

# Toots Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123119
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Jenny Read
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 satisfactory. 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?

Toots Day Nursery opened in 1990 and operates from three rooms in a purpose built premises in Tooting. There are two separate enclosed garden areas with grass and impact absorbent hard standing surfaces for outdoor play. The day nursery is privately owned and serves the local community.

A maximum of 42 children from birth to five years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 58 children on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for nursery education. The day nursery is open each week day from 08.00 until 18.00 all year round apart from bank holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The day nursery employs thirteen full- and part-time staff to work with the children. Of these, all staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to Level 2 or 3. Four staff are currently working towards a Level 3 qualification and one member of staff is working towards the Foundation Degree in Early Years Childcare and Education. All three managers hold the National

Nursing Examination Board qualification. The day nursery receives support from the Local Authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted because staff are clear of the procedures when administering first aid treatment or medication. For example, they sought training from individual parents on how to administer specialist medication. Children receive prompt treatment for minor injuries because each group room have their own first aid box, although contents are not regularly checked to ensure they are in-date and fully stocked. Children receive appropriate care if they are ill because staff closely monitor how they are feeling, give them lots of cuddles and contact their parents to collect if necessary, to minimise the spread of infection.

Children are developing good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. They can easily access the toilet facilities and staff are on hand to offer the younger children support if this is needed. The children know hand washing routines and develop independence in their personal care as they access soap from the dispenser, paper towels and tissues. They wash their hands after using the toilet and use wet wipes before and after meal times, explaining clearly how they must 'wash their hands because a member of staff will check'. There are excellent nappy changing practices and routines in place that safeguard the children from infection and cross contamination. For example, staff wear aprons and spray the changing mat and change their gloves after each child. The premises are clean and well maintained because the setting is cleaned every evening. Staff monitor the toilet facilities throughout the day and follow a number of cleaning checklists when working on the late shift.

Children are well nourished and have their health and individual dietary needs well met because the numerous notices displayed throughout the nursery ensure all staff, including the chef, have secure knowledge. The children enjoy healthy, nutritious, home-cooked meals that include foods from around the world. However, healthy eating habits are not actively encouraged because children are unable to access drinking water when they are thirsty and have to wait until they have finished eating their food before they are given a drink. Meal times are a social occasion but children do not take an active part by helping to prepare the table, count the cups or set out their name cards.

Children rest and relax in comfort when they wish because staff work very closely with parents and take account of their wishes. They enjoy plenty of daily fresh air and exercise, which contributes to their healthy well-being, although, free-flowing indoor and outdoor play is not available to enable the children to make choices about where they play and learn. Young babies are also given the opportunity to have fresh air as the staff provide a selection of age appropriate toys on a blanket for them. The babies gain control, balance and strength as staff challenge them to reach for their toys and hold them as they practise supporting their weight on their legs as they learn to stand and practise their early walking skills.

The children enjoy regular visits to the soft play centre where they gain confidence in their physical skills and learn to move their body in different ways. Children enjoy weekly dance sessions, warming up and cooling down as they stretch and exercise. This enables the children to become aware of what is happening to their bodies as they learn how to keep themselves healthy. The children learn to bounce, throw and catch balls and develop small muscle control

as they practise threading and using scissors. However, planning for outside play and learning in the pre-school is weak to challenge children's physical abilities.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety and security is given high priority because the management team regularly review safety procedures to provide a very secure premises. For example, the buzzer alarm and entry phone system notifies staff of persons wishing to gain entry. The daily safety checks and detailed risk assessments ensure hazards to children are minimised. However, staff accessing the first aid box and certain documents displayed on high shelves in the pre-school room by using a chair, have not been assessed as a risk, heightening the risk of them slipping and falling. Staff supervise the children closely, responding swiftly to their aid, for example, when the toddlers start to climb on top of the garage or the older children run around the room. However, an explanation is not consistently given to help children from a young age begin to gain awareness of potential dangers so that they may learn to keep themselves safe.

There are effective arrival and collection procedures in place to continually safeguard the children because procedures are well known and understood by staff and parents. A member of staff is present on the door to welcome the children and parents. There are good systems to record children's attendance as parents sign their children in and out in their child's group room. However, there are no systems to record staff's attendance to show clearly who is present at any one time in the event of a fire or child protection concern. The children take part in six weekly fire drills and describe with clarity how they 'walk nicely to the gate', learning appropriate action to take in an emergency.

