



Toad Hall Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY219283
Inspection date	22 September 2006
Inspector	Patricia Mary Champion
Setting Address	at Wyburns Primary School, Nevern Road, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 7PE
Telephone number	01268 773386
E-mail	info@toad-hall-nursery.co.uk
Registered person	Toad Hall Day Nursery Ltd.
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?

Toad Hall Day Nursery is privately owned and opened in 2002. It operates from four rooms in a purpose built facility within the grounds of Wyburns Primary School in Rayleigh. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 76 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week all year round, apart from public holidays. Operating times are from 07:00 until 19:00.

There are currently 149 children aged under five years on roll. Of these, 45 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions or full day care. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 24 staff, of whom 17 of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are four staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority, the National Day Nurseries' Association (NDNA) and the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy and are protected from the spread of infection because staff members follow effective hygiene routines. Anti-bacterial spray is used consistently on tables and work surfaces and staff wear disposable gloves for nappy changing. Children learn about good health and hygiene routines as they know that they need to wash their hands regularly to remove germs. Liquid soap, paper towels and individual flannels are provided to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Staff hold first aid and food hygiene certificates and the nursery is inspected by the environmental health officer. Children's health is protected as there are clearly written policies regarding the care of sick children and administering medication. Parents are made fully aware of exclusion periods regarding infectious illness and any accidents are appropriately recorded.

Children are well nourished. They enjoy eating freshly cooked, well-balanced meals and the menu is displayed every day. Children are encouraged to try new foods and parents are given the recipes for healthy meals the children particularly enjoy. A variety of fruit is provided for snacks each day so that children learn about healthy eating. Drinks are freely available and the youngest children in the nursery have their covered drinking cups within eyesight at all times. The staff sit with the children as they eat to enable interaction and promote good table manners. Meal times are seen as an opportunity to help children to enjoy their food and become independent in feeding themselves. Babies are bottle fed in comfort as they are held in the staff's arms and sensitively given plenty of eye contact. Individual children's needs are met well as staff are fully aware of any allergies or special dietary requirements.

Children have good opportunities for exercise and fresh air every day, which contributes to their good health. Each age group has an allotted time to use the outdoor play area in the morning and afternoon. Children have great fun climbing and balancing when they play on the outdoor apparatus and ride scooters with great skill as they carefully manoeuvre around obstacles. In very warm weather the staff utilise the shaded courtyards adjacent to the classrooms for outdoor play. During wet weather staff clear space in the classrooms so that children can take part in energetic circle games or crawl around obstacle courses using indoor apparatus such as tents and tunnels. Each week visitors to the setting encourage the children to use a greater range of movements. For example, the children practise ball skills with football players and take part in music and movement with a dance teacher.

Children rest or sleep according to their needs because the staff recognise the signs of tiredness and act on this knowledge to plan and support appropriate periods of rest and activity. Children have individual bedding and they are monitored regularly as they sleep.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, comfortable and clean environment. The staff are extremely vigilant about the security of the children and effective systems prevent unauthorised access to the premises. Visitors are consistently monitored and CCTV has been installed both inside and outside the premises. Staff within the playrooms can see on monitors when parents have arrived to collect their children and there is an inter-connecting telephone system within the nursery. Risk assessment is regularly undertaken to ensure that children do not have access to potential hazards. Suitable safety items such as cupboard locks and door finger guards are used to protect children from harm. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised and fire equipment is routinely checked.

Children use a wide range of safe, good-quality toys, play materials and furnishings. There is a comprehensive inventory of resources that indicates to staff where items are stored. Play equipment is regularly rotated to provide added interest and stimulation and toys are checked frequently for cleanliness and damage. High chairs are fitted with safety harnesses and soft seating areas are provided for children to rest and relax while enjoying a chat or a story.

Children learn to keep themselves safe as they are encouraged to pick up tripping hazards and are reminded to walk indoors rather than run. They learn to use tools such as metal cutlery carefully and safely and any toys within reach of babies are suitable for them to explore using their mouth and hands.

