



Toad Hall Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY225251
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Registered person	Careroom 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 Nursery, Walton has been registered since 2001. It is one of sixteen nurseries owned by the Carerom Ltd chain of private day nurseries. The nursery operates from a purpose built building situated in a residential area of Walton on Thames, Surrey. Children are accommodated in age related base rooms and have access to an enclosed garden area for outside play.

The nursery accepts children from three months to under five years of age. There are currently 105 children on roll, of these 25 receive nursery education funding. The nursery welcomes children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Children may attend for a variety of sessions and most come from the local community.

The nursery opens five days a week (Monday to Friday) from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. It is closed for Bank Holidays and a week at Christmas. There are currently 22 staff

employed to work with the children. Of these, 14 hold relevant early years qualifications and 21 hold current first aid certificates. Three staff are being supported to gain NVQ and degree qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority child care services. They are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA) and the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a setting that places high emphasis on meeting children's individual health needs. Staff pay meticulous attention to the comprehensive personal information that parents provide prior to children attending, such as the routine sleep and feeding needs of babies so that they can ensure likewise. Babies are reassured by the consistency in care and are therefore happy and secure. Excellent record keeping ensures that children's health development is well monitored, for example accidents and administered medication are all documented, children's settling in experiences are described in succinct reports, and their growth and development is regularly assessed. This enables staff to identify possible concerns, which in turn assures that appropriate support can be quickly arranged. Virtually all the staff have completed certificated first aid training, which means that they are equipped to treat minor injuries and to respond to some emergency situations.

Children are very well protected from the risk of cross infection because staff fully understand and implement the comprehensive written procedures. For example, all areas of the premises are thoroughly cleaned every day, staff practise high standards of hygiene when they change nappies, children are well reminded about hand washing at appropriate times of the day, and each child that sleeps has their own set of linen. Parents are well informed about what childhood conditions require an incubation period and therefore understand when to keep children at home, so that others are protected.

The superb outdoor play area, which is divided to ensure babies are protected from robust older children, ensures they all get plenty of fresh air and physical exercise. Children are able to play outside regardless of weather conditions because there are covered and shaded areas, and a good supply of outdoor clothes are readily available. Older children very much look forward to the weekly football skills and dancing sessions provided by visiting specialists. As a result, they are developing excellent coordination skills. Older children play advanced games such as hopscotch, learn to use skipping ropes and ride bikes with pedals. All the children have access to appropriate and physically challenging apparatus and equipment. They learn the importance of good health through well delivered curriculum and activity planning and through daily practical routines. For example, older children are helped to recognise the changes to their bodies after exercise, toddlers learn the art of teeth brushing with the aid of an excellent dental model, and all the children practise this for real after lunch as part of the nursery's commitment to the 'stop the rot' campaign. Food play features heavily within the nursery for all children. A wealth of photographs displayed around the setting depict delightful images of the children covered in jelly, corn flour and cereals. Children grow their own vegetables in the nursery allotment. The daily menu of fresh produce, plenty of fruit and vegetables, and healthy snacks

such as rice cakes is planned by a nutritionist and cooked by a chef who makes sure that foods look appetising. This highly pro-active approach to promoting good health is laying the foundations for a physically active lifestyle and a fondness for, and interest in nutrition.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very well maintained, secure environment which is immediately welcoming to the eye. A wealth of photographs depicting the children at play adorn the walls and the well designed rooms, with integral toilet and nappy changing facilities and direct access to the superb outdoor play area meet children's needs exceptionally well. Play and learning resources are kept in good condition and sufficient in quantity to enable children to play nicely together. Toys are all stored at children's eye level so that they can help themselves. Furnishings and clearly defined play and learning areas are highly interesting and exciting, although in the two toddler rooms this is less apparent. Pre-school children cannot wait to get in the door and absorb themselves in play. They use tools such as a stapler and scissors safely because they have been taught the rules. Sleeping babies are particularly well monitored through the viewing panels within the room and very regular recorded individual observations. The availability of a rocking feeding chair enables very comfortable and exceptionally enjoyable bottle feeding. The organisation of the grouping of children, according to age or stage of ability means that they have access to only those that are suitable or appropriate. An electronic entry system, with CCTV is fitted to the front door and the self closing internal door has a release button which is pitched well above the height of children. The risk of children being able to leave the premises unsupervised is well minimised. Visitors are required to show identification and their details are all fully recorded.

Excellent risk assessment procedures ensure children's safety within the setting. The garden in particular, is meticulously checked every day to clear public and natural debris. Internal maintenance staff conduct three monthly visits and record their findings. Electrical, fire and heating appliances are inspected as required, and the current action plan to install air conditioning to the kitchen demonstrates the organisation's high level of commitment towards continual improvements to the premises. Numerous child safety gadgets are installed around the setting, for instance plug sockets and radiators are covered to protect children from harm. Management are astutely aware of the recent changes to fire legislation and all staff have completed specialist training, so that they know how to operate fire appliances. Emergency evacuation is regularly practised with the children, which means that they are familiar with what to do and where to go.

