

Toad Hall Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122730
Inspection date	18 September 2007
Inspector	Janet Marie Thouless

Setting Address	St. Stephens C of E Primary School, Hunters Chase, South Godstone, Godstone, Surrey, RH9 8HR
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Registered person	Catherine Snell
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 Pre-School was registered in 2001. The group operates from a classroom in St. Stephen's School in South Godstone, Surrey. However, the pre-school had been operating since 1987 on a previous site. Children have the use of the main classroom, school hall and outdoor courtyard. Toilet facilities are located in the main school. The group have kitchen facilities within the classroom.

A maximum of 20 children from two to five years may attend the pre-school at anyone time. There are currently 31 children on roll of which 22 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school welcomes children with additional needs and who speak English as an additional language. Children attend a variety of sessions.

The pre-school is open five mornings from 9.00 - 12.00 every weekday during term time, and from 13.00 - 15.30 when numbers of children are high during the school spring and summer term.

The pre-school employs six members of staff and a minimum of four are on duty during the session. All staff hold an early year's childcare qualification. The setting receives support from a mentor within the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy and are protected, because the pre-school follows effective health and hygiene guidelines and procedures. Children learn the importance of good hygiene practice through well established daily routines; for example, hand washing before and after snack times, messy play and toilet routines. Therefore, children increase their independence and personal care successfully. Anti-bacterial cleaners are used effectively to wipe tables used for snack times and to sanitise toilet areas.

Staff are aware of children's individual dietary needs. Simple snacks of fruit and bread sticks are provided and children sit together talking about the morning's events enjoying each others company. Children's thirst is quenched as they help themselves to drinking water from a dispenser. The accident and medication records are complete and are signed by parents or carers. Children are reassured and taken good care of if they are unwell or have an accident and appropriate levels of staff hold current first aid certificates.

Staff create opportunities for children to enjoy a wide range of physical equipment with confidence and ease. Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise and benefit from the well planned sessions in the hall and school playground. During the inspection, the children enjoy playing outside, using the climbing apparatus and stepping stones and music and movement in the hall. They dance to musical rhymes, such as, 'The Music Man' and 'Head, Shoulder, knees and Toes. Developing their co-ordination and gross motor skills effectively.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel welcome as staff greet them and their parents at the entrance to the classroom. They are happy and settle quickly into their chosen activity. The premises have good safety features such a secure, fully enclosed play areas. This ensures that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. Good use is made of all available areas.

Children are able to access their own resources and toys with ease and in safety, as staff set out a good variety of equipment before the children arrive. A good range of equipment is provided, including child sized furniture and soft furnishings.

Hazards to children are reduced as staff carry out regular risk assessments of the premises to minimise identified risks. All equipment is checked and cleaned regularly and staff ensure it conforms to safety standards to protect the children. Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff discuss the pre-school rules with them. They are discovering that the provision has boundaries and limits, for example, walking quietly around the school. Clearly defined procedures for the emergency evacuation of the building are understood by staff, who carry out regular fire drills.

The children's welfare is safeguarded because the pre-school has child protection procedures in place which staff are able to put into practice should concerns arise. Staff have secure knowledge of their role in safeguarding children. They know and understand the procedures to follow should they believe a child to be at risk. However, the procedure needs to be updated to reflect current pre-school practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a bright and colourful child centred environment, in which they have opportunities to enjoy free flow play and focused activities within a classroom setting. Children confidently choose what they would like to do from the good selection of activities prepared for them. They are able to select additional resources of their own choice to enhance their play. Young children separate confidently from their parents and carers showing they have made trusting relationships within the pre-school. Staff make observations to plan activities for younger children, to ensure they are offered a variety of interesting learning experiences.

Children become active learners as they begin to express their ideas, thoughts and feelings. Young children show enthusiasm and thoroughly enjoy a range of exploratory and imaginative play experiences. For example, children enjoy scooping up sand using a range of tools and confidently roll out play dough into a range of shapes and objects. Children enjoy musical activities and participate enthusiastically in action rhymes confidently following instruction. Young children develop their interest in books and stories as staff read books with the children and encourage them to participate with turning pages as part of the story. Children use their imaginations well in role play by caring for young babies in the baby clinic. They practise weighing baby, changing nappies and making appointments to see the health visitor. This encourages children's imagination and develops their listening skills and concentration.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and support children's progress through the stepping stones. They plan and provide a broad range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning. Children enjoy getting fully involved in focused activities and free flow play. Observations inform staff of children's progress, enabling them to plan the next stage in learning. The teaching skills of staff ensure the activities provide interest to the children, helping them to become focused, able to resist distractions and to persist for some time. The methods of teaching provide challenge and staff have realistic expectations and support children to enable them to achieve as much as they can.

