



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY239470

DfES Number: 546231

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	23/09/2004
Inspector Name	Margaret Coyne

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Toad Hall Nursery
Setting Address	23-25 Bury Mead Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1RT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Carerom Ltd 03614275
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Carerom Ltd
Address	3rd Floor, Wembley Point 1 Harrow Road Wembley Middlesex HA9 6DE

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Toad Hall Nursery opened in 2002. The nursery is part of a chain of nurseries which operate under the company name of Care Room limited. The nursery operates from a spacious building over two floors with six main rooms for the children. There are also toilets, a kitchen, and office, and indoor garden room. The nursery have access to a spacious, fully enclosed outdoor area. Toad Hall nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 65 children from 3 months to 5 years on roll. This includes 6 funded three year olds and 5 funded four year olds. The group offers support for any child with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open five days a week all year round, closing only for public holidays and one week at Christmas. The nursery operates from 8.00 until 18.00. Children attend both full time and part time.

There are 15 members of staff working directly with the children, 5 of whom are part time or bank staff. Over half the staff have an early years qualification. Currently 3 members of staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification.

The school receives support from an early years teacher and a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Toad Hall Day Nursery provides a good standard of care for children. All aspects of the provision are well organised and staff are deployed effectively. Staff have a high regard to the policies and procedures that they implement consistently. The nursery continually monitors its practice to maintain a high level of care. They have recently introduced the Birth to Three Matters program and finds this helps focus staff on the care and development of children under three. High priority is given to children's health and safety throughout the nursery. However care should be taken to ensure all fire safety doors close securely and babies bottles are clearly identified.

There are effective key worker systems throughout the nursery. These enable staff to establish supportive relationships with children and parents. In all areas staff plan a stimulating range of activities which the children happily take part in. They play confidently, independently and with support. There is a wide range and balance of stimulating and challenging toys and equipment for children to access. Children's imaginations, independence and sensory development is given high regard. Good use is made of the garden and the children have a range of outdoor equipment to access. Meals at the nursery are of high quality, the menu is varied and nutritious with a vegetarian choice. Children are very well behaved and respond positively to direction from staff. They know what is expected of them and are aware of the boundaries.

The nursery has developed a supportive partnership with parents and carers. They are kept informed of their child's progress through daily communication sheets and have access to their child's records at open evenings or by request. Staff are approachable and friendly, sharing information verbally with parents each day. Parents are invited to complete questionnaires and the feedback from these is used to implement any changes.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable

What is being done well?

- The management of the day nursery, with effective use of the policies and procedures and the staff deployment to ensure children have a consistent approach to their care. High regard is given to the development of the practise and the efficient use of all records and documentation.
- The range of interesting and stimulating activities, toys and equipment, particularly in the role play, sensory areas and creative development. Good use is made of treasure baskets and heuristic play for younger children. Children are involved and can access all activities both independently and with a high level of support from staff.
- Children relate well to each other and staff. They play happily alone or in small groups. Children are confident and their feelings of security are well fostered by staff. Staff respond to children's interests and give praise and encouragement at all times. Behaviour is very good as children are occupied and stimulated throughout the day. Children's independence skills are well fostered by staff at all levels.
- The staff display the children's creative work well, through wall displays with good use of labelling. Some work is displayed at the children's level which gives the children a sense of pride and self-esteem for their achievements.

What needs to be improved?

- safety, with regard to the fire doors and identification of babies bottles.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
6	Meet any recommendations made by the Fire Safety Officer (in this case ensuring all fire doors close securely)
8	Ensure all babies bottles are clearly indentified.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Toad Hall Day Nursery is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is very good. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and use effective direction for children to encourage them to think for themselves and be self-motivated. The staff work directly with the children and provide a good balance between structured learning and child led play. However staff do not encourage children to develop an interest in books. There is an excellent range of resources available to provide children with exciting, stimulating and challenging opportunities to learn. Children are very well behaved and staff have high expectations for good manners and self control.

