

# Towntree Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY274180
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sandra Laura Bates
<b>Setting Address</b>	Echelford County School, Park Road, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 1EX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01784 229700
<b>E-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:martyn.nicholson2@tiscali.co.uk">martyn.nicholson2@tiscali.co.uk</a>
<b>Registered person</b>	Anne Nicholson & Fay Sugg
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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](http://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?

Towntree pre-school and after-school club opened in 2004. It operates from a purpose built, single storey building within the grounds of Echelford County School in Ashford. There are two activity rooms, toilets, kitchen, office and disabled facilities available. It serves families from the local community and surrounding villages.

A maximum of 26 children are accommodated at any session. There are 64 children aged from two years to five years currently on roll, this includes 32 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting makes provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The provision opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions within the pre-school are from 08:30 to 11:30 and 12:00 to 15:00, with the option to stay for lunch or for both sessions. Sessions for the after-school care provision are between 15:15 and 18:00.

Eight members of staff work directly with the children in the nursery. All staff have a recognised early years qualification and a current first aid certificate. The after school club has six members of staff of whom two at each session are qualified, with one currently on a training course. The

setting receives support from the Early Years Childcare Service and several other professional bodies.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and well managed surroundings. Staff pay careful attention to the condition of the premises and ensure that equipment and furniture is wiped down at regular intervals during the sessions. They monitor the condition of the toilets and washing facilities carefully so that children can use them independently and safely. Children know where to find a tissue to blow their noses and they dispose of the used tissue carefully in an appropriate receptacle.

Children enjoy the social aspect of the shared snack time with their peers and the staff. They take turns to share responsibility for calculating the number of cups and plates that will be needed for the children at each table. They happily tuck into a selection of fresh and dried fruit and have milk or water to drink. Children freely access their individual drinks bottles at any time during the session, and staff monitor to ensure that children do this at regular intervals. Some children stay for lunch and they talk about the contents of their packed lunch boxes with the attendant staff as they eat.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to participate in cooking activities such as making fruit kebabs and fruit faces on a plate, linked to a theme of 'Handa's Story'.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming environment which is decorated with examples of the children's art work. Staff identify all potential hazards and take appropriate steps to reduce risks to children including regular risk assessments. There are careful procedures for identifying any visitors to the setting. Great care is taken to ensure security of the premises, both the building and the outdoor play area. For example, there are high level catches on the internal doors and the external gate is locked during the sessions.

Children use resources that are clean, well maintained and suitable for the age range of the children accommodated. They promote early learning in all skill areas.

The setting has a clear and comprehensive child protection policy that is shared with parents, although this is not entirely up to date in relation to current local authority organisational changes. Staff are confident in their ability to recognise any signs or symptoms of abuse and are clear about the steps to take if they have any concerns.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their sessions at the setting. They come in confidently and separate from their parents easily. Younger children have time to settle and gain confidence in a smaller room before joining the main group for the majority of the activities. Staff give individual support to those children who need it. Older children who have just moved up within the group

are proud to be 'big Dolphins'. They talk about the children who have left recently to go to 'big school' and understand that this is the next stage in their own development.

Children gather in a group to discuss how they have spent their time since the last session. They are happy to share special news or treasured items from home. They make links with home such as telling the group who has brought them to nursery today. Children are good at taking turns to speak and staff always thank them for waiting and for their special contributions. A cheerful, active and chatty atmosphere prevails throughout the sessions.

Children benefit from the wide and varied range of resources and activities offered to them that help them to develop their skills and understanding in all areas of learning. They join in enthusiastically and make good use of the materials with the close support of the staff. They are free to choose and self select resources. Staff are very good at offering discreet support without overtly leading the children. They know the children well and can identify and encourage children's developing skills at such things as forming the letters of their names. Staff show great appreciation of children's endeavours and achievements.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are highly motivated and enthusiastic about what they do. All are involved in the planning and assessment process and they are clear about their individual roles and responsibilities on a daily basis. Staff know what the aims for any given session are, and they make sure that these are delivered smoothly and efficiently. They recognise, and make use of, most opportunities for extending children's thinking and learning through everyday routines and situations.

Very detailed initial assessments help staff to understand each child's learning and developmental stage, and enables them to tailor the care and education to their individual needs. On-going assessment is used very effectively to identify achievements or areas for improvement. Key workers take responsibility for ensuring that such assessments are used to guide and inform the planning for the whole group.

As the quality of teaching is good, children make good progress in all areas of learning. For example, they are very articulate and happy to share information and feelings verbally, both individually and as part of a larger group. They use sign language to reinforce everyday routines such as greetings. They begin to use mark making materials to form the letters of their names and have plenty of opportunities to use these resources informally, such as in the role play area. Clear labelling helps children to link the printed words with the items around them.