Children arrive happy and settle quickly, they separate easily from parents or carers and seek out friends. They are becoming confident learners as they move between and ask to join in activities. They approach staff to talk to, express their views and ideas and have established warm and friendly relationships with both staff and their peers. Children are able to concentrate on self-chosen challenges, for example, placing the sand in buckets, turning it over carefully to make sand pies. Children benefit from the wide range of books in the welcoming and comfortable book corner; books are stored at low level and are easy for children to access. Children enjoy stimulating stories, such as, 'The Smartest Giant in Town' at group story time. They delight in repeating familiar parts of the story line or offering ideas. They know to handle books correctly, turn pages carefully and show interest in their content. Children talk confidently at snack time commenting on an up and coming birthday event. 'Do you know where I'm going'

one asks 'I'm going to the Dr Who Museum' confidently telling friends what they hope to see. Children enjoy focused activities where they learn to write their names or familiar words and have many opportunities to write for a purpose within spontaneous or free flow play.

Children make sense of the world around them through creative projects and individual artwork. For example, children are currently looking at growth and have brought in baby pictures of themselves, along side staff members' baby pictures. Children select programmes on the computer with confidence. They enjoy number and colour recognition programmes and use the mouse with good control. However, they have few opportunities to experience a range of programmable resources.

They have good opportunities to explore a wide range of experiences, which enable them to develop their senses and express themselves creatively. They enjoyed exploring the texture of stewed and sliced apples. They giggle when staff members explain that babies have stewed apples because they have no teeth. They confidently state they have teeth so they can chew the sliced apples. They delight in participating in music and enjoy using a range of musical instruments which help them recognise pitch, tone and rhythm and practise hand-eye co-ordination.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff provide a range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world, for example, through topics such as 'Chinese New Year' and 'Japanese food tasting festival' and all Christian festivals. Good displays, planning and photographs show that children are offered many opportunities to find out about other cultures and religions which helps them to develop a positive attitude and respect for others. Staff use resources including books, role-play and dolls, which reflect diversity to help children appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences. Children learn about their community as they visit places of interest, such as, local farms and organised trips to the sea life centre. All children in the pre-school are valued and respected as individuals by staff, who take great care to ensure that all children are included. There are effective procedures in place to adapt established routines to accommodate and integrate children with additional needs. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Children's behaviour is handled sensitively and appropriately for their age and stage of development. Good behaviour is reinforced with lots of praise and encouragement and staff act as good role models. Staff use positive methods for recognition of their behaviour, for example coloured stickers are given to children for being kind and helpful to each other or simply helping to tidy away.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents contribute towards their children's learning and development because they are informed of the daily activities and topics on offer. The provision offers an effective induction session which provides parents and carers with well-written information, which includes the policies and procedures. Further information offered includes a prospectus, a regular newsletter and notice boards. Information is offered on the Foundation Stage, and the pre-school holds open days on the early learning goals. Parents and staff regularly discuss the progress of all children using the children's individual profiles. They also share information informally on a daily basis as staff make time to talk to parents before and after each session. Systems are in place to ensure that all parents' comments and concerns are noted. This lists the steps to be taken if a parent has a complaint. However,

the current complaints procedure does not fully show how any complaint received will be investigated as required.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by qualified and experienced staff who have been appropriately vetted to ensure they are suitable to work with young children. Induction training, policies and procedures work well in practice ensuring the efficient and smooth management of the pre-school. Management has high regard for the staff and they work well as a team. Staff training needs are identified and management effectively supports staff training and development. All mandatory policies and procedures are in place. However, some policies, such as child protection and the complaints procedure require updating to fully comply with current legislation and pre-school practice.

Leadership and management is good. The effective leadership and management of the provision and the educational programme enable children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Leadership and management ensure staff are motivated and attend training which ensures they have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. Leadership and management have a clear vision for the nursery education with a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children. They set clear directions for continual improvements in the organisation of nursery education and the outcomes for children.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, one action was made for the pre-school to develop an action plan that sets out how staff training and qualification requirements will be met. This has been fully implemented with all staff gaining an early years childcare qualification. Also, five recommendations were made: to keep a written confidential record, signed by parents, of accidents and existing injuries to children, record and update information about children's special dietary requirements or allergies and share with staff; ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and develop staff's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues; make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint and develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and ensure that there is a trained member of staff who has responsibility for child protection issues. All of the recommendations have been fully implemented by the pre-school to ensure the safety and well being of the children.

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.

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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):

- update the complaints procedure in line with current legislation.
- update safeguarding children's policy in line with pre-school practice.

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 children have access to a range of programmable resources to develop individual learning.

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