A thorough assessment system is used to record children's progress through the stepping-stones. Assessments are used to set future planning and targets for children. Comprehensive plans are in place that cover all areas of the early learning goals. These are evaluated to ensure they meet the educational needs of the children. There are good systems in place to provide support for children with special educational needs.

Leadership and management is very good. The nursery benefits from a strong and enthusiastic manager who works closely with a dedicated team of staff. Staff are supportive of each other and work well together in providing a positive learning environment for children. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the practise.

Partnerships with parents and carers are very good. Parents are welcomed into the group and are provided with information both verbal and written. Parents have access to children's development and achievement records and are encouraged to extend learning at home. They attend open evenings and are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of their child's learning.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority which helps children to gain in confidence and foster feelings of security. Staff display children's work well, some at the child's height which develops their self-esteem and confidence. Staff interact well with children giving them opportunities to become self-motivated and responsible. Their independence skills are excellent as they serve themselves at snack and meal times, access activities and take care of personal hygiene.
- Use of resources and space is excellent. High quality equipment and toys are in place to promote learning and challenge the children in all areas. The use of the role play and sensory areas are excellent. Staff adapt these to provide

different life experiences for the children such as trains, shops, travel agents in line with the theme in the room. The sensory areas are well supported by staff as they provide opportunity for children to explore and investigate using their senses to discover different textures, smells, techniques to apply and mix paints and to mix sand and water.

- Children are confident speakers and listeners, staff develop children's confidence to speak as part of the group and in smaller peer groups. Staff have effective questioning skills which encourage the children to think for themselves. Children take turns to talk and interact well developing good conversation skills when playing. They listen well to others and concentrate during story time.
- Children use mathematical equipment confidently. Staff support children in activities allowing them opportunities to develop and discover mathematical knowledge for themselves. They are well supported in all areas and have a sound understanding of a variety of different mathematical concepts.

What needs to be improved?

- There are no significant key issues identified at this inspection, but the following point for development should be considered in the action plan.
- the development of children's interest in books.

What has improved since the last inspection?

not applicable

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children form good relationships with peers and adults. They make independent choices and work confidently seeking support when needed. Their concentration levels are high as they become absorbed in activities. They share resources and behaviour is very good, due, in part, to the stimulating choice of activities on offer. Children are secure and confident, reinforced by staff with constant praise and encouragement. Their independence skills are adept as they serve themselves at meal times.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident speakers as they join in activities including sand and water play and role-play. Staff skilfully extend children's vocabulary as they interact during play. They listen well during stories and to instruction about activities. Their writing skills are well fostered by staff as they encourage them to write and make marks in structured and free play activities, such as the travel agents. However staff do not encourage children to access the books to read for enjoyment.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use numbers for counting and most children count to ten and beyond. They access a range of equipment to count, compare size, shapes and weight and understand simple calculation. Staff introduce children to a wide range of mathematical language i.e. short, tall, heavy, light and mathematical concepts through cooking and activities with sand and water. Children have a good understanding of shape and could create and match a range of shapes using magnetic shapes, boards and sorters.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's curiosity is developed through a range of activities. They discover the natural world, enjoying a mini beast hunt and draw a range of representational pictures of these. They discover how things work and change through experiments with magnets and cooking with chocolate. They access the computer independently and use a variety of programs. Children's awareness of different cultures and beliefs is well fostered through topics and activities i.e. harvest festivals around the world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use a range of equipment both inside and outside to develop large motor skills. They confidently climb, jump, peddle, balance and negotiate available space using the outdoor area and the indoor garden room. Children's dexterity is developed well they have good hand and eye coordination as they manipulate small objects and use one handed tools. They pour sand and water, hang socks on the line and use magnetic shapes with boards and post boxes. Children carry scissors and tools safely.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children imitate life experiences in role-play which is often theme based. They make two and three-dimensional models using a range of techniques. Staff encourage children to use their own ideas and support their play well. Children enjoy the sensory area where they experience a range of activities i.e. jelly, sand, mint water and cornflour. They use musical instruments to express themselves and discover different sounds. Children use imaginations to create and their work is well displayed.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- The opportunities and encouragement provided by staff to develop children's enjoyment and interest in books.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.