Children are safeguarded because they are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills. Staff are fully aware of their child protection responsibilities. They attend training and have access to child protection literature so that they know the appropriate procedures if they have concerns about a child's welfare. There is a clear child protection policy and relevant information is displayed for parents to view.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children throughout the nursery have fun, show curiosity and enjoy their play. They have formed secure relationships with the staff and their peers and benefit from playing in a child friendly and stimulating environment. The effective key worker system enables staff to get to know the children extremely well. Children are developing language by listening to stories or singing songs. Staff talk to young children and explain what they are doing, which encourages children to link words with actions and to question or talk about things which interest them.

Children have interesting resources to support their play and learning. Staff use everyday materials and ingredients such as shaving foam, cooked rice and jelly so that children can use all their sense to explore and investigate. They become totally absorbed scooping jelly with a spoon and licking their fingers when they become sticky. Children of all ages paint and glue using lentils or glitter to enhance their pictures. Staff provide children with role play resources which support young children's imaginative learning. Children enjoy pretending to make tea in the home corner or shopping in the farm shop. Babies are given plenty of choice in their

play, this encourages them to develop their physical skills by crawling towards items that particularly interest them. Although staff observe the younger children as they play and record and link their progress and achievements to the 'Birth to three matters' framework, they are not yet consistently using the framework to plan the children's activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a secure knowledge of the Curriculum for the foundation stage and understand how young children learn. They support children's learning by using traditional teaching methods and use some Montessori equipment. A great deal of thought has gone into reorganising the classroom so that children have access to an interesting and stimulating range of activities. This encourages children to develop positive attitudes towards learning. The children are curious, excited and eager to learn. They respond well to challenge and ask questions and describe what they are doing. The show and tell at circle time allows children to explain items they have brought from home. Children develop good independence skills as they pour their own drinks and put on or take off cardigans after outdoor play.

Children acquire new knowledge and skills as they learn about music from around the world and find countries on a globe. They listen attentively to sounds, explore similarities and differences and also make their own musical instruments using recycled materials. Children sing with gusto and are building up a repertoire of favourite songs.

Children have good opportunities to use and enjoy books. A suitable range of fiction and non-fiction books is freely available to children. They choose to read for pleasure and show an awareness of how books work and handle them carefully. Children learn to recognise letters as they spell out their name using sponge letters in water play. They carefully learn to write their name with one-to-one adult support by tracing and copying. Older children enjoy practising and adeptly write their name on their artwork. Although children can self-select writing materials from the resource trolley, there are occasions when children are not encouraged to write for a purpose within their role play, for example, by writing messages as they talk on the telephone.

Children show interest in numbers and counting in their everyday activities, such as counting when playing hide and seek or making candles with play dough for a birthday cake. Children make and recreate patterns as they carefully sort pegs onto a board. They learn about capacity and volume and use words such as full or empty as they pour drinks or play with sand. Children use construction toys to make models such as fire engines and work out how many linking pieces they need to fit around their waists.

Children learn about their local community by making visits to the library or nearby shops. They learn what happens when you post a letter. The children also benefit from weekly dance lessons and French, which helps their physical development and understanding of other cultures. Activities such as using electronic toys, along with regular opportunities to use a computer develops children's understanding of technology.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points and capabilities. Staff observe the children as they play and chart their progress and

achievements. Record keeping has recently been reviewed and revised to ensure that it contains sufficient detail. However, staff do not yet consistently indicate the children's next steps in learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a sense of belonging as they are warmly welcomed by staff each day and enjoy looking for their names on coat pegs as they arrive at the nursery. The staff recognise that children need a predictable environment to feel settled and secure and sensitively support children as they change rooms or if there are changes to the staff team. Children are encouraged to bring things from home to carry, suck or play with because the staff recognise and understand that this may help young children move between home and a new setting.

