

Happy Tots Pre School

Landseer Road Methodist Church, Landseer Road, IPSWICH, Suffolk, IP3 9LX

Inspection date	23/01/2014
Previous inspection date	05/06/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- The leadership has a strong commitment to further develop and improve the pre-school, to promote high quality teaching and care for all the children.
- Staff sensitively settle children into the pre-school and build positive relationships with them. Consequently, children are happy, confident and secure in the pre-school. Their transitions on to school are also well- supported.
- Staff proactively work with parents, and other professionals, as required, to effectively support children's individual care, development and learning needs.

It is not yet good because

- The required adult to child staffing ratios are not always rigorously applied, and staff are not always suitably deployed, to best meet and fully safeguard children's welfare.
- The quality of planning and teaching is not always strong enough to ensure activities are suitably varied and refreshed, to offer children sufficient interest and challenge to promote their best progress, particularly for children who stay all day.
- The quality of teaching is variable, due to differing experience levels of the staff. This results in some opportunities, for example, to promote and extend children's language and learning, not being appropriately exploited.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main playroom and outdoor area and, when appropriate, interacted with the children.
- The inspector spoke with the pre-school manager, and the staff, at appropriate times throughout the inspection and discussed activities with them.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager and had a discussion with the manager.
- The inspector looked at children's learning journey development records, planning documentation, the setting's self-evaluation and a selection of policies and children's records.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of the staff.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents from their comments received on the day of the inspection and from parent questionnaires.

Inspector

Hazel Meadows

Full report

Information about the setting

Happy Tots Pre-School originally opened in 1981. It is registered on the Early Years Register and is managed by a voluntary committee. It operates from Landseer Road Methodist Church Hall, in south-east Ipswich, Suffolk. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is a purpose-designed outdoor play area.

The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. One member of staff is trained at level 6 and the manager at level 5. The deputy is trained at level 3 and is working towards a level 5 qualification. Four other staff are trained at level 3 and two are working towards level 2.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, term-time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm and 1.15pm until 4.15pm. An optional breakfast club operates from 8.15am until 9.15am and a lunch club is available from 12.15pm until 1.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 59 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure at least the required adult to child ratios are maintained at all times, and improve staff deployment, to ensure that children's needs are fully met at all times, for example, by reviewing organisation of lunchtimes.

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

- pursue the ongoing improvement of staff's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to apply in practice, to ensure that opportunities for children's learning and development are fully exploited. For example, improve ways of promoting communication and language by listening, using more open-ended questioning and following children's lead
- review planning and improve the variety and choice of activities available throughout the day, to offer children sufficient interest and challenge, and to encourage more focussed and purposeful play, particularly for children who stay for both morning and afternoon sessions.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff establish children's initial capabilities through induction meetings and discussions with parents, 'All about me' documents and their own observations. This helps them to ascertain children's starting points and plan for the next steps in their learning. Individual learning journals are used to record and monitor children's ongoing progress. Written observations, often supported with photographs or examples of the children's work, are used by staff to identify any possible lines of development and inform future planning. All the areas of learning are covered and children's development is generally supported in the prime areas. This ensures they are developing the skills to support their future learning and to prepare them for school. Termly progress summaries are completed for each child, to monitor their progress through the areas of learning. Staff complete clear progress checks for children in the two- to three-year age range, which are shared and discussed with parents, to ensure children are progressing within the expected range for their age.

Parents are encouraged to contribute about what they know about their child from home. Communication slips are given to parents, to suggest ideas of how they can further support their child's learning at home. They are kept informed about their child's progress and learning through regular discussions with their child's key person. Parent evenings enable them to look at their child's learning journal in more depth with the key person. Staff proactively support children with English as an additional language. They liaise closely with parents to enhance communication with the children. Parents are also invited to share aspects of their culture with the pre-school as a whole, to benefit all the children, for example, different foods and festivals. Staff work closely with parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to support their learning and development, welcoming and utilising input from other professionals, when required. Consequently, children with additional needs are making continued progress and gaps their learning are reduced. Children are mostly offered suitably interesting and challenging activities, however, they are not always sufficiently refreshed or changed after lunch for children who stay all day. Children's language and communication are mostly encouraged well. Staff play down at the children's level and most promote children's conversation by listening attentively, reflecting back to them and asking open-ended questions. However, the quality of teaching, and impact it has on children's learning, is sometimes variable according to staff's experience and training. For example, there are instances where less experienced staff ask children repeated closed questions, resulting in opportunities being missed to broaden children's language and conversation. Children are not always given time to think and respond or they do not have opportunity to formulate and verbalise their own thoughts, ideas and questions.

Children freely access writing resources, such as chalk, pencils, pens and paper to practise making marks and writing skills. One child observes a visitor taking notes in the pre-school and, keen to copy, goes to the writing area to get something to write with. Some of the older children are beginning to form recognisable letters and are becoming aware that text has meaning. A cosy, well-stocked book area fosters children's appreciation of books. Children snuggle up to staff for stories on a one-to-one basis or in small group. Good use

is made of props to captivate and hold children's attention. For example, a crocodile puppet is used well to engage even the youngest children with singing number rhymes. Children's own play and contributions are incorporated into the activity, for example, a child shares a role play picnic with the assembled group. Children delight in playing in the large, well-resourced outdoor area, where they have space to run and move freely. A broad range of age-appropriate equipment supports children's physical development, for example, a trampette, see-saw and hoops. Children are mastering skills, such as balancing, using stilts and beams and as they negotiate the grassed mound. They use the ride-on toys with competence and control. Staff fully recognise that some children prefer being outdoors and all areas of learning are covered outside, with good use made of the canopied area. Children are given liberty and time to explore. For example, a two-year-old discovers a wind chime and works out how to move it to make a noise. A range of saucepans strung on the fence enables children to discover a range of percussion tones. Children's imagination and role play is well-supported with good quality props, such as a play kitchen and small world toys. A wigwam enables children to re-enact the story of the three little pigs, as they blow the house down. Children explore a range of different textures, such as, play dough, paint, gloop and sand. They learn more about living things as they help to grow and care for plants in accessible compost troughs.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Staff work closely with parents to introduce children sensitively and gradually to the group. Children's transition from home to the pre-school is a smooth and positive experience, which helps them settle well. Each child is allocated a key person to support them who consults with parents, to promote their well-being. Staff use information gathered from parents, and their own observations, to help them understand and meet each child's particular needs. The group is very inclusive and welcomes all children. Diversity of culture and language are strongly valued and reflected well in the setting's resources, activities and practice. Extra staff are deployed, as required, to offer additional support for children with special educational needs. Staff are caring and attentive and they get to know children very well as individuals. Positive bonds and secure attachments are established between children and their key persons. Children are happy and settled in the group and comfortable with all the staff, which supports their emotional well-being.

The environment is safe and secure and staff are mostly well-deployed to ensure children's safety. For example, at arrival and departure times a member of staff monitors the main door, to ensure children's safety. However, on occasions at lunchtime, there are insufficient staff working directly with the children, to fully support and ensure their well-being. Children are beginning to learn about how to keep themselves safe through reminders from staff, for example, how to carry and stack the chairs. The pre-school is well-resourced. However, staff do not always make best use of the resources and space available. Toys and activities are not routinely changed between the morning and afternoon sessions, therefore fresh activities are not available for children who stay all day. Consequently, children are not always motivated and engaged, through good quality learning experiences. Positive behaviour is promoted through ongoing reminders and a consistent approach. Staff are attentive and kind to the children and present positive role

