



## Toad Hall Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY273595
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 April 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Felicity Gaff / Teresa Colburn
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<b>Registered person</b>	Careroom 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 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?

Toad Hall Nursery is one of sixteen nurseries run by Careroom Ltd. It opened in 2005 and operates from a large detached house in the centre of Horley in Surrey. A maximum of 53 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children have access to secure outdoor play areas.

There are currently 50 children aged from 3 months to under 5 years on roll. Of these

18 children receive funding for nursery education. Children are drawn from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports a number of children with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 staff. Of these, 10 hold relevant early years qualifications and 1 other is working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is suitably promoted because they learn good personal hygiene habits. For example, staff provide effective teaching, reminders and personal example so that children learn how and why they need to wash their hands. Two-year-old children confidently help themselves to readily accessible tissues, blow their own noses and dispose of the tissue appropriately. Most children enjoy adequate opportunities for active physical play out of doors every day. However, staff do not ensure that babies go outside regularly which limits their opportunities to explore their environment. Children's well-being is enhanced because there are suitable systems for them to rest and sleep, adapted to their individual needs. However, the organisation of nap time in the pre-school room fails to meet the needs of all the children, as it prevents other children using resources such as the home corner. There are effective systems in place for recording minor accidents or any medication administered, and ensuring parents are kept fully informed. Children enjoy sharing healthy choices at snack time; they enjoy a suitable menu of attractively presented meals which are prepared on the premises from fresh ingredients. Staff make sure that individual dietary requirements are met. Most areas of the nursery are maintained to a satisfactory standard and all the walls have been freshly painted to enhance the children's environment. However, staff in the pre-school do not use established routines to monitor the condition and cleanliness of the children's surroundings effectively and do not always notice when action is needed. Staff in the baby room protect children's well-being by acting promptly and effectively to minimise identified weaknesses.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in welcoming and generally safe and secure premises. Playrooms are bright and freshly decorated with generally suitable furniture and equipment. Staff do not always know when replacement equipment has been obtained and sometimes continue to use worn resources unnecessarily. Although toys and play materials are stored in low, accessible storage units, these are not clearly labelled with pictures of the contents. Consequently, children do not routinely select their own play resources. The provider has identified where furniture requires replacing in order to improve the environment for the children and is addressing this.

Staff in the pre-school do not consistently follow the established procedures to monitor and minimise risks to children on the premises. As a result, hazards are not always identified and addressed sufficiently promptly. Children are well protected from unvetted persons because staff use the CCTV system effectively and the details of all visitors are recorded clearly. Staff are very aware of child protection issues and fully understand how to protect children by recording and reporting any concerns. Children's safety is enhanced by effective fire safety procedures. The nursery has good contingency plans for how they would care for the children should they have to leave the premises in an emergency. There is a comprehensive evacuation bag, fully equipped to meet children's needs should they have to be taken to a place of safety.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual development is satisfactory overall because they are cared for by qualified staff who generally understand and meet their needs well. Children are secure, confident and at ease because they form stable relationships with consistent, trusted adults. Staff caring for babies and toddlers make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and provide children with imaginative and absorbing, age-appropriate play experiences. For example, toddlers relish covering themselves with paint; they are intrigued by exploring the properties of glue and playing with bowls of tepid and icy water. Babies delight in one-to-one activities such as peek-a-boo and sharing books with their key workers. As a result children develop their social skills well and begin to form satisfying friendships with each other. They are able to persevere at achieving challenging tasks such as learning to put on their own coats. Toddlers take great pleasure in discovering things for themselves, for example, as they dig for worms in the garden. However, the lack of regular outdoor play for babies limits their opportunity to find out about the world around them.

### **NURSERY EDUCATION**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a basic understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan activities to cover all areas of learning over time. They recognise that children make progress at different rates according to their age and stage of development. However, plans are minimal; they do not identify how activities will be presented or what children are expected to learn. Focus activities are often highly adult-directed and children rarely explore the areas of learning for themselves through carefully constructed, first-hand play opportunities. Staff compile comprehensive scrap books of what children do. However, these are not linked sufficiently closely to the stepping stones and observations are not used to plan future play activities. As a result children do not make consistent progress in all areas of learning.

Children are confident and at ease in the setting and play harmoniously together. Children discuss what they are doing and share their ideas confidently, for example, as they compare the colours of the paint they are using for traffic lights. Staff use praise and encouragement well to build children's self-esteem. Children learn to

count confidently to 10 and beyond. Staff make some use of incidental opportunities to develop children's mathematical understanding, for example, by calculating the numbers of plates and chairs needed at snack time. However, they have not made this a consistent aspect of nursery routine and therefore they overlook many opportunities to relate children's knowledge about numbers to real life experiences.

Children develop their listening and speaking skills as they share age-appropriate stories. They listen with interest, discuss illustrations and predict what will happen next. Staff often ask them to complete formal handwriting tasks before they have the necessary fine motor skills so children sometimes acquire habits they will later need to unlearn. They are unable to develop their reading and writing skills for real purposes as staff do not provide resources such as recipe books, calendars, diaries, shopping lists and magazines in the home corner. Children delight in participating in well-delivered group activities such as 'Going on a bear hunt'. Staff use the activity skilfully to introduce expressive language such as 'swirling snow storm' and reinforce mathematical ideas such as 'through', 'under' and 'over'. Children make appropriate use of the outdoor area for vigorous physical activity every day. Plans are often very brief and staff do not identify clearly how planned activities will be used to help them develop their skills. Children develop good fine motor skills, for example, as they competently thread pasta shapes to make necklaces.

Children enjoy a generally adequate range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world and to respond to it creatively. They begin to learn about technology as they use suitable programs on the computer although this is not available for the children to use every day. Although staff plan some suitable activities for children to learn from first-hand experience they do not always do so in sufficient detail. For example, children were asked to draw and make models of minibeasts before they had had the chance to find and watch any in the garden. An activity planned to encourage children to explore and experiment with paint was insufficiently resourced to allow them to do so. Consequently, children do not always make sufficient progress in their learning.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel welcome and develop a sense of self-worth because staff work effectively with their parents to ensure their individual needs are known and met. Staff know about children's home languages and actively encourage their use. For example, in the baby room the welcome sign is translated into families' home languages. Staff learn and use key words and reassure parents that their children will benefit from bilingualism. Children learn to respect and value cultural differences as they celebrate the diversity of modern Britain by marking festivals from a wide range of traditions. Staff provide positive role models and children reflect this in their dealings with each other. Staff have realistic expectations and recognise that toddlers do not automatically know how to behave but need to learn what is acceptable. They intervene calmly and effectively to resolve conflicts, for instance, when toddlers squabble over a toy. Consequently, children learn to form friendships and cooperate with each other. However, staff in the pre-school do not always deal with unwanted

behaviour consistently and give children insufficiently clear guidance on what is acceptable. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The provider has appropriate awareness of how to anticipate provision for special needs and the nursery development plan includes an assessment sheet covering disability issues such as access. Following recent staff changes the provider has appointed a new coordinator of special educational needs (SENCO) and has organised appropriate training. Although staff understand how to refer children about whom they have concerns for assessment, they sometimes keep insufficiently detailed records. This limits how well they can trace children's development and liaise with parents. They have a narrow interpretation of special needs which means some children receive limited support.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive clear information about the setting before their children attend and staff invite them to share sufficient information to enable them to meet individual needs well. They are kept informed about the setting and about the care and education their children receive because the staff display a wealth of good quality notices and photographs. Staff provide very good opportunities to exchange information with parents informally every day on arrival or departure. They also provide detailed two-way communication books for babies and informative daily sheets for toddlers. There are regular formal arrangements for parents to meet children's key workers to discuss their progress which are arranged to fit in with their working patterns.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The owners establish clear, comprehensive policies and procedures to support children's welfare and learning. They maintain all the required documentation well and ensure children's personal details are stored securely to maintain confidentiality. The provider takes decisive and generally effective action to improve areas of weakness. Children are protected because there are effective systems in place to ensure staff are suitable and that they continue to be so. The provider and nursery manager take decisive action to address concerns affecting children's safety promptly. Effective staff deployment ensures children are cared for by consistent staff with a high adult:child ratio. Staff feel that the changes put in place since the previous inspection have led to children being happier, busier and eating more healthily. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The nursery manager is aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the setting. She identifies staff training needs and ensures staff are able to access it. She provides in-house support and training to help staff develop their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. However, the day-to-day organisation of nursery education is weak. The room leader lacks understanding of how children learn and provides insufficient leadership to her staff to ensure all children make consistent progress in all areas of learning.

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

At the last inspection the provider agreed to improve the way children are grouped, to improve staff's understanding of early years practice, and to ensure staff working with children aged less than 2-years are able to provide activities appropriate to their developmental needs. The provider also agreed to improve the nursery education by improving the condition of the play materials and resources used by funded children.

The care of children has been improved because they are now suitably grouped according to their ages and developmental needs. Staff have a better understanding of early years practice because they have attended training and are familiar with the setting's policies and procedures. Staff have undertaken training in 'Birth to three matters' and now provide age-appropriate activities which meet the needs of babies and toddlers. Play materials and resources for funded children are being renewed so that funded children benefit from good quality play opportunities to support their learning.

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004. 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.

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## **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 high standards of cleanliness are maintained in all areas of the nursery throughout the day
- ensure that all children, including babies, can play outside every day
- ensure all staff know how to assess, record and report hazards on the premises to ensure they are promptly addressed.

## **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):

- provide a stimulating learning environment so that children can choose from a rich variety of first-hand play experiences that challenge and excite them to learn, and that allow them to make decisions, plan, experiment and learn from their mistakes
- develop planning and recording systems to provide an effective tool that is clear, concise and quick to complete
- ensure all staff delivering the Foundation Stage have sufficient knowledge and understanding of how young children learn.

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