The children have more than enough space to move freely and generally good emphasis is given to making sure the environment is welcoming for children. However, the dignity and privacy of the children in the Busy Bees and Pre-school rooms when using the toilets are not actively respected because there are no partitions and the main toilet door is left open. The Tiggers and Busy Bees rooms are bright, cheerful and comfortable. Although most of the display boards throughout the nursery depict pre-drawn and pre-cut pictures and are all high on the wall meaning children are unable to see and interact with the pictures, posters in the Tiggers room are displayed at a low-level thus allowing the babies and younger children to observe and enjoy what they see. An open shelving unit in the Tiggers room and some child-height storage units with named boxes in the pre-school room, allow the children to help themselves. This encourages children's independent learning.

Although the role play, computer and creative areas in the pre-school remain consistent within the room, a number of areas including mathematics and communication, and language and literacy are not clearly defined. As such, mathematical resources are kept in a cupboard and are not available for children to help themselves and the very small graphics table is poorly resourced, limiting children's opportunity to explore different writing materials and tools. However, on the whole, the nursery is generally well resourced and systems to maintain cleanliness of the toys and play materials are successful, because children occasionally help to wash the toys. This helps the children learn to take responsibility for looking after the resources and reduces the spread of infection.

Children are generally well protected from abuse and neglect because some staff have experience of child protection issues and demonstrate a satisfactory awareness of the signs and indicators of abuse and the line management process to follow with any concerns. In addition, staff

understand their role to report any concerns and will refer to the nursery's policies for direction. The child protection policy clearly documents the different types of abuse and the procedures to follow, although this does not reflect current referral procedures.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The younger children enjoy a generally good range of stimulating activities and experiences because staff in the Tiggers room have a sound knowledge of the Birth to three matters and know how the younger children learn. The key workers record clear extension and differentiation for each of their key children. This is successfully highlighted on the weekly planning sheet to ensure the youngest children's experiences and activities are based upon their next steps to promote their individual development. However, communication between the different groups and parents, before a child moves up to the next age group, is weak. Records are not consistently shared to ensure staff are fully informed and able to provide suitable care to meet their individual needs and aid a smooth transition.

The children enjoy a broad range of activities that encourage their sensory development and enable them to explore, investigate and broaden their experiences. For example, photographs show children playing and having fun with shredded paper, squeezing and squashing play dough and touching, smelling and eating jelly. They investigate the textures and sounds in the treasure basket and tentatively touch and run their fingers through the cornflour and water. Toddlers in the Busy Bees room trickle the runny liquid over the animals and respond well to staff involvement in their play. Staff model appropriate play to extend and engage the children's interests, introducing pots to fill and empty where children pretend it is milk and begin to drink the liquid. However, staff often do too much for the children, pre-drawing and cutting the majority of their pictures rather than allowing them to express themselves freely.

The toddlers develop their language and early communication well through participating in singing familiar songs and because staff interact and purposefully join in their play. Staff ask relevant questions and talk about what the children are doing. This enables the children to acquire new skills and develop confidence through useful adult support. They pretend to take their dolls for a walk, taking on different roles in the home corner. The younger children are developing social confidence through daily opportunities for small and whole group time and sessions at the beginning of the day where the older and younger children join together for breakfast.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is adequate. The new staff team in the pre-school room have attended observation and assessment training and are developing their knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They inherited the current planning and assessment systems and management recognise these need a significant overhaul and are developing action plans to highlight which areas of the planning and assessments need amending. For example, planning covers most areas of learning but there are no systems in place to ensure equal emphasis is given. Staff have a sound awareness of the purpose of the activities, however, the planning does not show intended learning or radiate from the children's next steps in their learning.