Children's welfare is well safeguarded by staff's secure knowledge and understanding of the comprehensive child protection policy and step-by-step procedure which is regularly reinforced through training. Succinct written information provided to parents ensures that they are clear about the nursery's regulatory responsibilities towards children too, for example to record all existing injuries sustained to them as part of good practice monitoring systems.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies are exceptionally well cared for and stimulated by a consistent team of dedicated and experienced staff. The dominant feature of heuristic and sensory play opportunities provides endless fun and enjoyment. For example, they gurgle and squeal with delight as staff good naturedly throw piles of shredded paper over them, and regularly explore the texture of paint, jelly and cereals. Treasure baskets and a wall mounted sensory board inspire their natural impulse to investigate; they squeeze sponges, press switches, pull plugs, and feel brushes. Staff are very relaxed and calm, and babies benefit from the frequent times that staff spend playing with them individually. Early language and literacy skills are being subtly introduced through the use of lovely board books and high levels of verbal and non-verbal communication from staff. Their eyes light up when staff initiate singing which encourages their participation. Daily learning themes encourage them to make connections, for example associating hats for heads as staff take them to look at themselves in the mirror. The bond between staff and babies is very strong and cuddles are frequent. Their progress and development is well monitored and documented because staff are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Toddlers are cared for by very caring and enthusiastic staff. Their secure knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework is very clearly demonstrated by the methods used for monitoring, evaluating and assessing the effectiveness of activities, and children's progress and development. These give a clear overall picture of the stage that children have reached, and what they need help with next to enable further development. Activities are pre-determined, but are very much outcome, rather than target based. This enables children to explore, experiment and use their imaginations without being overly led by adults and is highly beneficial. Staff are skilled and flexible enough to be able to respond to unexpected learning opportunities, for instance when it snowed recently they observed the melting process and worked together to build a snowman. During the topic on space, children had great fun observing the stars with torches in the dark, and during the Chinese New Year period they practised picking up noodles with chopsticks. Children frequently create and design their own models and pictures. Similarly to babies they have excellent opportunities to explore and experiment using their senses. For example, patterns and marks are created in shaving foam, and ice cubes and noodles are squelched and gripped as they learn to describe the feeling on their hands. Toddlers use the role play resources, when they are provided to imitate their real and imaginary experiences, such as patting dolls to sleep in the way that staff do to them and changing nappies. However, role play is not always available, and when it is, is not fully resourced to enable all children to act out their real experiences. Both toddler rooms tend to tidy away activities for snacks, meals and sleep, which reduces playtime. Opportunities for them to move freely between activities are restricted by the way that the partitions are used. The use of straps, albeit to ensure children's safety, on bucket chairs whilst sitting at creative tables are equally restrictive. Nevertheless, the children are happy and the relationships between staff and children are very affectionate.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The presentation and organisation of most activities and learning areas provide children with superb access to the foundation stage curriculum and they are all making good, and in relation to literacy, outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. However, the daily planned 'focussed activity' has less beneficial outcomes for children. Staff concentrate too heavily on directing the children towards an identified learning goal, which means that their learning during these times is very directed. These activities are predominantly used to observe, record and assess children's progress and development. Although the activity is always evaluated, key issues are missed because staff remain focussed on one area for observation. Furthermore, relevant observations that are recorded are not consistently transferred to children's assessment records to identify next steps for learning. Outside of this though, children are engrossed in a hive of activity, play and learning and are very well supported by staff. Activities all identify extensions so that more able children are consistently challenged and staff spend a lot of time engaging the children in interesting and worthwhile conversations.

Children are making outstanding progress in literacy because writing resources are prominently available. A wide range of activities encourage the use of purposeful print and the use of 'jolly phonics' is enabling older children to work out three letter words such as 'cat' whilst they play independently in the office role play area. Children are keen to caption their pictures and models and they use their rapidly developing reading and writing skills, and interest in stories to make their own books. Most children confidently write part or all of their names and routinely do this to label their work. They use clipboards outdoors to record their observations in print and pictorial form and as they pretend to be someone else, such as a policeman doing his work.

Mathematical learning opportunities are equally as well provided for and children are becoming confident mathematicians. They learn the value of coins and even debit cards during shop play using a very realistic cash till. They confidently write and recognise numerals, such as price lists for shop play. They count well into double figures and are constantly challenged by skilled staff participation in play and during practical routines. Children experiment with weight, volume and capacity during activities such as water play and baking and the availability of rulers, calculators and tape measures inspires purposeful use.

Children have constant access to natural resources both indoors and outdoors. For example they grow seeds, bulbs and vegetables. They use clay to create and design purposeful models as part of thematic curriculum plans and frequently create their own still life interpretations of nature. The use of minerals within sand, water and a wide variety of varied foods, and the often permitted use of sand and water together inspires their interest and imagination. They regularly explore and experiment with colour and texture through the extensive range of creative activities. Shape challenges are prominently accessible in the form of equipment and skilfully incorporated within many activities. As a result, older children recognise solid shapes and a wide range of secondary colours. Children are becoming competent computer users; they navigate the mouse with skilled dragging and clicking techniques and are able to follow simple programmes for themselves by going into the menu.