Children behave well and understand the need for responsible behaviour. Any disagreements about taking turns are skilfully negotiated by the staff, particularly when children use the sand timer so that they learn to play cooperatively with each other. There is a behaviour management policy for staff to follow and they act as calm role models. Systems are in place to support any child that has additional needs and staff members have attended relevant training to act as special educational needs coordinators.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children become aware of wider society by learning about different festivals and traditions. Books and play equipment portray positive images of diversity and children are starting to use French language as they take part in activities. Children show care and respect for each other and learn about social skills such as sharing and remembering to say please or sorry. A helping hands system operates where children help staff to distribute drinks and snacks and this assists in raising confidence and self-esteem. Plenty of praise and encouragement is heard and children proudly show visitors their artwork, certificates or their helping hands badge.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are made to feel extremely welcome and high quality written information is provided in the beautifully presented prospectus and welcome pack. Newsletters and displays throughout the nursery provide additional information. Open evenings are held so that parents can discuss their child's progress and achievements and they know that they can view their child's records at any time. Information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and weekly activity plans are shared. Parents share in their child's learning as each week the parents of the funded children receive a diary sheet detailing the experiences the children have enjoyed and how staff support the children's learning. The parents of younger children attending the nursery receive daily record sheets within a communication book. These keep parents informed about care routines such as sleep times, food eaten and nappy changing. Ongoing dialogue with parents ensures that staff can effectively meet the individual needs of the children. Parents speak positively about the nursery and appreciate the efforts of the staff team and the care provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and feel secure in the nursery. They are cared for by an enthusiastic and well qualified staff team who are encouraged to attend further training or workshops to ensure that their skills and childcare knowledge are regularly updated. The required minimum staffing ratios are met at all times and efficient cover is provided during staff lunch breaks. There are some times during the day when staff are fully stretched dealing with domestic tasks and supervising the children. However, the manager and deputy are supernumerary to the staffing ratios and step in and take on additional responsibilities or assist with the smooth running of the daily routine within the rooms.

All the essential documentation regarding the safe and efficient management of the nursery is in place. There is an effective operational plan that is used as a working tool. Policies and procedures that are individual to the nursery promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. Paperwork regarding the children's details is kept up to date and stored securely.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The management of the nursery are strongly supported by the friendly and caring staff team. They are strongly committed to improving the provision for nursery education. Regular staff meetings are held. The range of resources has been improved and the planning and assessment cycle is continuously reviewed. Staff appraisals are routinely undertaken and activities are evaluated. Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust. There is a very effective induction process for new staff and they receive a comprehensive handbook that covers all aspects of their responsibilities. The nursery has successfully completed a recognised quality assurance scheme through the National Day Nurseries' Association and holds an Investors in People accreditation.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to record the movements of staff and children between rooms, display children's work and posters, provide a range of toys to develop children's imaginative play, extend the risk assessment to include potential hazards such as the trees in the garden and to review meal times so that children can develop their social capabilities. Children's enjoyment, welfare and safety has been enhanced because staff now sign in and out of the rooms they are working in, additional notice boards and mirrors at the children's eye level have been installed, themed imaginative and multi cultural resource boxes have been developed, staff have checked thoroughly that the trees in the garden do not present as potential hazards and at meal times children and staff sit in social groups within each room.

At the last inspection for nursery education three key issues were raised. The staff have improved the opportunities for children to self-select art and craft materials, recognise their name or explore calculation. More effective use is now being made of the Montessori equipment. Large group activities such as circle time or snack time are now planned to develop and enhance children's learning. Children now work in appropriately organised groups to ensure that activities provide sufficient challenge and sustain interest for the older or more able children. As a result

the provision for nursery education has improved and children are offered more challenging and exciting learning opportunities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection Ofsted have received one complaint. On 28 July 2004 concerns were raised that related to National Standard 2: Organisation, regarding the nursery not meeting the required staffing ratios. An unannounced visit was made by childcare inspectors to the nursery on 9 August 2004, when it was found that the required staff-to-child ratios were being adhered to. A recommendation was made under National Standard 14: Documentation, regarding making sure that record keeping was consistent. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- develop and plan further the range of learning opportunities offered to children aged under three years by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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):

- increase opportunities for children to use writing for a purpose and making their own marks within role play scenarios
- ensure that staff consistently use their observations to identify each child's next steps in learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk