff employed at the nursery. Three have qualified teacher status, five have NNEB or equivalent and five are working towards child care qualifications.

The converted building provides accommodation over three floors. The rooms for the youngest children are on the ground floor with the pre-school and toddler groups on the first floor. The third floor is used for administration and storage. Kitchen facilities and toilets are on the first floor and the outside play area is accessed from the ground floor. The nursery uses the nearby shops and park as a resource within the local area.

One child has Welsh as a first language and there is one child from a multi ethnic group attending the setting whose first language is Polish. There are no children with a statement of SEN but two children have additional needs and the nursery offers appropriate provision and support for them.

The nursery was inspected by CSIW in August 2006 and was judged to meet the required standards. The nursery was previously inspected by ESTYN in March 1999 before the present owners took over.

The nursery is working towards the Investors in People Award.

2.0 Main findings of the report

2.1 The overall quality and standards of educational provision and whether or not the provision successfully promotes the goals for children's learning

The quality and standards of educational provision, taken overall, are appropriate and successfully promote the desirable outcomes for children's learning;

2.2 Standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning

Six areas of learning	Grade for under-fives
Language, literacy and communication skills	1
Personal and social development	1
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Physical development	2
Creative development	2

2.3 Inspection judgement on the quality of education provided by the setting

Quality of education	Grade for under-fives
Quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
Quality of planning for children's learning	1
Quality of teaching	1
Quality of assessment and recording of children's progress, and reports for parents and carers	2
Quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community	1
The contribution made by the setting to children's well-being	1
Quality of the leadership and management of the setting	1
The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for action identified in the last inspection report	1

3.0 The standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning

Standards achieved by 3-4 year-olds and standards achieved by 4-5 year-olds

3.1 Language, literacy and communication skills

Good features

Children achieve very good standards in language, literacy and communication skills. They listen attentively with sustained concentration. They enthusiastically engage in discussion and willingly respond to questions. They speak clearly and use a wide range of descriptive language. A trip to Australia and an investigation into the properties of ice demonstrates their ability to think things through, pose questions and clearly express their thought. The children's confidence in using language is an outstanding feature.

Children respond confidently to questions in Welsh and use Welsh words during their activities. They can recall and sequence stories and events and confidently handle books. They show an understanding that written symbols have sound and meaning and some children can recognise individual sounds and words. They enjoy mark making both inside the classroom and outside, using a variety of writing materials. They experiment with emergent writing when writing invitations to the gardener and using the message pad. The majority are able to write more than one letter in their name and many can write their first name.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings.

3.2 Personal and social development

Good features

Children enjoy very good relationships with adults and with one another. They settle quickly, immediately joining activities with other children. They appear confident and fully engage in both directed and chosen learning activities concentrating for sustained periods. Children display a purposeful approach and show enjoyment when taking part in activities. They communicate with one another, share equipment and understand the need to take turns. An outstanding feature is the level of independence they display. They make every effort to put their coats on, take shoes off and put wellies on, wash and wipe hands and, without prompting, check in the mirror to see if they need to wash their face. They are confident in making decisions, moving tasks and finding the necessary equipment. They tidy up making sure the equipment is returned to the correct storage area. They use safe knives to butter their currant bread and lay the table for lunch. Children confidently relate to adults and

approach them when they need help.

They care for and show sensitivity to other children and animals. They put an arm around a child if they are upset and help one another when faced with a difficult task. They understand the need to care for living things, such as the nursery guinea pig and the birds in the garden.

The majority of children display good self control resisting the temptation to pick up and play the instrument placed in front of them.

Children have an increasing understanding of greetings, phrases and simple commands given in Welsh and many children respond in Welsh. They enjoy celebrating St David's Day and are beginning to develop an awareness of other major festivals.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings

3.3 Mathematical development

Good features

Children use appropriate mathematical language and all children can count confidently and recognise numbers to at least five. Most can also count to five in Welsh. They listen attentively to number stories and join in counting activities. They match sound to number when selecting numbers to place on the number line. They are beginning to understand the meaning of "more than" and "less than" when adding another child to the dinner numbers. They are able to distinguish between tall and short when comparing the size of the rabbit in the music lesson and starting to use positional language when lining up the animals. Some children recognise shapes and refer to them in their activities. Cutting out circle and square shapes in play dough and commenting that they know the instrument is a triangle because it has three sides. When laying the table for lunch they count cups and sort plates and cups by colour. In the greengrocer's shop they sort the fruit into shape and colour and handle money.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings

3.4 Knowledge and understanding of the world

Good features

Children demonstrate an understanding of their immediate environment. They learn about people who help them and understand some of the work that people do in the community such as the policeman, fireman and shop keeper. They visit the local shops to see where food comes from, walk across to the park and discuss visits made by children. Items brought in by a child who had just returned from Australia provided an opportunity for children to make comparisons. In the garden they become "Bob the Builder" using the tool bench and tools. Children and parents collect money for Barnardos and Children in Need helping to raise the children's awareness of the importance of helping others

They discuss the changes in the weather and understand the common features of seasonal change. They mix paints to make autumn colours, use leaves and conkers to create pictures. Make a bird feeder and fill it with food for the birds in winter. They show a secure understanding of why ice melts and display very good problem solving skills to reach conclusions. Placing a small piece of ice in the kangaroo's pouch a child knew it hadn't melted but knew it was melting because it was getting smaller. The children learn about living creatures and enjoy looking after their guinea pig. The outdoor area is used as a resource for learning and the children have an awareness of the importance of recycling.

Children enjoy using the computer independently and most children display good "mouse" control.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings

3.5 Physical development

Good features

Children confidently use a range of tools when cutting, shaping, and sticking. They pull, roll and cut to make animal heads out of play dough. They demonstrate good fine motor skills when threading, cutting and sticking. They handle a variety of mark making equipment including paint brushes and glue spreaders well and show determination in achieving the desired effect. They use a wide range of construction equipment which improves their dexterity and hand- eye co-ordination.

When visiting the "café" they hold the knife correctly and successfully butter the currant bread. Some children are able to throw and catch a bean bag and with practice improve their throwing accuracy. When outside they confidently balance, stretch and jump. In the "gym" they demonstrate spatial awareness when moving to the music and are able to stretch and curl at the appropriate time. The obstacle course provides opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills.

Shortcomings

Children's gross motor skills are under developed when using the outdoor area.

3.6 Creative development

Good features

Children enjoy music and music making. They show an understanding of tone and respond appropriately with their voice to a whispering, speaking, shouting and singing voice. They also have an understanding of pitch answering in either a high or low voice. When given the opportunity to choose from a range of instruments they are able to choose the named instrument. One child was able to recall the real name of the “scraper” being guiro. Children play the instruments either loudly or softly in response to the instructions and they enthusiastically sing, with actions, the song “Brown Bear snoring in his winter sleep”.

Children are confident in making choices. They select from a range of materials to experiment create individual pieces of work.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings.

4.0 The quality of educational provision

The quality of educational provision for 3-4 year-olds and for 4-5 year-olds

4.1 The quality of provision for children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Good features

The nursery has clear policies and procedures which outline their values and principles.

Children respond well to staff who provide them with good guidance for appropriate behaviour. There is a strong emphasis on being kind to one another and as a result the children interact extremely well with one another. Staff encourage children to be aware of the feelings and needs of other children, to share and co-operate in their play. They are guided gently, but firmly, and are developing the ability to judge between right and wrong. The opportunities provided for children to raise money for good causes contribute well to their awareness of their responsibility towards others. Staff use incidental Welsh vocabulary and phrases throughout the session and events such as St David’s Day help the children to establish a sense of their Welsh identity. Multi cultural awareness is gradually being developed by the celebration of some festivals.

Shortcomings

Few opportunities are provided for children to develop their multi cultural understanding.

4.2 The quality of planning for children’s learning

Good features

The quality of planning for children’s learning is very good. Long term planning demonstrates coverage of the six areas of learning and topic webs focus on specific topics. Weekly plans are detailed and include target skills, differentiated activities, key vocabulary and resources. Problem solving opportunities are included with open ended questions posed. Teaching prompts such as how to engage the children are also found in these detailed plans. Whole group, individual and small group focus tasks and enhanced activities provide a blend of adult led and free choice activities. A very good feature is the section “things to watch” which provides suggestions for new staff.

Although there were no children with additional needs present at the time of inspection the special needs records show that those children are well provided for with detailed notes and individual educational plans. The nursery works closely with other agencies to ensure the needs of these children are met.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings.