Children develop an understanding of a variety of mathematical concepts such as more or less as they stick stripes on their 'tiger' sock puppets. Children identify shapes as they play with stickle bricks. All count confidently down from five as they sing 'five little monkeys' and many count to ten and beyond. Staff use everyday routines such as snack time to introduce problem solving. For instance, children calculate how many cups and plates will be needed for the children sitting at the tables.

Children have regular opportunities to develop their physical skills as they use a range of equipment outside and take part in action songs indoors. They enjoy singing together and making the associated signs and actions. Children have lots of opportunities to be creative and love to see their art work displayed around the room. For example, children make 'tiger' sock puppets linked to the current theme based on the book 'The Tiger Who Came To Tea'. They play 'walking through the jungle' acting out the creatures that they imagine would be there.

Children develop an understanding of the wider world as they use resources that depict a range of social situations. For example, children complete puzzles showing figures such as a lollypop lady and a police officer and talk about what these people do to help them. In the role play area children use the play food and discuss the relationship between a whole egg and the fried one. Children enjoy helping to care for the group's pet stick insect and knowledgeably talk about what he eats.

Children confidently share their experiences of what they have done at home and on outings with their families. They are sociable and helpful towards one another, for instance making room for a rather anxious child to sit near a friend. They learn to take turns and to share, and they take pride in their achievements.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children receive care that is tailored to their individual needs. They begin to develop an understanding of social diversity as they use materials that reflect positive images and take part in activities linked to the festivals of a variety of cultures and traditions. The setting has an inclusive policy and challenges any discriminatory behaviour firmly. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are extremely well supported. Staff take great trouble to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and training to enable them to provide excellent care for children with a wide range of special needs. For example, staff acquire the necessary skills to enable them to support a tube fed child. They ensure that all the children are at ease with this procedure by preparing a realistic demonstration of tube feeding using an adapted doll with a hole in its tummy. Staff ensure that children with kidney complaints are regularly hydrated and toileted to avoid any complications arising. Staff work very closely with parents and a range of other professionals and take part in multi-agency conferences in connection with each child's care. The setting enjoys the respect of the relevant professionals in the local community, which it has worked extremely hard to achieve.

Children behave very well. They understand and respect the rules and routines such as being quiet for a moment when a bell rings so that staff can speak to them. Staff reinforce positive behaviour with praise and show great appreciation when children are helpful or kind to each other for instance. Children come confidently to staff for a cuddle or a comforting lap if they are upset or unsure.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in the life of the nursery. They contribute special skills such as talking to children about being a police officer for instance. This helps children to make firm links between home and the setting. A termly newsletter helps to ensure that parents are aware of planned themes and events so that they can contribute ideas or materials.

Parents can access their children's records of achievement at any time. They also have regular one to one meetings with their child's key worker. New children and their parents enjoy introductory sessions, outside of the regular hours, so that they can familiarise themselves with the policies and routines of the setting in an informal way. Staff carry out home visits, if these are wanted by parents, in order to provide additional support. They use individual record books, shared with parents, to monitor any unusual situations. Parental feedback is extremely positive.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children receive their care from an appropriate ratio of qualified and experienced staff who are committed to the aims of the setting. Staff have regular appraisals to identify any personal development needs and there is a clear commitment to on-going training to enhance and up date their skills and knowledge.

Staff organise the space and resources effectively so that children can move around freely and safely as they play. Activities are set out so that children are attracted to participate.

There is a comprehensive range of supporting documentation including an operational plan that under-pins the service. All of these are shared with parents and staff sign to indicate their full understanding of the policies and procedures. All the regulatory documentation is in place and very well maintained.

Leadership and management is good. There is a clear vision for the service that is upheld by all the staff. They understand the aims and are completely committed to providing good quality care and education through a well managed and loyal workforce. The managers are well respected by their staff because they are very careful to ensure that staff receive the support and encouragement they need to achieve their personal aims and ambitions. This means that staff are very well motivated. There is a clear induction process that helps staff to be familiar with the policies and procedures.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last nursery education inspection, the setting was asked to improve their understanding of the Foundation Stage for learning and to plan how children will be taken forward, in particular with respect to communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal development. At this inspection, Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of all six areas for early learning, and they plan effectively to take children forward.

At the last care inspection, the setting was asked to improve the format and consistency of the accident and medication records. These are now presented in a consistent and effective manner.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Sine the last inspection, concerns were raised in October 2006 in relation to a child being able to leave the premises unsupervised, and the notification of this event to Ofsted. These concerns related to National Standard 6 - Safety, and National Standard 14 – Documentation. Ofsted conducted a visit to the provider on 30 October 2006. Actions were set in relation to National Standard 2 - Organisation – to “Ensure that registration systems reflect arrival and departure of children staff and visitors” and National Standard 14 – Documentation – to “Improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in the regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of significant events”. A written response to these actions was received from the provider on 13 November 2006. The provider remained 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.

## 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):

- ensure that the child protection policy reflects the current terminology in relation to the local authority safeguarding children board

#### **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):

- continue to maximise opportunities to extend thinking and learning through everyday situations and routines

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)