



Tops Day Nurseries

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY263786
Inspection date	19 September 2005
Inspector	Lorraine Wardlaw
Setting Address	Royal Hampshire County Hospital, Romsey Road, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 5DG
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Registered person	Tops Day Nurseries
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 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?

Tops Day Nursery is one of a chain of nurseries and opened in January 2003. It operates from a purpose built, two storey building, in the grounds of the Royal Hampshire County Hospital, Winchester. The nursery provides care for the children of health care staff and accommodates the needs of parents who work shifts.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 61 children at any one time. There are currently 86 children on roll. This includes 15 funded children. The nursery

supports children who have special needs and those who speak English as an additional language. The setting is open each weekday, with the exception of bank holidays, from 06:45 to 18:30.

There are 15 members of staff; 13 have an early years qualification to National Vocational level two or above and two staff are working towards level two. The nursery is committed to on-going staff training. It receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good, hot, nutritious mid-day meal, which is plentiful and well received. Snacks successfully promote healthy eating; young babies and children are given a choice of fruit during the morning and regular drinks are offered. Babies form close bonds with key staff who are very in tune with their emotional well-being, they receive plenty of cuddles when they become unhappy. Children are developing well in their gross motor skills; the older child enjoys the challenging outdoor climbing apparatus, and the baby or toddler explores the indoor area; crawling in tunnels and in and out of the ball pool. Staff care for children well when they become poorly; they are diligent in following the correct medication procedure and ensure the child is comfortable before being taken home. Good hygiene practices such as hand washing on entry to the nursery by adults, an effective nappy changing procedure and regular hand washing by the children means that children remain in good health. 3-year-old children working in the Foundation Stage infrequently use malleable materials and a variety of tools which inhibits the development of their fine motor skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and are cared for in a well maintained, colourful and safe environment. Regular yearly risk assessments and daily checks on the outdoors ensures that the premises are safe to receive children. Staff are vigilant about visitors to the nursery and have good security features in place such as coded doors, gates between each area and passwords to ensure children are safe when they leave the premises. High staffing ratios ensure that children are safe when on outings and during lunchtimes. Staff supervise children well, particularly the under 3's, when they are descending the stairs. Sleeping babies and toddlers are regularly checked to ensure that they remain safe. Well recorded evaluations of the monthly fire drill means that the nursery are continually updating their fire procedure. Children themselves are learning about staying safe, for example, an adult gently reminds a 2-year-old not climb on a table because he might fall and a 3-year-old tells her friend about the safety rule about not running indoors. All age groups play with a suitable variety of toys and resources most of which are accessible to them, being stored in child height furniture and

rotated. Toys are clean and safe. Children are appropriately protected from harm; management and staff are aware of the child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and enjoy their time at the nursery, especially the babies who are cared for by enthusiastic staff, who interact well with them. However, the majority of staff in the 1 to 2-year-old area do not readily and effectively encourage the toddlers communication skills during routines and activities such as painting and at dinner time. Children in the 2 to 3-year-old area enjoy singing rhymes, using musical instruments and making collage animal pictures into masks. Staff in this area successfully promote children's developmental progress. All young children have the opportunity to enjoy occasional sensory experiences such as play with gloop, water, paint and jelly. Birth to three matters planning has recently been introduced, and children take part in developmental games such as 'wash the dolly' or 'hello teddy' but staff are not, as yet, fully confident in implementing the activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals because overall staff are secure in their knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and offer a suitable learning environment. Planning covers all areas of learning and is linked to the stepping stones. Assessment records track children's progress, and are supported by some anecdotal observations. Time spent on free choice in the routine is short, and children regularly look to the adult for direction and guidance. This does not allow them to initiate their own learning and gain the most from the environment leaving some areas unused by children, for example, the role play area and literacy table. Staff know children's abilities fairly well and can pitch activities adequately but the more able child is not sufficiently challenged during the routines and activities particularly in the area of problem solving and emergent writing.

Children engage easily in conversation with their peers and the adult, who encourages them to talk at every opportunity and to think through their ideas. Children gain a lot of enjoyment from stories, often joining in with rhyming words or finishing the sentence in the book. They show an awareness of print and learn the sounds of letters well. This is promoted through good teaching methods such as looking at and discussing objects in a bag beginning with the letter 'g' and comparing the initial sounds of their own names. Children are learning to count in routine tasks such as at registration, they recognise many numerals during the 'Engines' story time, and complete puzzles well. Children have a knowledge of shapes and an awareness of size stating that 'we have smaller ears than elephants'. They are confident in using the computer, enjoy exploring light with torches and are developing a sense of place through local visits around the hospital, to the library and garden centre. However, there are missed opportunities in their play to fully practice their emergent writing in play situations and to fully develop their imagination during role play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff take account of individual children's needs by offering special diets and fitting in with the different care routines of the younger child. Positive images of culture and disability around the nursery help children appreciate others and activities, such as food tasting and making a collage of a dragon at Chinese New year, raises their awareness of the wider society. However, more attention should be paid to effectively support English as a second language children and children with Special Educational Needs, to ensure all children feel wholly included in the group and are making progress. The 3-year-old children are keen learners, developing well in their concentration skills and have a positive attitude to their activities. They build good relationships with their peers often assisting one another in their play. Children behave well and display acts of kindness when one of their group becomes upset. Staff are calm and give explanations about inappropriate behaviour, to those children who occasionally become over excited. Children are developing in confidence but there are some missed opportunities to fully develop children's personal independence and to work on their own initiative. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. There is a good exchange of information between the nursery and parents with effective communication between the two to ensure good continuity of care. Parental wishes are taken into account well, which helps build the positive relationship between home and the nursery staff. Regular parents evenings inform parents of their child's developmental progress across all age groups; this is where aims and achievements are discussed to facilitate the child's future care and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The new manager is well supported by higher management to ensure that the majority of procedures are carried out correctly. Monitoring of practice takes place and management work with the staff to address and action any weaknesses identified. For example, all staff will be attending Birth to three matters training to improve their skills. Staff undertake internal training which is regularly offered by management who are committed to raising the quality of practice within the nursery. However, not all staff are fully aware of the people in designated roles such as child protection. Most records are up-to-date and sound policies reflect the nurseries practice, which are regularly updated. Ratios are kept well which ensures children are positively supported in their care, learning and play. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The off-site operations manager is involved in supporting the Foundation Stage leader, who is new to this key role. Communication channels between staff and the manager are not fully effective as the manager is not wholly aware of practices within the different areas of the nursery. Evaluations of the education practice takes place and some action is taken to

improve the outcomes for children's learning, such as re-arranging the room.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were made. These were to ensure details of the policies and procedures are easily accessible to parents and to ensure the registration system records accurately when children are present. Both recommendations have been successfully addressed. A policy and procedure file has been placed in the foyer for parents to access and each area has its own register with the time of arrival and departure of each child. These contribute to the settings partnership with its parents and ensures the safety of the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report

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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):

- develop further ways of supporting and valuing children with whom English is a second language and who have special needs.
- develop the communication channels further between staff and manager, ensure staff with extra responsibilities are aware of their roles and incidents are fully documented.
- develop staff's expertise in interacting with young children to encourage their communication skills.

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):

- ensure that during the routine children have a good amount of time to initiate

activities for themselves from a wide selection, covering all aspects and areas of learning

- increase the challenge for the more able child, particularly in the area of mathematical problem solving, independence, and emergent writing.

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