4.3 The quality of teaching

Good features

The quality of teaching is very good. An outstanding feature is the quality of open ended questions posed by the adults which develop the children’s thinking skills. They set high expectations and challenge the children to solve problems. A variety of different strategies are used to engage the interest of the children and teaching is well paced and purposeful.

Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Desirable Outcomes and are beginning to plan in the areas of learning. Learning is very well organised and managed to ensure coverage of all areas. Teachers use a good range of resources to support activities and promote high standards.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings

4.4 The quality of assessment and recording of children’s progress and reports to parents and carers

Good features

Personal files are kept for each child showing progress and examples of achievement. Staff observe children's performance and note specific achievements or difficulties on sticky labels. These then form an assessment of the child's progress in the areas of learning. Parents have daily contact with the adults in the setting and a daily diary and verbal report is given at the end of the session.

Good quality reports offer a clear picture of children's achievements and progress in the six areas of learning. Staff maintain a Monmouthshire transition record which is passed on to the school. Staff also keep parents informed of children's progress through informal chats and parent evenings. Parents and carers appreciate the willingness of the staff to discuss their child's progress and welfare.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings

4.5 The quality of relationships with parents, carers and the community**Good features**

The quality of relationships with parents and carers is very good. Parents are full of praise and highly recommend the provision. They express full confidence in the staff whom they find very approachable. Parents and carers have daily contact with the staff and are kept well informed about all aspects of their child's well-being and learning. Daily diaries and newsletter provide all parents and carers with current information. An informative notice board provides details of current thematic work along with a copy of the weekly plan. There is also a suggestion box for parents' contributions. Photographs of the staff and copies of their qualifications are displayed where all parents can look at them.

Children use the local shops and park to contribute to their learning and visitors support topic work.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings

4.6 The extent to which the setting contributes to children's wellbeing

Good features

The nursery is very caring of the children's welfare. Clear policies and procedures contribute towards the wellbeing of each child. These include; special educational needs, child protection, behaviour management, hygiene, accident procedures, medication procedures and health and safety. Staff have a high regard for children's safety and quietly remind them of procedures during the day. Very good opportunities are provided during sessions such as "circle time" to discuss the children's social; wellbeing and feelings. Procedures for answering the door, ensuring visitors sign in and keeping stair gates closed ensure the nursery is a safe and secure environment for children.

The nursery promotes healthy eating and encourages children to eat fruit at snack time. Also a healthy lunch menu has been introduced.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings.

4.7 The quality of the leadership and management of the setting**Good features**

A number of excellent features are associated with the quality and leadership of the nursery. The managers are committed to achieving high standards and have a clear vision. Aims and objectives provide children with a stimulating environment where they feel happy and secure.

Managers' process of self evaluation and planning is thorough and is embedded into the culture of the nursery. Strengths and areas for development are identified in all the areas of learning and in the outdoor area. There is a clear action plan identifying short and long term actions for achieving improvement.

The managers enable staff to develop their potential and take on individual responsibilities. Since they have taken over the nursery they have developed a team approach where everyone is valued. The work of the staff is monitored carefully and professional development of staff is very well catered for through regular appraisal, coaching and training. Their improved knowledge, increased skill level and self confidence positively impacts on the standards achieved by the children.

Documentation and policies are regularly reviewed. The nursery offers equal opportunities and caters for the needs of all children.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings

4.8 The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for inspection identified in the last inspection report

Good features

The nursery has addressed all the issues identified in the last inspection report. Since taking over the nursery the new managers formulated an action plan to ensure all areas were addressed. They now:

Ensure that the timetable has a balance between the six areas

Have trained all staff in the Desirable Outcomes

Purchased equipment to ensure that the nursery is well resourced

Trained staff to use open ended questions

Ensure that work saved for the purpose of recording progress or reporting to parents is dated.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings.

5.0 Recommendations

The setting needs to:

- Continue to develop the outside learning environment allowing daily direct access to enable the children more opportunities to use the outdoor area as an extension of the classroom for all areas of learning.
- Plan for and develop opportunities to promote children's awareness of other cultures.
- Further develop children's gross motor control.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days, or 45 working days if the plan needs to be translated to or from Welsh, showing how the issues identified above will be addressed. The action plan must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the setting. A copy of the action plan must be sent to Estyn. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection.