



## **Toybox Nursery**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	142865
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 January 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Samantha Powis
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<b>Registered person</b>	Toybox Yeovil Ltd
<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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Toybox Day Nursery has been established for approximately 13 years and is situated near the town centre of Yeovil in Somerset. The setting occupies a three bedroom house that has been adapted to accommodate young children. The nursery is privately owned and registered to provide full day care for 18 children aged birth to under five years.

The nursery is open 08.00 until 18.00, Monday to Friday, all year round except for 2 weeks over the Christmas period. They serve the local community and places are offered to children who come from a range of different backgrounds. When required, they can cater for children who have special educational needs or English as an additional language. The nursery is in receipt of the government funding for 3 and 4 year-olds. There are currently 35 children on the register, of which 12 receive the funding.

The accommodation consists of two main play areas downstairs, with toilet and changing facilities for the children. Upstairs accommodates a sleep room and facilities for staff. The nursery are able to provide children with hot and cold meals as required. A securely fenced and gated outdoor play area is available.

The owner holds recognised child care qualifications and employs a supervisor who has a level III qualification in child care and education. They are supported by four members of staff, all of whom are qualified to level II in childcare, with one member of staff working towards a level III qualification.

Support and curriculum advice is received from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Some older children are developing independence in their self-care skills. They demonstrate an awareness of hygiene practices, including the importance of hand washing before meal times and after using the toilet. However, younger children are not always supported effectively by staff to ensure they follow good hygiene routines, which means their health is compromised. For example, they are not always reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet. Staff do not ensure children are protected from the risk of cross infection when they change nappies. The changing mat is not consistently cleaned in between uses, and although gloves and aprons are available to be worn, staff rarely do so.

Older children take part in an organised physical activity programme. This benefits their health and well being. When joining in they have opportunities to develop strength and skills, and move their bodies with control. They jump, balance and use balls and hoops with increasing co-ordination. They use the outdoor areas when possible, to exercise and get fresh air. They go on walks outside of the nursery and participate in a sponsored "toddle" in the local park.

Satisfactory systems are in place to record if children have an accident or receive any medication. Prior consent is sought from parents, and they are kept sufficiently informed of any measures taken. To reduce the chances of children passing on infections, the setting has a clear policy regarding the exclusion of children with infectious illnesses. This policy is given to parents, and is adhered to in practice.

Children are developing a knowledge of healthy eating through discussion with staff

at meal and snack times. They are offered a healthy range of meals and snacks throughout the day. These are freshly prepared by the nursery staff, and pureed or mashed to meet the needs of the babies. Children enjoy the appetising options such as cauliflower cheese, vegetable lasagne and chilli and rice. Meals are accompanied by vegetables, and fruit is offered at snack times. Children are offered drinks at snack and meal times. Some of the practices used to check the temperature of the food offered to children do not promote their health.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children's safety is compromised due to inadequate staffing ratios. At the start of each day, there are insufficient staff available to meet the needs of the children. Fourteen children are present with two members of staff. Due to limits within staffing, children are all kept in the same room for up to an hour before the next member of staff arrives. This means they have limited space to play and are at increased risk of being hurt. During this period, children have few activities to engage them and are offered minimal attention from staff. Staff constantly have to leave the room to open the door to parents as they arrive. This is unsettling for the children.

Most areas within the nursery are maintained appropriately. Some displays of the children's work help to make the environment appear welcoming and increase children's sense of belonging. There is an adequate range of resources, toys and equipment. However, some items are not well maintained, which compromises children's health, safety and enjoyment. For example, some toys and equipment appear to need cleaning. In the room for the older children, resources are stored to allow some independent access for children.

Basic consideration is given to maintaining safety throughout the nursery. Visual checks of the indoor and outdoor areas before children use them, help to protect them from danger. Sleeping babies are physically checked regularly, to ensure their safety whilst sleeping. To ensure staff and children are familiar with the emergency evacuation procedure, fire drills are practised regularly.

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection procedures and policies. They are aware of the basic signs and symptoms of possible abuse, and would notify the designated person. This knowledge supports them in their role of protecting children from harm.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children are happy within the setting and develop positive relationships with their peers. However, they are find it difficult to form bonds with a familiar adult within the setting, due to constant changes of staff working within the different areas. They are developing some confidence and independence. Children's achievements and learning are sometimes hampered due to staff supervising activities, rather than

interacting with the children to promote their development. For example, at snack time, staff stand around the table where children are sitting, instead of getting down to their level.

There is no written planning in place specifically for the under three's, which means that their experiences and opportunities are limited. Younger children enjoy a basic range of activities and experiences. Staff's knowledge of how to effectively support the needs of children of this age group is limited. Children's individual routines regarding sleeping and feeding are respected, which helps them to feel secure. Ongoing communication with parents ensures that staff continue to change routines according to the children's needs.

Children have access to a range of appropriate toys and resources, which are suitable to meet the needs of the ages of children attending. However, at the beginning of the day, when the children are all cared for together, activities suitable for the older children are limited. This means they are bored and wander around the room uninterested in the activities on offer. The grouping of the children and the range of resources provided means that children do not receive the care and attention they need at this time.

#### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staffs knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum is basic. They are often unclear about the plans for the day, or of the particular learning intentions. This means that children are often waiting for an activity to be offered to them. Long term plans demonstrate how all areas of learning are covered. Short term planning is ineffective in challenging children's learning appropriately.

There are systems to record and assess children's achievements. However, these are inconsistently completed, and are not used to guide future planning. This results in them being ineffective in helping children to take the next step in their learning. Therefore, children are not always appropriately challenged.

In general, staff use an appropriate range of methods for helping the children to learn. They use discussion when involved in activities to encourage learning. For example, staff talk the children about colour and size when they are sorting the compare bears. At times, the resources and equipment offered to the children, limits their achievements. For example, children were asked to cut around a pre-drawn spider shape, however, the paper used was extremely difficult to cut. No consideration had been given to the abilities of the children participating, and how they could each be supported to achieve and progress at their own level. This led to all children needing lots of support and help, and led to disappointment as they were unable to achieve the outcome independently.

Children develop some independence with their personal care skills. They show an increasing ability to concentrate and sit quietly when appropriate. They demonstrate confidence when singing a familiar nursery rhyme in front of a small group of their friends. Children listen to stories with increasing enjoyment, and select big books, which they share with a friend. Children are not actively encouraged to attempt

writing or make marks, for example when labelling their work. Text on furniture and displays throughout the nursery, increases children's awareness of letter shape.

Children use counting when playing independently. They count five cars on the road they have made, demonstrating their understanding of number order. Children use language to describe colour and size when using the compare bears. More able children do not have regular opportunities to compare numbers and apply their developing mathematical skills to solve simple problems.

Children show interest in construction equipment and select from the resources to build. They take part in some activities to explore nature. For example, the children visited the "zoo lab", and had the opportunity to see, touch and hold unusual animals such as snakes and stick insects. There are few opportunities for them to develop technological skills. They have access to a computer only in the term before they go to school, and equipment such as remote control cars are broken. Children are unable to fully develop their own creativity, as they have infrequent access to free painting or designing. They take part in creative activities, but these are often very adult led and children are expected to produce a pre-defined end product. There is limited access to role play resources, which staff state is due to the minimal available space. This limits children's ability to use their imaginations and act out their own experiences.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's awareness of diversity and the wider world is promoted adequately through the provision of some resources that offer positive images of diversity. Children engage in some activities that increase their understanding of culture and religion. For example, activities are planned for later this month to celebrate and learn about the Chinese New Year.

Information is gained from parents regarding the individual needs of each child and family. Important information is recorded to ensure needs are respected. There is a list in the kitchen of children who have food intolerances or allergies. However, this is incomplete and does not include all the children's names. This compromises children's health and well being.

