

Inspection of Tots Academy

140 High Street, Luton LU4 9LJ

Inspection date: 9 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enthusiastically enter the nursery. They chat to their friends and smile when they receive a warm welcome. Children engage in the activities offered and confidently find equipment and toys that interest them. Staff play along side them, adding comments and challenges to help build on what they already know and understand. For example, staff ask children what they are cooking in an imaginary kitchen. They encourage children to use new words and phrases, helping to expand their emerging vocabularies.

Children happily join in activities led by staff. They gather around a table to investigate cress seeds before scattering them in pots to grow. Children compare the size of different seeds, using words such as 'tiny'. In another activity, children wait for their turn to listen to and repeat a drum beat. They share equipment and understand they need to take turns. This helps children begin to respect others and regulate their own behaviour. In the garden, children splash in puddles and ride on wheeled toys. This supports their physical development.

Children are motivated to set their own targets. When they need to, they ask staff to help them reach these targets. This helps to strengthen their confidence and self-esteem. For example, older children have a desire to write simple rhyming words, while younger children want to successfully thread pasta on to laces. Each child thrives on the encouragement and praise staff give them.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager has a clear understanding of how children learn and develop. She ensures staff follow a consistent curriculum that helps children build on what they already know and understand. Staff assess children's progress to help them focus on children's individual needs and interests.
- Staff work closely with other professionals, helping to ensure that care and education plans effectively meet the needs of individual children. This contributes to consistent approaches used at home and in the nursery.
- The manager invites visitors to the nursery to help provide memorable ways for children to learn. For example, firefighters bring a fire engine to the nursery for children to look inside and discover the equipment they carry. This helps children find out about the world around them.
- Staff are dedicated to support communication and language development, including for those children who speak English as an additional language. Staff ask parents to make a list of key words in the language that children use at home to help children feel settled and welcome. Visual timetables help children recognise what will happen next during the daily timetable. All children learn basic sign language, aiding communication with their friends. Staff take time to

speak clearly and allow children time to repeat words or work out their own answers. This helps children become confident talkers in the nursery.

- The manager monitors staff's professional development through regular and robust supervision. Through discussion, the manager and staff identify any training needs that support them to further enhance their already good quality teaching. The manager values advice and evaluation from other professionals, helping to promote continual improvements in the quality of care and education.
- The manager and staff have established a variety of ways to share information with parents. For example, they invite parents into the nursery to share ideas of how children's learning can be extended at home. However, the amount of information gathered from, and shared with, individual parents is variable. As a result, not all parents benefit from the wealth of support and guidance offered. In addition, staff do not consistently gather sufficient information from parents to help plan focused teaching right from the start.
- Staff are keen to help and support children. However, through their enthusiasm, staff do not always give children time to solve problems, predict what might happen next or find different ways of doing things for themselves. This reduces opportunities children have to develop their independent thinking skills.
- Children enthusiastically select toys and equipment throughout the day. However, staff do not support children to take responsibility to care for the resources. This impacts on the available space to allow children to move freely and express themselves in an unrestricted way.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good understanding of how to protect children. They know when and how to report any concerns they have about children's well-being. The manager regularly shares scenarios with staff, promoting discussion about different aspects of child protection and safeguarding. This helps staff refresh and build on their already sound knowledge and awareness. New staff quickly familiarise themselves with key policies and procedures they must follow to help keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review and enhance methods used to consistently gather information from, and share ideas with all parents to help ensure children's learning is effectively supported both in nursery and at home
- encourage children to develop their thinking skills during adult-led and self-chosen activities
- support and encourage children to take responsibility to care for toys and equipment in the nursery.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2618532
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10280848
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	KHM Education LTD
Registered person unique reference number	2618529
Telephone number	01582496989
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Tots Academy registered in 2021. The nursery employs eight members of childcare staff, six of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from 8am until 5pm, Monday to Friday, term time only. The nursery provides funded early education for two,- three- and four- year- old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Katrina Rodden

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken this into account in her assessment of the provision.
- The manager took the inspector on learning walk around the nursery and garden. The manager described what and how children learn in the nursery.
- The inspector and manager observed an activity together. They discussed the quality of teaching they saw.
- The inspector observed activities in the group rooms and in the garden. She spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The provider met with the inspector to discuss recruitment procedures and other aspects of leadership roles.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents. She took their views, along with those contained in emails to the inspector, into consideration.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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