The children enjoy a range of interesting activities that encourage interaction as part of a small or large group or as an individual. Staff are developing their confidence to become more flexible

with the daily activities to occasionally run with the children's ideas, however, the children do not contribute to topic ideas or planning to promote autonomy and individual learning effectively. Staff observe the children during play and occasionally complete tracking observations to inform their assessments. However, these are not completed routinely and the tick sheet assessments are not dated or show links to the stepping stones to enable staff to plan successfully. Children enjoy free-flow play indoors and out during the warmer weather, which allows the children to make choices about where they play and learn. Staff have satisfactory expectations of the children, which is well balanced with suitable individual support and praise. For example, even though differentiation is not clear on the planning, staff adapt the activities and their questioning to support and encourage individual children.

Staff organise the space and some resources well to promote children's independence and decision-making skills, for example, they access equipment for sand play. They display an increasing level of confidence as they settle into the routines and manage their personal care. Children are building good relationships with each other and readily anticipate the arrival of their friends. They work collaboratively together and show pride as they excitedly show the staff how they completed the large floor puzzle as a team.

Many children recognise their written names and refer to these when finding their draws to store their pictures, collect their coat or find their slipper basket. Although name cards are in place, these are not currently used to encourage children to practise their emergent writing or make marks to represent their names on their pictures. The writing area is poorly resourced and occasional writing implements and tools in the role play, means children have few opportunities to develop their hand and eye co-ordination. Most children listen attentively to the story and talk about the royal family during the topic of Kings and Queens. Some more able children are beginning to recognise and name the first letters of their name, however staff rarely plan specific activities or discussion at circle time to introduce the letter of the week to broaden children's awareness of letters and letter sounds.

More able children confidently count the play people as they help to tidy them away at the end of the day, responding to staff's support as they count beyond 13. The planning and photographs show children sequencing beads, making patterns and developing their problem solving and small muscle control as they complete numerous jigsaws. However, children rarely count or use numbers during daily routines, for example counting and comparing the numbers of boys and girls present each day to introduce mathematical language, such as more than and less than.

Children learn to care for living things as photographs show children planting and tending to their seeds and bulbs growing in the garden pots. Although the board to indicate what the weather is, the day, the month and the year is displayed on the wall, this has not been introduced to the children to help raise their awareness of a sense of time and introduce language, such as yesterday, today and tomorrow. They are beginning to develop an interest in everyday technology as a small number of children attend weekly computer sessions with an outside tutor. The children are able to use the pre-school computer with growing control using a specialised child-friendly mouse and keyboard. However, this is not available each day to challenge the children and help them build on what they already know and can do. Plans show children investigating how gears and magnets work and occasionally designing and making models with household recyclable materials.

Children show good awareness of basic colours and successfully identify the objects on the colour table. However, the colour table does not relate to the colour of the week as shown on

the display board for parents. This is confusing for the parents and children. Children respond well to planned experiences that use their imagination as they dress up as Kings and Queens, design and decorate crowns and make sand castles in the sand tray during the topic. They play doctors and nurses, make up a hairdressers or garden centre and take on various roles in the home corner, for example, a child announces 'I am the mummy you can be the dog'.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued as individuals and have their needs well met because staff work closely with parents and outside agencies to provide suitable support. Detailed information about the babies' and toddlers' individual feeding patterns and sleep routines are clearly recorded and displayed to ensure they are fully known and understood by all staff. Staff liaise successfully with parents who speak English as an additional language, learning a few important words in the children's native language and utilising staff's own cultural backgrounds to aid communication with children and parents at key times to promote integration.

Children benefit from a good range of well-planned activities and resources, which help them value diversity. They celebrate festivals from their own and others' cultures, including International day where they tasted food from around the world, organised their own West Indian carnival and learnt about Eid, Diwali and Chinese New Year. Children appear happy and settled and contently cuddle and seek out familiar staff. This helps the children to gain confidence and enables them to become special to someone. They begin to feel a sense of belonging as they proudly wear their nursery tee-shirts and sweat tops. The Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are generally well behaved because staff consistently use a range of age appropriate strategies to manage inappropriate behaviour and sharing issues. For example, staff persevere for several minutes to help two children understand they can both play with the same toy if they take it in turns. In addition, staff in the pre-school use timers to encourage co-operative play and have trialled sticker charts for repeated good behaviours. Clear explanations are given to the children most of the time to help them learn how to manage their own behaviour. However, children are not involved in helping to devise the rules and boundaries to give them ownership and learn to manage their own behaviour. Children are gaining in confidence and self-esteem because staff frequently offer praise and encouragement to appreciate their achievements.

