

# Towntree Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120294
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Lisa Jane Cupples
<b>Setting Address</b>	Methodist Church Hall, Saxon Road, Ashford, Surrey, TW15 1QL
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Towntree Pre School Ltd
<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 is a privately owned setting and is one of two pre-schools and an out of school club owned by the proprietors. It opened in 2000 and operates from a church hall in Ashford, a residential area of Surrey. The setting has the use of the main church hall and a smaller room with kitchen and toilet facilities. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:15 to 12:15 during school term time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 32 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the surrounding areas. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children will receive appropriate treatment if an accident occurs because most of the staff hold current first aid certificates and a fully stocked first aid kit is in place. Staff obtain written parental consent prior to administering any form of medication and also to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. Staff record all the details clearly and parents are required to sign the records when they collect their children, helping to keep them informed. Staff have a clear understanding of the procedures to follow with regard to recording all accidents that occur on the premises and parents sign to acknowledge they have been informed. However, the records do not always show where in the building the accidents occur, making it difficult to track and identify any possible areas of risk.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines. They are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times and use disposable paper towels to help prevent the possible spread of infection. Children are able to explain why they are washing their hands and know it is to 'wash off the germs'. Staff implement good hygiene procedures during the sessions. They ensure the tables are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray before and after snacks and the toilet facilities are checked and cleaned regularly.

Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating as they talk about the type of food that is good for them. Staff provide nutritious snacks for the children, promoting healthy eating as part of the daily routines. For example, children have fresh fruit and/or vegetables at snack time. Children also take part in activities to learn more about the type of food they are eating. For example, they help to prepare the vegetables for home made soup and often spread their own sandwiches for snack. Children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the session. They bring in their own drinks bottles which are placed on a tray at the side of the room. Children help themselves, increasing their independence. They are also offered a choice of squash, milk or water with their snack, ensuring they have enough to drink throughout the morning.

Children have the opportunity to develop their physical skills during the sessions. Staff ensure they have access to activities such as using the climbing frame and balancing equipment in the main hall. They also enable the children to go outside for a period of time during the session, although consistent good use is not made of the garden area. Children also participate in a wide range of indoor music activities, laughing as they sing and dance, learning to move with control and coordination.

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

The provision is good.

The premises are clean and well-maintained, providing a warm and welcoming environment for the children and their families. Their work is displayed on boards around the two halls, valuing the children's efforts. Clear procedures are in place to prevent children from accessing the kitchen areas and the large storage cupboard, providing a safe play and learning environment. The staff implement secure arrival and departure procedures. The parents accompany their children into the small hall to the back of the main hall and get them seated for registration. Staff are on door duty and also waiting for the children in the smaller hall, ensuring there is no opportunity for the children to leave the building unnoticed.

The space available is organised well and children are able to free-flow between the two rooms, accessing all the activities on offer. Children have access to an extensive range of resources, play materials and activities which are suitable for their age and stage of development. The equipment is brightly coloured and set up in different ways to attract the children's attention, ensuring they are fully occupied throughout the sessions. Staff ensure the resources are clean and well-maintained and use a system to ensure play materials are deep cleaned at least once a term and more often if necessary.

Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe through daily routines and discussions. For example, they learn how to carry the chairs safely and know they must not run inside the hall in case they fall and hurt themselves. Children practise regular fire drills, evacuating the building quickly and calmly to ensure they know what to do in an emergency. Children's safety is promoted effectively because staff are vigilant and remove any possible hazards to children. For example, chairs are not stacked too high, all plug sockets are covered and the garden gates are locked during the sessions. Staff also complete comprehensive written risk assessments and have undertaken training to develop their own knowledge and to further protect the children who attend.

Staff have a very clear understanding of child protection procedures. They are able to recognise the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and record any concerns. Staff are fully aware of the settings internal procedures and also have the contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure they can contact the relevant agencies directly to safeguard the children in their care. Parents are informed about the settings responsibility towards protecting their children and information is included in the groups' policies and procedures.

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

The provision is good.

Children are extremely happy and settled in the pre-school. They laugh with each other and the staff as they take part in the extensive range of activities throughout the sessions. Staff have a clear understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and link the children's planned experiences with the main curriculum, enabling them to differentiate the activities, ensuring all children gain the most from the opportunities provided. Children take part in a wide range of activities alongside their peers and are making good progress in all areas of their development. The whole staff team interacts exceptionally well with the children and at times it is difficult to see where the staff are located because they ensure they are at the children's level, engaging them in purposeful conversation as they learn through play. All children have access to the outdoor play area for a period of time during the sessions, although in winter months, the range of outdoor activities is very limited and do not cover all areas of development or learning.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning are good. The whole staff team have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage and work closely together to ensure the children make good progress in all six areas of learning. Staff observe the children's progress during free-play and focussed activities and record what the children can do. They collate the information to identify the children's next learning steps, which are used by the key workers to set up specific activities alongside the main curriculum, ensuring the children's needs are being met. Staff are exceptionally skilled at asking open-ended questions to encourage the children to think about what they are trying to achieve. For example, they ask the children about their drawings and

encourage them to talk about what they are doing. Children share their thoughts and suggest ideas, building on their work throughout the sessions. Staff organise the sessions effectively to enable the children to work in small and large groups and often take part in one to one activities with staff. They ask lots of questions encouraging the children to share their stories, laughing and joking as they build the children's confidence and self-esteem.

Children benefit from the good relationships with staff and their peers. They bring items of interest from home and share their experiences with each other. For example, one child brought a camera in with pictures of her new pets. Children are able to sit quietly and concentrate well when required. They say good morning with confidence as staff call out their names at morning registration. Although, some children are easily distracted during other large group activities, such as story time and often miss the learning opportunities. Children have many opportunities to practise their emergent writing skills during free play and as they write their names on their work. They recognise their names in print and link the letters to sounds. Children handle books correctly and often pretend to read stories to each other in the well stocked book areas. Staff encourage the children to count at every opportunity. For example, children count how many pieces of wet pasta they can hold during water play and how many children are at the table. They use mathematical language to describe size, shape and position during everyday activities. Children are able to recognise numerals and point to show the number that relates to their age.

Children are developing a good sense of time and understand the routines of the day. They are able to explain what will happen next and often help the younger children to remember that they are tidying away ready for snack time. Children use many different techniques to join resources, learning about the properties of the various materials. They build models using the construction toys and often link what they are building to the theme. For example, children make rockets in line with the current topic of 'Space'. Children use their imaginations extremely well. They dress up as characters and make up stories about super heroes and princesses during role-play and make the noises of cars and various forms of transport with the miniature world equipment as they talk about where the vehicles might be going. Children use a wide range of resources during art and craft activities. Staff assist the children as little or as much as is needed for them to make their own ideas. Staff often prepare activities, for example, today the children are making rockets and the staff are skilled at letting the children create their own ideas.

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

The provision is good.

Staff have a very clear understanding of equal opportunities and ensure all children have equal access to the resources and activities. The whole staff team take the time to get to know the children and their families, making them feel valued and part of the group as they talk about siblings and other family members. Parents openly share information with the staff to ensure the children's individual needs are being met. Children participate in an extensive range of activities to develop their understanding of other cultures and beliefs. For example, they enjoy food tasting, listening to music from around the world and use a broad selection of multi-cultural resources during the everyday routines. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children benefit enormously from the good relationships between their parents and the staff team. Parents are able to talk to their children's key worker at any time, sharing information to support the children during their time at the setting. Parents have access to the setting's policies and procedures, receive a newsletter each term and the notice boards are used effectively to keep the parents well informed.

The special needs coordinator has a clear understanding of her role within the setting. The staff have developed good relationships with other agencies to fully support all the children and their families. Comprehensive systems and procedures are in place and the pre-school has a positive approach to caring for all children. When concerns are identified the staff make observations and openly discuss any concerns with the parents. In agreement with the parents an individual educational plan is drawn up detailing the next steps for the children, which are reviewed regularly and adapted as necessary to help the children make progress and participate fully in all the activities provided. Staff work hard to ensure all children are welcomed into the setting and they are teaching the children Makaton sign language as part of their fully inclusive programme.

Children behave exceptionally well because staff implement the clear rules and boundaries consistently so the children know exactly what is expected of them. Staff focus on the good aspects of the children's behaviour, recognising their efforts and responding well to their needs. They offer praise and encouragement throughout the session and staff take the time to give clear explanations to the children so they can see they have been treated fairly, building their self confidence as they begin to develop a good sense of right and wrong.

