

# Towcester Scout Hall Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 219963  
**Inspection date** 13/10/2010  
**Inspector** Susan Marriott

**Setting address** The Scout Hall, Baden Powell Crescent, Towcester,  
Northamptonshire, NN12 6DS

**Telephone number** 07980 525116

**Email**

**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## Description of the setting

Towcester Scout Hall Pre-School was registered in 1979. It is a committee run pre-school which operates from the scout hall in the town of Towcester. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to provide a maximum of 26 places for children in the early years age group aged from two to five years. The pre-school is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The children have access to a secure enclosed outside play area.

The pre-school is open on weekday mornings during term-time only, from 9am until 11.30am. There is an optional lunch club facility on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 11.30am to 12.45pm. There are currently 34 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, nine children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school has experience of supporting a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language. There are five members of staff of whom, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

This is a very friendly and inclusive setting where the experienced and established staff team work conscientiously to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff sustain generally good quality interaction with children to draw learning from play and promote positive attitudes to learning. Children make sound progress in their learning and development although observation and assessment systems are currently being refined and some planned activities lack challenge for the older or more able children. Many aspects of children's welfare are promoted well and there are good partnerships with parents and carers. Competent and capable leadership and generally effective self-evaluation secures the pre-school's positive capacity for continuous improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve the system for recording the arrival and departure times of visitors
- improve the frequency of fire drill practice
- develop the use of information gathered from parents to establish a starting point on entry.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children's welfare is promoted well as the pre-school has effective safeguarding procedures. Staff attend regular training and review their procedures to ensure that they keep up-to-date with this area of work. Appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Regular risk assessments and daily checks are appropriately recorded and ensure that hazards are minimised. Good daily practice, such as ongoing explanations from staff, reinforces children's understanding of safety issues. For example, children are reminded that running about indoors may cause accidents. However, minor weaknesses in health and safety practices potentially compromise the safety of children and staff. Fire drill records show that practices are insufficiently frequent. Although the identity of visitors is checked and a record of the visit is kept, times of arrival and departure are not recorded appropriately.

Available resources are used well. Management is committed to funding training to update staff knowledge and has a considered approach to change, steadily introducing improvements to the service through satisfactory self-evaluation in consultation with staff, parents and the advisory services. Staff hold appropriate levels of qualification and work very well as a team, helping to create a positive environment where children feel secure and happy. Staff have a clear understanding of anti-discrimination, enabling them to implement appropriate policies and provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They work with parents and carers to ensure that they understand each child's background and culture and are therefore able to meet their needs and promote children's awareness of individuality.

Parents receive thorough information about the setting and their children's progress, for example, through newsletters, daily talks with staff and review meetings with their child's key person. Staff observe each child at play in order to understand and support their individual well-being and development, enabling each key person and family to work together. The staff are alert to the early signs of needs of the children that could lead to later difficulties. They respond quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as necessary, to promote consistent and appropriate care for children.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children experience an enjoyable programme of learning and development at Towcester Scout Hall Pre-school. They are generally well-supported by the friendly and caring staff who work hard to meet their individual needs. The daily routine supports effective learning. For example, children learn to recognise their names as they self-register on arrival and read the name cards to identify their personal chair. Children's enjoyment is enhanced and their learning is effectively extended because staff join in appropriately with their play and discussions. For example, a

member of staff notices children playing with dolls and engages them in discussion by asking how the potty training is going and why the doll might be crying. Staff speak clearly and calmly at all times, asking open questions and continually extending children's understanding. They acknowledge children's achievements with praise and actively promote children's independence. They include teaching about colours and counting in their commentary so that children learn effectively through play-based activities. Group activities and songs contribute positively to the quality of the provision.

The learning environment promotes children's progression towards the early learning goals. The space inside the premises is bright and thoughtfully set out, with chairs being used to create play areas which reflect the six areas of learning, whilst the outside play area is used regularly to provide additional play opportunities for the children. Play and exploration is generally planned and purposeful and takes place both indoors and outdoors, with a balance of adult-led and child-led activities that results in children being active learners. The supervisor draws upon support from staff engaged in current professional studies to further improve the outcomes for children and is refining the planning, observation and assessment system. However, the learning programme sometimes lacks challenge for older/more able children and sufficient focus to secure children's progress. Staff clearly spend a lot of time and effort completing a detailed weekly planning sheet but identified learning intentions are not sufficiently matched to the criteria in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means that some adult-led focus activities are planned with inappropriately low expectations of children's capabilities. Staff observe children as they play and record comments under the six areas of learning in the children's folders. Commendably, staff have already identified that their previous recording format was not helping them to move children's learning forward. They have introduced a new format this term in an effort to address this. However, this information is not sufficiently linked to the language of the Early Years Foundation Stage to guide and support staff in identifying the next steps in learning. Therefore, the new system is not yet fully effective in actively moving the children's progress forward. Although staff members gather some basic information from parents and carers when children join the pre-school, this does not contribute towards a useful baseline assessment from which to measure children's progress.

A well-organised rolling snack time provides some good opportunities for children and adults to interact in small groups. Staff maximise the learning opportunities for promoting children's independence and discussion about healthy eating. For example, children pour their own drinks and make choices about what foods they will eat.

Children's behaviour is managed well by the staff and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and particular individual needs. Children learn about the relevance of healthy lifestyles and develop skills for the future as they become independent, share ideas and work together. For example, staff encourage children to try to fasten their own coats rather than doing the task for them. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are offered opportunities to talk about themselves, their families and recent experiences.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met