Children benefit from the friendly and informal partnership between their parents and staff. Parents indicate their children are very happy to come to the nursery and cards sent to the staff, thank them for giving their child 'a fantastic start in life'. Parents receive satisfactory information about the setting through the simple prospectus, monthly newsletters, notice board articles and display boards around the nursery. Policies and procedures are displayed in the entrance area for parents to view when they wish and any complaints or concerns are recorded. Although previous complaints have been recorded in the incident book and not in a separate complaints log, staff responded appropriately and discussed all the concerns raised with parents.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents receive basic information about what their children are learning through a poster displayed in the narrow hallway that informs them of the colour, number, shape and letter of the week, however little information is shared about the Foundation Stage and stepping stones. Consequently, parents are not fully aware of the

education provision and how their children move through the stepping stones to help them move onto the next steps in their learning. The management team are fully aware of this discrepancy and although they have drawn up an action plan to work out ways to improve the information to parents, such as up-dating the prospectus and devising monthly pre-school newsletters, these have not been implemented to date. Parents value the opportunity to speak with staff about their child when they wish but indicate they would like to receive more information about their children's on-going progress so that they may support their children's learning at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The management team have a good awareness of the nursery's strengths and a generally good awareness of the improvements necessary, with particular regard to the education provision and monitoring systems because they regularly spend time in the group rooms. As a result, a number of action plans are now in place, which highlight particular areas, such as the planning systems to meet individual needs, and management indicate these are now ready to be discussed and implemented with staff.

Children are cared for by staff with suitable knowledge and understanding of child development because there is a strong focus on promoting staff's professional development. A number of staff are currently working towards a degree level qualification in early years or a National Vocational Qualification in childcare at Level 3. Staff feel they have good opportunities to attend training and this is monitored well through training tracking sheets and yearly appraisals. There is a clear management structure and staff indicate they feel well supported. Staff work well as a whole team and as part of a group in their own rooms. They each meet monthly to review planning and address any issues.

The different play spaces are organised appropriately according to the ages of the children in each room. Staff operate a key worker approach whereby they are responsible for building relationships and communicating with parents and completing their key children's assessment folder. However, the transition period when children move up to another group is not effective to nurture and support their well-being because the settling and handover procedures are not consistent.

The operational plan is detailed and well laid out in line with the 14 National Standards. Policies and procedures are clearly organised and most contain accurate and up-to-date information. The recruitment and vetting procedures are acceptable, however the detailed staff handbook and useful induction programme ensure staff are sufficiently well informed. Children's records are stored alphabetically to allow easy reference when sharing information with parents. All records and documentation are stored securely to maintain confidentiality. The setting meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The last inspection requested that the provider ensure accurate times of children's attendance are recorded and recommended that resources are cleaned and written records of medication are shared and signed by parents, and remain confidential. The parents sign their children in and out each day and most include accurate times of attendance to show clearly who is present. Useful cleaning routines in the baby and toddler rooms ensure toys and resources are clean and free from germs. Children's health care needs are generally well met because staff share



medication records with parents and ensure these are filed promptly in the medication file to maintain privacy.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider was asked to: use observations and children's next steps to inform the planning; provide opportunities for older and more able children to recognise numerals and count for a purpose; increase activities to develop gross motor skills including balance and climbing; and build children's awareness of the effect healthy practices, such as eating, sleeping and hygiene, have on their body. The provider has made acceptable progress in all areas but further improvements are necessary to ensure planning is effective, radiates from the children's next steps and covers the six areas of learning successfully to support children's learning.

### **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, which parents may see on request. The 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 satisfactory. 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 the attendance register includes times of arrival and departure of staff to show clearly who is present at any one time in the event of a fire or child protection concern.
- provide opportunities for children to access drinks throughout the day when they are thirsty.
- ensure the smooth transition of children as they move through the nursery by extending communication links and information shared so staff may be sufficiently informed.

#### **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):

- make sure the observations and children's assessments link closely to the planning and children's next steps, to challenge their learning and help them build on what they already know and can do

- increase the information to parents about the Foundation Stage, stepping stones and children's on-going progress so that parents may support their children's learning at home.
- continue to develop the monitoring systems for nursery education.

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)