

# Toybox Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	219271
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Kelly Eyre
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<b>Registered person</b>	Toybox Day Nurseries Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Toybox Day Nursery is one of two nurseries run by Toybox Day Nurseries Limited. It opened in 1998 and operates from a purpose-built building. It is situated within the grounds of Sandy Upper School and Community College and serves the local and wider community. A maximum of 78 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday throughout the year, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 07:00 to 19:00. The setting is also registered to provide out of school care for children from four to eight years. These sessions are from 07:30 to 09:00 and from 15:00 to 18:00, and from 08:00 to 18:00 during the school holidays. Care is also provided for children over eight. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 147 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 18 members of staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

The nursery is accredited through Bedfordshire County Council's Quality Counts Accreditation scheme.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted because there are good daily hygiene procedures in place which help prevent the spread of infection. For example, the nappy changing area is cleaned thoroughly between each use and children wash their hands before snack and mealtimes. Children are developing an understanding of the relevance of good personal hygiene because they are given explanations by staff and there are visual prompts around the setting. Children gain a further understanding of this area as they clean their teeth after each meal. Their health in an emergency situation is very well promoted because the majority of staff members hold an appropriate first aid qualification and there is a clear system in place for highlighting the renewal dates for this training. All records and policies are in place to further support children's health, for example, there are thorough procedures for the administration of medication and guidance regarding infectious diseases and the exclusion of children who are unwell.

Children's individual requirements with regard to health and diet are clearly documented and observed. Special diets are catered for and there is a clear system for identifying babies' feeds. Children's growth and development are well promoted because they are offered healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. These are prepared daily on the premises and are cooked using fresh ingredients. Menus are displayed for parents to see and these contain a balanced range of all food types. Babies and young children are encouraged to feed themselves and staff are vigilant, checking that children are eating sufficient quantities.

Children's health and development are promoted because they enjoy a wide range of physical activities. They develop control of their bodies and improve physical skills such as control, balance and co-ordination as they participate in structured activities and play in the outdoor area with equipment such as ride-on toys, slides, a mini-trampoline and bats and balls. Their participation in a range of smaller activities ensures that they are able to develop finer physical skills and hand-eye co-ordination. For example, a small group of children enjoy a magnetic fishing game, whilst another group of children manipulate small construction pieces to build towers.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where there are colourful displays of their work. Their safety is given a high priority and staff carry out daily checks to identify potential hazards, taking appropriate steps to minimise or remove these. This helps to ensure that children are able to play and move around the setting safely, freely and independently. The consistent daily implementation of policies and procedures ensures that staff are aware of safety practices and are able to promote children's safety, for example, there is a clear procedure regarding emergency evacuation and this is practised each month. This area is further supported as a comprehensive risk assessment has been completed and this is reviewed regularly. There are also additional safety procedures which further promote children's safety in a range of situations, for example, room and water temperatures are checked three times each day. However, children's

safety is affected because they are able to access an unprotected heater and broken floor tiles in the room used for pre-school sessions and out of school care.

Children are gaining a good understanding about keeping themselves and others safe. They are given clear explanations by staff to reinforce their understanding, for example, a staff member explains why it is important not to build the large wooden blocks too high. This area is further promoted as children cover topic work where they learn about issues such as safety in the car and on the minibus. Children have access to a wide range of toys and play resources that are appropriate for their sizes and developmental stages. These are labelled and generally accessible so that children are able to make choices about their play. Children's welfare is well promoted because staff are experienced and have a thorough understanding of issues relating to safeguarding children. They have up-to-date information regarding current procedures and are able to identify, report and follow up any concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children are settled and secure, separating well from their parents and carers and happily exploring the resources and activities. They feel valued and welcome because staff are kind and caring and show the children that they genuinely appreciate their company, joining in with their play and discussions and taking time to get to know each child. This helps to promote a positive and caring environment where children can play confidently and are consistently offered appropriate support. For example, whilst outside, a member of staff talks with a child about autumn leaves and then fetches brooms so that children can gather the leaves up.

Babies and new children settle well and build secure, trusting relationships with staff. This is enhanced because staff ensure that they are aware of children's normal routines, keeping to these as much as possible, for example, young babies sleep according to their need and in accordance with parents' wishes. Babies and young children consistently receive appropriate individual attention which further promotes their feeling of security and their overall development. For example, a member of staff encourages eye contact by playing 'boo' with a child, whilst another staff member gains a young child's attention by playing a xylophone and then encourages the child to try playing this themselves.

The thoughtful planning of activities for all age groups ensures that children are offered a wide variety of play opportunities which are closely linked to their individual developmental stages. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They use this to inform their activity planning for younger children, helping to ensure that their play is stimulating, fun and purposeful. Younger children follow the same themes and topics as older children but these are adapted to ensure that they are appropriate for each age group. Children are able to make balanced progress in all areas because staff use comprehensive assessment methods throughout the child's time at the setting. These ensure that any strengths or concerns are highlighted and considered in future activity planning.

Children attending the out of school care are offered a wide range of activities which are linked to themes, including 'Me and My Family', 'Space and Time' and 'Around the World'. They are able to make independent choices about their play and are supported by staff in this. Children's opportunities to participate in activities are well balanced with opportunities to rest and relax after a busy day at school.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use appropriate teaching methods, ensuring that children are offered opportunities which enable them to make good progress in all areas of learning. This progress is well balanced because staff carry out regular assessments, using these to track children's development and to plan the next steps for each child, carefully incorporating these into the activity planning.

Staff are kind and caring and support children well in their activities, making good use of questions and suggestions to extend children's play and learning. However, children's creativity and independence are not consistently promoted as they are not always offered choices within the structured activities and are not able to express themselves and make independent decisions.

Children's confidence is promoted because they are offered a wide range of familiar activities and play resources. These include construction, imaginative play, reading, and a variety of craft activities. They are then offered further challenge and their knowledge is extended as they participate in a range of themed topics. This enables them to look more closely at subjects such as 'The Body' where they study body parts, bones and the skeleton, the heart and internal organs, and discuss issues such as appropriate clothing for different weather conditions.

Children have daily opportunities to develop the attitudes and dispositions that enable them to achieve in their future learning. For example, they are gaining a good understanding of right and wrong, therefore promoting a positive environment in which to concentrate and learn. They have a good awareness of appropriate ways of expressing themselves, through daily discussions and exploring issues such as 'Feelings' through topic work. Children initiate conversations and are confident to speak in a group, for example, children take turns to discuss the items they have brought in, carefully describing these and listening to each other's contributions. They show a keen interest in books and have consistent opportunities to read and explore these, for example visiting the local library to choose books. Children confidently use writing as a means of recording and communication, for example, they write invitations to their pretend party and write their names on their work.

Children are beginning to use numbers in a meaningful context and understand that numbers represent sets of objects, for example, they count the number of ducks in the water and match these to the correct number printed on a card. They have a good understanding of concepts such as position and size. For example, when playing with construction sets, they compare the sizes of the towers they have built and talk about tall, small and medium towers. Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them as they are offered opportunities to investigate and explore and are encouraged to make use of all their senses. An example of this is an activity where children work with a staff member to identify different scents, listen to different sounds, to look at picture cards and to explore textures. At the end of the activity, children identify that they use their ears to listen, their hands to feel, their nose to smell, and their eyes to see. They are becoming competent in the use of information and communication technology equipment. For example, they are able to create a picture on the computer and save this to a file.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills. They have regular structured sessions and also enjoy independent play, such as outdoor play, where they engage in activities such as throwing and catching balls, balancing on scooters and pedalling tricycles. Regular music sessions and access to musical instruments promote children's enjoyment of music and offer them opportunities to explore music and learn how sounds can be changed. The development of their imagination is encouraged through role

play which is well supported by staff. For example, two children explain to a member of staff that they are 'going on a bus' and are encouraged to talk about where they might be going.

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

The provision is good.

Children are respected and their individuality is valued, helping them to develop a positive self-image. This is further enhanced because staff offer children appropriate praise and encouragement, promoting their confidence and self-esteem. Children are encouraged to express their views but also to listen to and value the views of others. For example, during group time, children take turns to talk and listen carefully to what their peers are saying. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their individual requirements recognised and consistently met. Staff are experienced in this area and work sensitively with children and parents. They also liaise closely with other professionals to ensure that consistent and appropriate care is offered. Children are set realistic targets and their individual plans are reviewed on a regular basis, ensuring the balanced promotion of their development.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their understanding of other cultures and ways of life is promoted through topic work and daily access to an appropriate range of resources which promote positive images and provide information. Their awareness of their community is enhanced through the use of local facilities such as the library, walks and parks. Children's behaviour is good and they show care and concern for each other. For example, a child accidentally knocks against another child and stops to apologise. They are gaining a good understanding about taking responsibility for their actions because staff give them clear explanations, helping them to understand their behaviour and make decisions about this.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given comprehensive information about the setting's policies and procedures, ensuring that they are aware of daily practice and expectations. Good use is made of newsletters and notice boards to ensure that parents receive information about current activities and events and to provide an extended range of information covering subjects such as health issues, benefits and behaviour management. They are given clear information about each of the base rooms and about the Foundation Stage, enabling them to understand this and be involved in their child's learning. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and activities through daily discussions with staff, open evenings, newsletters and the use of daily diaries for children under three.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. Their safety, activities and daily play opportunities are enhanced by the good organisation of space within the setting. The designated base rooms for each age group help to ensure that children are able to move freely and safely between activities and can initiate their own play. The thoughtful organisation of each base room means that children can be offered a range of opportunities and their varying needs can be consistently met, for example, there is space for quiet play, messy play, role play and for sleeping. Children's individual routines are accommodated because the overall routine of the setting is flexible. For example, young babies sleep according to their own routine and then return to their group to continue playing.

Children benefit from the daily care and activities provided by supervised, well-organised staff. Their ongoing safety and welfare are promoted because there are robust procedures in place

for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children. The comprehensive staff induction process ensures that the nursery's policies and procedures are understood by all staff and can be implemented on a daily basis. This is further supported by regular staff supervision, staff appraisals and daily monitoring of all areas of the setting by the manager and senior staff. All paperwork and records are in place and are well organised to ensure that children's needs are clearly documented and staff are able to work appropriately at all times to promote their ongoing safety and individual development.

Leadership and management is good. Children's learning and development are enhanced and their welfare promoted by the good understanding that the owners and senior staff have of their roles and responsibilities. Ongoing daily monitoring and regular reviews help to ensure that staff are well supported in their work and are able to access training when needed. The owners and senior staff act as good role models, demonstrating their genuine enthusiasm for their work and for continuously improving the practice of the setting and the outcomes for children. This promotes a positive environment in which children are able to play, learn and develop confidently and safely.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At their last inspection, the setting was asked to develop the child protection policy to include procedures to follow in the event of allegations against a staff member. This has now been developed as a separate policy and includes all relevant details, thus promoting children's welfare. They were asked to make rain-filled containers in the garden safe or inaccessible. These have now been removed and staff carry out safety checks of the outdoor area before this is used by children, further promoting children's safety.

At their last inspection of funded early education, the setting was asked to increase opportunities for children to write and to use mathematical problem-solving skills. These are now included in all areas of play and in the daily routines, further promoting children's development in these areas. The setting was also asked to improve planning and make this accessible to parents. Planning has now been extended to cover all areas of learning and is comprehensively linked to the Foundation Stage. It is displayed on notice boards for parents to access. These improvements promote children's overall development and ensure that parents are kept informed.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been two complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The first complaint was raised in November 2004 and chiefly regarded behaviour management, partnership with parents and record-keeping. This related to National Standards 2: Organisation, 3: Care, learning and play, 6: Safety, 9: Equal opportunities, 10: Special needs, 11: Behaviour, 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers, and 14: Documentation. Ofsted investigated these concerns by carrying out an unannounced visit and was satisfied that the provision had taken appropriate action in regard to most areas of the complaint. However, one action was raised in relation to Standard 14: Documentation, requiring the provision to ensure that Ofsted is notified of any significant change. The provider responded appropriately and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigations were closed.

The second complaint was raised in July 2006 and regarded appropriate care of children during hot weather. Ofsted received a written report from the provider regarding this and also carried

out an unannounced visit to the provision in August 2006. This related to National Standards 7: Health and 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers. The visit demonstrated that the provider had a sound knowledge of sun care procedures and had updated their policies regarding this. However this had not yet been shared with all parents. The visit also highlighted issues regarding the updating of the complaints procedure in line with changes in regulations. One action was raised in relation to National Standard 12, to update the complaint procedure. A satisfactory response was received and the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigations were closed.

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):

- further improve children's safety by ensuring that hazards are removed or are inaccessible. This refers to the unprotected heater and the broken floor tiles in 'the Loft' area.

#### **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 opportunities for children to make decisions about their play and to express themselves.

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)