models of behaviour. They mostly offer calm and clear explanations to children to help them begin to learn what is acceptable and how to manage their own behaviour. When there are insufficient staff working with the children or insufficient activities to absorb them, the children become less focused and their behaviour begins to deteriorate.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air, daylight and exercise in the well-equipped outdoor area, promoting their health and physical development. Staff recognise that some children prefer to play outdoors and the resources and activities available to children in the garden area cover all the areas of learning. Indoors, children of all ages are keen to join in with a new music and movement compact disc, encouraging them to move their bodies in different ways, enthusiastically led by a member of staff. Children manage their own personal needs well, according to their age and stage of development, with older children independently using the toilets and washing their hands. Reminders and consistent routines promote children's understanding of good hygiene habits. A healthy variety of snacks is provided by the group and children are encouraged to try a variety of tastes and textures, while staff remain acutely mindful of any dietary needs. Children's independence is encouraged, as they pour their own drinks and put on their coats, with adult help available if required. Staff promote discussions about school and children play with school uniforms. Visits are arranged to the schools the children will attend and some teachers visit the pre-school. This helps to ensure that they are emotionally well-prepared for the next stage in their learning. They are gaining confidence and independence, helping them to be emotionally prepared for the next stage in their learning or for their transition on to school.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The leadership mostly fulfil their responsibilities to safeguard children and keep them safe from harm. Robust recruitment procedures work effectively in practice to ensure suitability of staff. Volunteers are suitably vetted and are not left unattended with the children. There is a thorough induction and probationary period, to ensure staff are clear of their roles and responsibilities. However, staff's practical application of their responsibilities is sometimes not sufficiently rigorous. On the day of the inspection, over the lunchtime period, insufficient staff are available to meet the required adult to child ratios, which could have a detrimental effect on children's safety and welfare, including behaviour. Staff are generally well-deployed, however, after lunch, two members of staff are busy with clearing up, leaving just one member of staff working directly with all the children. Any changes of committee are notified to Ofsted, as required. All staff have attended safeguarding children training, and policies and procedures are understood, and mostly implemented in practice, to promote children's welfare. The emergency evacuation routine is practised regularly, ensuring it works in practice and helps children to become familiar with the procedure, without being fearful.

The manager works hard to make continuous improvements within the pre-school. For example, the action from the previous inspection has been thoroughly and positively addressed and the manager and staff are continuing to address the recommendations. A

focussed action plan timetable ensures that identified tasks and improvements are not overlooked. Ongoing staff development is strongly encouraged and staff are keen to attend training to enhance their practice with the children. Regular supervision meetings, and annual appraisals, also promote staff's individual development. A recently completed Ofsted self-evaluation form offers an accurate reflection of the group's achievements and clearly outlines priorities for improvement. All staff are involved with self-evaluation and areas for improvement are discussed at fortnightly team meetings. The manager monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching and practice, through supervisions and peer observations. She recognises that this is an area for ongoing improvement as staff still have varying degrees of understanding of how to consistently promote effective learning.

Parents views are actively sought and welcomed, both verbally and via surveys, to guide improvement. For example, a survey was recently sent to parents who have English as an additional language, to try to ensure the pre-school was doing all it could to support their family's particular needs appropriately. Children's views are also valued and used to inform planning and activities.

Staff establish positive and effective partnerships with parents. Parents receive an initial information pack and are kept fully updated, both verbally and by newsletters and a well-presented noticeboard. Staff communicate regularly with parents about their child's well-being and learning and development. This promotes a consistent and cooperative approach to supporting children's progress. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection are very happy with the quality of care provided and how well their children were helped to settle. They find staff approachable and confirm that they receive regular feedback about their child's development, progress and learning. Close and purposeful links have been established with local schools to support children's transitions on to school. The nursery works and communicates closely with other early years professionals, such as portage workers and the local children's centre. This helps to focus cohesive support to children, as required, to promote their individual welfare and development. The manager and staff regularly attend local cluster meetings plus focussed network and liaison sessions with nearby settings to share and emulate good practice.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY316234
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	948944
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	59
Name of provider	Happy Tots Pre-School Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	05/06/2013
Telephone number	01473 290290

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

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