The quality of partnership with parents of children who receive funding for early education is good. Parents receive a detailed prospectus outlining the aims and objectives of the pre-school. It includes clear information about the Foundation Stage and stepping stones, helping them to understand how the staff plan for their children's individual needs within the group. The curriculum planning is displayed, helping the parents to become involved in their children's learning and parents are able to make appointments to see their children's progress records at any time. However, there are no opportunities for parents to make written contributions to the records about their children's learning at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children's safety is promoted because the owners have robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure all adults working with the children are suitable to do so. Training needs are identified throughout the year and are included in the staff appraisal system. The owners fully support all staff training and ongoing training is part of their job descriptions. This enables staff to remain current and continue to update their own knowledge base and practical skills for the benefit of the children. A full induction programme is in place for new staff and volunteers, ensuring they are effectively supported and aware of their responsibilities and limitations within the pre-school. All the required paperwork is in place and most is maintained to a high standard, helping to promote the children's health, safety and general wellbeing effectively.

Staff deployment is exceptionally good, providing high quality support and supervision for the children at all times. Staff are skilled at watching the whole room and overseeing all the children while engaged in specific activities with small groups of children. The sessions run smoothly and are extremely well organised, ensuring the children move around freely, never having to wait for the next thing to happen. Children enjoy an extensive range of activities during a session; they are busy, stimulated and fully occupied at all times, which has a very positive effect on their behaviour. However, good use is not made of the outside play area during winter months.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. The owners employ a fully qualified and experienced manager to oversee the day to day running of the group. She is knowledgeable and has clear aims and objectives for the group. The owners support the staff team and they all work together effectively for the benefit of the children. The owners and staff attend local cluster meetings with other providers to share expertise and have strong links with other agencies. All staff play a part in planning the curriculum and evaluating the effectiveness of the programme; monitoring the nursery education and individual children to ensure they continue to make good progress in all areas. The settings strengths and weaknesses are assessed continually, through discussion on a daily basis and through the staff appraisal system. The whole staff team are fully committed to improving the quality of care and nursery education for all the children who attend.

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

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure that a system is in place for registering visitors, detailing when they sign in and out and the reason for their visit and to ensure training is made available for staff responsible for risk assessment. They were also asked to ensure that full information is given to volunteers about their roles and responsibilities.

The pre-school has made very good progress since the last inspection. All visitors are required to sign in and out of the pre-school ensuring an accurate record of anyone coming into contact with the children is maintained. Staff have undertaken risk assessment training and comprehensive written risk assessments are in place and are reviewed regularly. A full induction programme has been introduced for volunteers and new staff, ensuring everyone is now fully aware of their role and responsibilities within the pre-school, enhancing the service provided for the children and their families.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to improve staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals and to ensure that planning reflects how activities are adapted for three year olds and children who learn at different rates. To provide mark making opportunities in the role play area; make the book corner more inviting for children and ensure that mathematical ideas, particularly relating to number operation are used in practical every day situations. They were also asked to provide more opportunities for science activities, living things and objects for children to explore.

All staff now have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and they all work together to plan the curriculum for the children. This ensures the children's individual needs are being met and activities are differentiated effectively. Children have ample opportunities to practise their emergent writing skills for a variety of purposes and comfortable cushions have been placed in the book corner, encouraging the children to make good use of the book areas. Children's mathematical development is progressing well; they recognise numerals, count with confidence and are beginning to calculate using small groups of objects. Staff ensure the children have access to a wide range of living things at different times throughout the year and make good use of the interest table, to link new experiences to the planned themes.

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

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standard 3: Care, Play and Learning, National Standard 4: Physical Environment, National Standard 6: Safety, National Standard 11: Behaviour and National Standard 12: Working in Partnership with

Parents. The concerns were regarding the children's access to the kitchen area and a storage cupboard, behaviour management, parental confidentiality issues, general concerns about the lack of activity planning for children and staff's engagement with children. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to investigate the concerns. Following the visit one action was set under National Standard 6: Safety. Ofsted received a suitable response from the provider detailing the steps the provider had taken to address the issues which Ofsted found to be satisfactory. In view of this no further action was taken and the registered person remains 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 the accident records include clear information about where on the premises the accident occurred
- further develop the use of the outdoor play area to include activities to cover all areas of learning and development, especially during winter months (also applies to Nursery Education).

#### **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):

- develop the children's listening skills during large group activities, such as story time
- provide ongoing opportunities for parents to make written contributions to their children's records about their learning at home.

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)