

Tops Day Nurseries

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY271409
Inspection date	06 November 2007
Inspector	Bridget Copson
Setting Address	Taunton and Somerset Hospital, Musgrove Park, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 5BZ
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Registered person	Tops Day Nursery Limited
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 good. 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 has been registered since 2003. It operates from a purpose built premises on the Taunton and Somerset Hospital site, Musgrove Park. The nursery is one of a chain of privately owned nurseries offering sessional as well as full day care. It serves staff from the hospital site, town and surrounding areas. A maximum of 122 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 to 18.00, all year round.

There are currently 203 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll as well as children up to the age of 11 years. Of these 29 children receive funding for early education.

The nursery employs 30 members of staff, the majority of whom hold or are working towards appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association Quality Assurance Scheme and Investors in People.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for within a generally clean and hygienic environment within which staff have some effective systems in place to prevent the spread of infection. For example, they use colour coded cleaning cloths, change cot linens frequently, disinfect all table tops before meal times and wear disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing and cleaning up. Staff also complete daily health and safety checklists and cleaning lists to further promote a healthy environment. However, not all resources and areas are clean in the Ducklings and Dolphins rooms. In addition, children in Poppies are not provided with a clean and hygienic environment for afternoon snack. As a result, children's health is not promoted well in these areas of the provision. Children learn about managing their own personal hygiene through regular hand washing and brushing their teeth when old enough after meals.

Children benefit from nutritious home cooked meals which provide them with a balanced diet throughout the week. The chef maintains good standards of hygiene in the kitchen and displays four-weekly menus to inform parents of what meals are available. Children are also provided with fresh and dried fruits and savoury snacks in the play rooms at snack times and have access to drinks of water. Babies' individual routines are met closely by staff, in partnership with parents, to meet their needs consistently.

Children's health and fitness is promoted well with activities organised outside as well as in the play rooms. They benefit from separate outdoor play areas to meet their developmental needs and age appropriate resources indoors. Babies use equipment to promote their balance and strength and early mobility skills and staff interact to encourage them to practise their developing skills.

Children's health is further promoted through the well-organised records and documentation kept in the main office and each play room. This ensures records of any accidents, incidents and medication are signed by parents for consistency of care. All special dietary and health needs are monitored closely both in the kitchen and all the play rooms to meet children's needs effectively. All staff hold appropriate first aid certificates and first aid kits are kept on the premises, as well as for outings. This supports staff well in caring for children appropriately in the event of an accident.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe and secure in all areas of the provision through the effective combination of direct staff supervision and the safety measures in place. Staff complete risk assessments and daily checklists to maintain high standards within the setting. They follow the safe procedures for all outings, school collections and lone working to further protect children. Children learn about safety well through staff guidance and activities. For example, discussing fire safety linked to bonfire night, managing steps safely, using craft tools effectively and practising the fire evacuation procedure each month. Staff caring for babies use a trolley to keep them safe and secure in the event of all evacuations.

Children are cared for within well-organised premises which provides them with separate play rooms according to their age. Each play room is segregated into different areas of play with

toys stored in easily accessible units and floor boxes. This allows babies and children of all ages to choose and play freely and safely.

Children's welfare is safeguarded efficiently by staff who have good systems in place to protect them. For example, written records are kept of all visitors and accurate attendance times for staff and children. Also, staff closely supervise children in person at all times, providing some age appropriate privacy and independence to school age children. Staff are all aware of their roles and responsibilities in acting on any concerns. The designated child protection officer is clear of the child protection procedures involved to assure children's welfare at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies in the Forget-me-nots play room are very happy and settled, playing with and exploring colourful toys. Staff maintain close communication with them through eye contact, cuddles during bottle feeding, talking and responding to their sounds with enthusiasm. Babies express themselves freely with smiles, chuckles and shrieking out to staff across the room to make themselves known. Children in the Poppies play room move freely between the two play areas to explore and play, such as crawling through the tunnel, exploring the sounds of musical instruments, building with constructional sets and playing with jungle toys. They are excited with new activities, such as clapping when staff announce time for outdoor play and laughing and asking for more when bubble blowing outside.

Children in the Ducklings play room confidently find favourite things and focus well when their interest is captured. Children explore freely and are encouraged to do so to extend their play and learning, such as playing with water and sand and creating pictures with mountains of glitter. They are forming early friendships with others who they hug, seek out to play with and also link up with staff to share and cuddle up to. Staff promote their language skills well through lots of discussion and questioning. Children attending the Shooting Stars out of school club benefit from two separate play rooms which provide a large creative area with easy access to many different media, materials and tools. Also, imaginative play, games and constructional sets.

Younger children's learning and development is planned within the Birth to three matters framework with learning objectives to meet the developmental needs of those present. Key workers carry out regular observations of their progress each month and use the information to plan their next steps for the following month. As a result, children's assessments provide an accurate reflection of their stage of development and that realistic and achievable challenges are provided each month to promote their development. As children move through the nursery, these records are transferred with them to promote consistency of their care and learning.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children's learning is planned through changing topics with activities used as a focus for promoting specific stepping stones. Staff have a generally good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and prepare most activities well. However, not all large or whole group activities provide sufficient adult support or space to ensure children benefit from the experience. Staff ask children lots of questions to encourage them to think and share their knowledge and interact with enthusiasm to promote communication. Children's progress is monitored appropriately by key workers who complete tick lists as children achieve specific stepping stones and write monthly photo observations.

However, these are not completed frequently enough to provide an accurate reflection of all children's current stage of development and to ensure realistic challenges are provided in all areas of learning.

Children are happy and active throughout the day, linking up with others to play and joining in adult led activities. They are learning about positive attitudes and how to manage behaviour through learning the golden rules and discussing different behaviour scenarios. Children behave well most of the time and only become disruptive during some whole group activities when they lose interest. Children are developing good independence and enjoy carrying out self-care skills and taking on responsible helper jobs within the room. Children speak with confidence. They ask questions and share their news, thoughts and knowledge openly at show and tell sessions and group discussion times. However, they do not always listen well during large group activities to further promote their communication skills. Children enjoy books which they choose spontaneously as well as join in elements of favourite stories with staff.

Children are developing an appropriate understanding of numbers and shapes. They count aloud with staff and can name different shapes around them. They experience some planned activities to promote their understanding of numeral recognition and grouping objects. However, these activities are not always set at the right level of challenge for most children. They have access to some puzzles and jigsaws to promote their understanding of numbers, shapes and problem solving skills. However, not all these resources are complete or in good condition to keep children interested. Children are developing a good understanding of information, communication and technology (ICT) using practical resources, such as a digital camera, calculators, tape machine and Bee-Bot programmable toy. They benefit from many activities to support their understanding of time and place. For example, they discuss past events, such as bonfire night outings, learn the days of the week and changing months throughout the year. Children also get involved in the local community through walks, trips, fundraising and meeting professionals linked to topics.

Children use a good range of large and small scale physical play provision in the outdoor play areas with control and co-ordination. They use many different one-handed tools with materials to promote their hand-eye co-ordination, such as scissors, glue sticks, brushes, knives, rollers, cutters, spades and shovels and watering cans. Children use their imaginations well in role play, small world activities and in adult led and free-choice creative activities. They confidently move resources around the room to extend their play and learning. For example, using coloured cellophane to make sunglasses in role play and tools to extend their creative play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for with equal concern by staff who welcome them all warmly and have systems in place to ensure they are all included equally in activities. Their individual needs are met with care through record keeping, the key worker system and good daily communication with parents. Staff caring for babies liaise closely with parents to ensure care routines are met consistently and key workers link well as children transfer through the rooms. Children are developing a good sense of belonging and see a positive reflection of themselves within their respective rooms. They also get involved within the local community. The setting has a designated special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). She is well-prepared to ensure any additional resources are provided for children to promote consistency of care.

Children behave well and learn about expectations and positive play as they develop through the nursery. They are provided with simple guidance and support and learn to manage behaviour well as they move into the pre-school room. Children attending the Shooting Stars club get involved in developing the golden rules and expectations to promote a positive environment. Staff work calmly and consistently when managing behaviour and provide lots of close support, praise and stickers to promote positive attitudes and raise self-esteem.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff have established good partnerships with parents for consistency of care. Parents receive comprehensive information regarding all aspects of the setting and welcome packs according to the room their child will attend. They complete records to support staff in meeting their child's needs according to their wishes and to support staff in settling their child in. Parents are kept well-informed through notices displayed in the entrance and play rooms and monthly newsletters. In addition, parents of young children and babies receive daily care reports and staff have a two-way message diary to record any additional information. Staff in all rooms also communicate with parents daily regarding their child's well-being.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are provided with good opportunities to get involved in their child's learning. For example, monthly newsletters and room notices inform them of planned topics, events and how they can get involved. They are also invited to attend a presentation evening on admission to advise them of the nursery education and to complete child profile sheets to inform staff of their child's stage of development. Following this, they are invited to attend open evenings each term to discuss their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by regular teams of staff in each room who attend training courses and workshops to update their knowledge and skills. This supports them well in their individual roles and areas of responsibility and in meeting children's needs. The setting has good recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure all staff are suitable to care for children. Staff's on-going suitability is well-monitored through an induction programme, annual appraisals and a training system to promote development.

Children benefit from well-organised premises which allows them to progress through the nursery consistently and efficiently. They are cared for by motivated and interested staff whose work and achievements are celebrated. Staff organise themselves well as teams in each room to promote children's safety, well-being and most aspects of their health and hygiene. Children's records and relating documentation is well-organised and easily accessible for relevant staff. Secure storage ensures confidentiality is maintained and parental consent is obtained to display any personal information to support staff in meeting their needs.

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

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The setting has sound systems in place to monitor the quality of nursery education and its strengths and weaknesses. For example, monthly staff and planning meetings, mock inspections carried out by central office, some links with the local authority, questionnaires for parents and daily evaluation of adult led activity. However, there is limited evaluation of everyday activities to ensure all areas of learning are promoted well, especially maths and listening skills as well as the organisation of large group activities. The

setting shows a commitment to improvement. For example, regular staff development and preparing all staff for changes through attending conferences.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting agreed to ensure staff's management of children's behaviour is consistent throughout all units. Also, to improve systems for monitoring and evaluating training and development to ensure they are effective for all staff.

Staff in all rooms manage children's behaviour consistently, according to the setting's policy. As a result children display positive attitudes. Staff all undergo annual appraisals and regular training opportunities to promote their development and to support them in meeting children's needs. In addition, designated staff attend training specific to their roles and areas of responsibility to support them further.

At the last nursery education inspection, the setting agreed to develop and improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. The setting agreed to improve the planning of activities for all areas of learning, to take account of children's assessments and the stepping stones, so that children's individual learning needs are met. Also, to provide more opportunities for children to explore and investigate the natural world and use the ICT resources available.

Staff have received training and support from supervisors and the local authority to develop a better knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and to improve the quality of children's learning. The staff have implemented new planning and assessment systems, supported by their head office, to support each child's learning. Children regularly explore their local environment and use ICT resources independently during the day to develop their knowledge and understanding in these areas.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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 satisfactory.

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 all resources are kept clean and children in Poppies are provided with a hygienic environment for all snack times.

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):

- improve the organisation of whole group times to ensure children benefit more from the activities and remain interested
- develop systems for monitoring and evaluating activities to ensure all areas of children's learning are promoted well, especially aspects of maths and communication skills.

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