



Toad Hall Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	511179
Inspection date	12 September 2005
Inspector	Karen Louise Prager / Rosemary Davies
Setting Address	Trinity Hall, Victoria Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 3AL
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Registered person	Careroom Ltd
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Toad Hall Nursery, under the ownership of Careroom Ltd, opened in 1999. It operates from a converted church building within the centre of Swindon.

There are currently 79 children from birth to under 5 years on roll. This includes 14 funded 3-year-olds and 0 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group has experience of caring for children with a variety of special needs and for children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week throughout the year. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00.

There are 6 part-time and twelve full-time staff working with the children. Fifteen have early years qualifications, while five are currently on training programmes. The group receives teacher support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Snacks are provided by the nursery and children enjoy a variety of foods including fruit and crackers. Children benefit from free access to drinks throughout the day. The children's health is further promoted through the safe storage and preparation of food.

The provider implements good hygiene procedures through regular cleaning of the children's areas and well planned daily routines such as washing hands before eating. Children are encouraged from an early age to manage this themselves to encourage independence. However, they are not helped to understand why they need to wash their hands.

Children are able to rest according to their needs. Children enjoy regular physical activities. However, a lack of detailed planning does not always enable the children to make the most of these times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in safe and secure premises. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised and there are good safety and security precautions, such as an internal telephone system and controlled entry in place. Practitioners help keep children safe in the nursery and on outings because they understand and comply with health and safety requirements.

Children use a sufficient range of safe, good quality resources. These are well-organised in child height furniture to encourage independent access. Staff skilfully explain safe practices, such as why children should hold the hand rail on the stairs, so that they do not fall. This helps children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Children are well protected. The child protection co-ordinator ensures that procedures are up to date and that staff understand their responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

All children arrive happily, settle well and develop skills as they chose what to do. The rooms are set out invitingly with bright posters and children's work on the walls. Activities are easy to access and laid out at child height.

Babies and children under 3 years benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home, for example following familiar sleep routines. They enjoy regular outings to the local park where they get pleasure from playing on the grass and observing the geese and moor hens. However early communication skills are limited as staff often fail to respond to sounds made during the children's play and conversation is restricted.

School aged children are able to spend time with their friends, playing for example, with the home corner or computer games. Children enjoy the activities planned by the staff in the school holidays.

Children benefit because the staff know them well. Regular observations and developmental checks are carried out.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Children play in a very well organised playroom where they see bright displays of their work. This room offers a stimulating learning environment in which children may choose from a wide range of good quality resources. They experience a broad range of activities which cover the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is only satisfactory, however, because staff lack understanding of the principles which underpin this stage in their learning. This means that staff often expect too much of the children, such as sitting together in a group for long periods or talking to them about things they do not understand. Their attention drifts, therefore and they become fidgety. Children spend too much time in adult-directed activity, particularly during morning sessions, making little progress towards becoming independent learners.

Children listen attentively when staff engage them effectively. They enjoy well-chosen and clearly read stories like 'The Blue Dog' and they pose pertinent questions to staff. Staff respond well when one child asks: "What does 'yawn' mean?" They help children develop their vocabularies. They develop their early mathematical vocabularies too, hearing staff describe biscuits as 'rectangular' and using words such as 'big' and 'small' appropriately for themselves as they describe their pets. They count real objects accurately and staff show awareness of children's differing abilities, asking the older or more able children to count further.

Children behave well when purposefully engaged in activities they have chosen for themselves, such as role play. They enjoy talking to staff about their home lives, speaking confidently and developing their conversation skills well. They receive much support owing to the favourable adult to child ratio and staff clearly enjoy the children's company and value what they say. Sometimes, however, staff set out activities whilst children wait and then they again become restless.

Relationships within the nursery are good. Children happily approach staff for support or to show what they make. Staff speak to children appropriately, taking a kind and caring approach.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop confidence and self esteem through regular praise given by the staff. They are confident in their relationship with practitioners. They begin to play happily together, though children under 3 years receive less attention from the staff.

Management of the children is calm and well ordered. Children are well behaved and appropriate strategies are in place to promote good behaviour. They are increasingly able to distinguish between right and wrong as staff set boundaries for the children. 'Golden rules' have been drawn up and are well displayed for children over 3 years, and occasionally referred to by staff.

Children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and children with special needs are welcomed in the nursery. Practitioners ensure that there are many images on display which positively represent individuals from the wider society. This helps children to begin to develop a positive attitude to others.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are happy with the provision. They receive regular feedback about their child's progress and are able to talk freely to staff when they drop off and collect their children. Reports are given to parents at regular intervals throughout the year and they are encouraged to attend parents evening and open sessions further promoting a positive partnership.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered, for example through learning to care for one another and enjoying a discussion about the sun and shadows.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery meets the needs of the children attending for whom it provides satisfactory care and education.

Good organisation of the paper work ensures all staff are suitable to work with the children. There is a generally effective operational plan. Effective policies are in place to ensure that the provision is well organised and that the nursery runs smoothly. Children and staff benefit from stable routines and know what is expected of them.

Regular observations of the children ensure the staff have a good knowledge of the children. Planning is in place for the majority of the children and a range of activities are provided. The Foundation Stage guidance and the Birth to three matters framework are both used by staff when planning activities.

Leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. Staff attend regular staff meetings and information gained from training courses is cascaded to all staff. Appraisals take place annually and targets are set for the future. Procedures for the appropriate monitoring of staff practice are not fully implemented and this is limiting the quality of care which the children receive.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection the nursery agreed to ensure that the bench in the outside play area does not pose a hazard to the children. Safety has been improved as the bench was removed.

At the previous nursery education inspection 3 key issues were identified; to develop the monitoring and assessment of the children which is then used to inform the planning; to improve the programme for mathematics; to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of ways to promote positive behaviour.

Children's education has been satisfactorily improved through staff training, as has the implementation of observation and assessment systems leading to better informed planning.

Complaints since the last inspection

A complaint was received relating to National Standard 6, Safety and Standard 10, Special Needs. We asked the provider to investigate and to report back to Ofsted within ten working days. The provider supplied full details including background information, what was found, their conclusions and actions that have been taken following the incident. We are satisfied that the National Standards are being met. The provider remains qualified for registration.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- improve the quality of the interaction of staff with children under three
- ensure that the monitoring procedures of staff practice are effective (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- enable children to become independent learners including enabling children to develop meaningful and appropriate ways to develop mark-making skills.

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