Whilst outings are rare, children's knowledge of the wider world is developed through topical curriculum planning and frequent visits from members of the community, for example a vet, fireman and nurse. Children are keen thespians, they love to dress up and act out delightful real and imaginary experiences. However, whilst the ideas for role play to support learning

themes, and to involve the children in building the area up during the first week are very good indeed, the area is not as fully resourced as it could be. Little use is made of real resources to enhance the theme and bring learning to life. Furthermore, although children learn about the customs and beliefs of others through the celebration of a wide range of festivals, not enough attention is given to ensuring that children can relate to their own and other cultures outside of these. The singing of familiar nursery rhymes and song games are a regular daily group activity, but the wider development of musical skills is not yet firmly established, for example instruments are not often used to introduce children to rhythm and beat.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The high priority that the setting places on meeting the individual health and emotional needs of children is well demonstrated by excellent record keeping and well implemented operational procedures. Children's contributions are highly valued and encouraged, for example their artistic interpretations are well displayed throughout the setting. Pre-school children's ideas are actively sought and valued by staff. They are clearly used to being very much involved in nursery life because they significantly contributed towards the inspection process. One three year-old and one four year-old articulately explained what they enjoy most about coming to nursery; both described variations of role play. The nursery has toys and resources which promote awareness of diversity, but they do not feature frequently enough outside of thematic activities. This means that not all children have access to resources which they might find in their own homes, and those of their friends, for example in role play. Staff have the skills and practical experience of meeting the needs of children with physical and/or learning disabilities. Named staff have completed specialist training and all demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of child development, which means that concerns are quickly identified and acted upon.

Children are polite and well mannered, and play and work cooperatively together. Rules, such as 'four in the role play at any one time', are well understood in pre-school and the use of clocks and sand timers to organise turn taking provides children with a sense of equity. Toddlers are learning the concept of sharing through gentle explanations from staff. They are quickly distracted from rising squabbles by appropriate staff intervention. Mealtimes within all the rooms encourage good use of table manners. Pre-school children take turns to be the helper which helps to raise self esteem. Staff sit with the children, although they do not eat with them, and sociable conversation is actively encouraged in all the rooms. This consistently good practice is well underpinned by the succinct written behaviour management policy. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. All parents are provided with high levels of written, and daily verbal information which comprehensively explains the setting's operational policies and procedures, such as how to make a complaint. Newsletters are regular and the notice board is kept up to date. Both encourage parents to play an active part in children's learning, for example by contributing their skills, reminding children to bring in certain items to support topics and informing them of setting changes and special events. The use of daily diary books and the written developmental reports for all children are highlighted by parents as key strengths because it provides them with a clear

picture and enables continuity of care and learning for the children. Parents are familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage because it is fully explained in the nursery prospectus, on posters around the setting and verbally. The regular development reports and opportunities for parents to discuss children's progress and development with key staff ensures their knowledge and understanding of how well children have progressed towards the framework for the under threes, and the early learning goals. Parents of children in receipt of funding for nursery education are clearly aware of the group topic and learning intentions, and of what progress their child has made towards each of the early learning goals. However, they do not know how to help children develop further because children's next steps for learning are not identified.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Very effective recruitment and induction procedures ensure that children are cared for by highly suitable staff. Children benefit greatly by their combined maturity, experience and skills and unanimous commitment towards continual improvement. Staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood, for example there is a named person responsible for child protection, and special needs. Regular staff meetings ensure that staff are kept up-to-date and that policies and procedures work effectively in practice. The appraisal system and on-going training programme provides staff with excellent professional support and they feel valued. Staff are happy and work very well together as a team.

Records and documentation which are required for the safe and efficient management of the provision, and to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children are put to very good operational use by staff. Furthermore, the highly responsible approach of the owner and manager ensures that this nursery continues to develop. Their striving towards continual improvement is very well demonstrated by their commitment towards the quality assurance accreditation.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The effectiveness of teaching is very well monitored and evaluated through visits by the organisation's area manager every three months. Strengths and weaknesses are clearly and very appropriately identified. Actions are then set for improvement and staff work conscientiously towards meeting these. However, although already identified, the systems for monitoring, evaluating and assessing children's development and the effectiveness of curriculum planning are still in the very early stages of development. Nonetheless, the children are making exceptionally good progress towards the early learning goals and the team demonstrate a united front and clear vision for the future. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last children act inspection raised two recommendations for improvement which related the safety of toddlers within the base room, and the storage arrangements for babies' bottle feeds. Thorough risk assessments are now conducted throughout the nursery every day. Toddlers are well protected from the risk of accidents and bottles are all clearly labelled.

The inspection of nursery education took place separately and five recommendations were issued which related to staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, curriculum planning and challenges for older children, and observation and assessment of children's progress and development. Children are now making very good progress towards all early learning goals, and mathematics and literacy skills are exceedingly good as a result of excellent activity ideas. Steady progress is being made in relation to evaluation and assessment systems.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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.

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 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 organisation of the toddler rooms; pay particular attention to role play and how it is resourced and enabling children to have more choice about what they play with.

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):

- further develop the systems for monitoring, recording and assessing children's progress towards the early learning goals, and introduce next steps for learning for all children

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