Children's behaviour is satisfactory. They appear to understand the expectations and boundaries within the setting, and staff remain consistent in their approach. Staff use praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour. Children are encouraged to be polite and are starting to show respect for each other. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They are confident within the setting, and feel happy to discuss their child's needs with staff. They have opportunities to discuss their child's progress and development in detail twice a year, at the arranged parents meetings. Parents are provided with a prospectus when their child first starts at the nursery. This provides them with some information about the setting. They are made aware of policies within the parents policy book, however, this

does not include all the policies that parents need to be aware of. Parents of pre-school children are provided with information about the foundation stage curriculum. This helps them to understand the different areas of learning that the children will cover. However, they are informed about topics, but have little access to information on daily planned activities. This prevents them from being able to follow through activities with their child at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Staff deployment and use of space is ineffective as children arrive in the morning. This means children are put at risk, and have limited space to play. There is no planning in place for the first part of the session for any of the children, which means that children are bored and their needs are not met at this time. Children benefit from being cared for by staff and students who have completed a sufficiently detailed induction procedure. Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are generally effective.

Policies and procedures are not used effectively to support the children's care and well-being. Some policies are available, however, they fail to include required policies on the action to be taken if a child is uncollected or lost. This means that staff and parents would be unaware of the procedure to be followed. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

The system for registering staff and children's attendance is organised successfully. This ensures an accurate record is available at all times, helping to maintain children's safety. Personal documents relating to individual children are kept in the office, to ensure confidentiality can be assured.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Staff meetings are organised monthly, which enables staff to share skills and practice. They take part in some in-house training to increase their knowledge in particular areas. For example, they looked recently at the Birth to three framework. However, this has had little impact on the care offered to the younger children.

Planning of activities is ineffective in offering children appropriate challenge. The main responsibility for planning lies with one person. Other staff do not contribute or make the staff member aware of their key children's development needs. Staffing within the rooms changes regularly. Staff do not always have a full understanding of their roles and are therefore unable to support children's learning effectively. For example, at times, staff are unsure of what the planned activity is for the older children, and are unaware of the learning intention.

To benefit the children, support is sought from the external agencies such as the local authority, to advise staff on areas such as planning. However, staff or managers do not allow time to evaluate their own practice or what they are offering to the children. This has meant they have not identified the weaknesses within the provision for nursery education.

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

Since the last inspection, the setting have re-arranged the toilet area. There is now the ability to offer additional privacy for those children who require it. They have reviewed policies including child protection, complaints and equal opportunities, to ensure they adhere to requirements. However, policies remain incomplete. Additional consents have been sought from parents, which means that in the event of an emergency, advice or treatment could be sought for a child quickly. Parents are made aware of the arrangements for re-heating babies bottles, to make sure they are in agreement with the methods used. Temperature probes are available to test the temperature of baby foods, however, this is not the only method used, which means children's health is not protected in this area.

The setting have reviewed their planning to ensure it covers all areas of learning, however, there continues to be weaknesses within the assessments and planning systems, which means children aren't always challenged appropriately. Books are available to the children most of the time, which allows them to select and enjoy books for themselves. There remains limited opportunities for children to solve simple mathematical problems, when they are engaged in practical activities.

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

Since the last inspection, Ofsted has received one complaint about this provider relating to Standard 1: Suitable person, Standard 2: Organisation, Standard 3: Care learning and Play, Standard 6: Safety, Standard 7: Health, Standard 8: Food and drink and Standard 9: Equal opportunities.

The complainant raised concerns over several different issues, including staffing ratios and qualifications, arrangements when children refuse their dinner, safety regarding unprotected radiators, the hygiene practices followed regarding food preparation and the reheating of foods. It also concerned hygiene when changing nappies, inappropriate expectations according to the ages of children, the celebrating of religious and cultural festivals, and the arrangements for cleaning the nursery at the end of the day.

Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit in January 2005. As a result of this visit, three recommendations were made. These were to improve methods used to check the temperature of re-heated baby food, to review the equal opportunities policy, and to ensure parents are aware of the arrangements for heating bottles of babies milk. No further action was taken, the provider has addressed the recommendations to a satisfactory standard and therefore 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure minimum staffing ratios are adhered to, to maintain children's safety
- ensure all policies are in place and are made available to staff and parents, with particular reference to a lost or uncollected child

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

### 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):

- review the use of assessments and planning to ensure activities offered are stimulating and challenging to each individual child
- develop systems to monitor the provision, to improve nursery education.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)