

Toad Hall Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Linda Coccia

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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

Toad Hall Nursery is one of 51 nurseries owned by Just Learning Ltd. It opened in 1996. The nursery operates from the ground floor and lower ground floor of a large house in Maidstone. A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 8.00am to 6.00pm for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 59 children aged from six months to under five years on roll. They all fall within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children aged three and four years receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and have procedures in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 13 staff. There are 12 staff, including the manager, who hold appropriate early years qualifications between National Vocation Qualification levels two and four. There is one member of staff working towards a recognised child care qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery offers good quality care for children. The procedures used to support children and parents who speak English as an additional language are outstanding. The manager has addressed recommendations made at the last inspection and has made further enhancements. This shows that the nursery is able to maintain continuous improvement. Overall, children's needs are being met well.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen the processes for observational assessments in the setting - recognising how these processes can extend effective practice and help improve the outcomes for every child.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and her competent staff team are good at ensuring the nursery is organised efficiently. They implement the company policies well to ensure the

children receive the individual care they require. The safeguarding procedures are known to all staff who regularly update their knowledge of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. All staff hold current Criminal Record Bureau checks; details are held at the nursery. Some safeguarding procedures used by staff are exemplary. For example, each room has its own evacuation bag which is used during the monthly drills. This means that children participate in well executed evacuation drills and allows them the opportunity to get to know the procedures well and keep themselves safe in an emergency. Risk assessments are regularly carried out by the manager and the staff and appropriate safety equipment is in place throughout the building. All regulatory paperwork is well maintained. The procedures used ensure children's well being is promoted. A good evaluation of the service is conducted by the manager on a regular basis. The staff are able to review their own practice and their findings are included in the evaluation. Through regular staff meetings and discussions about the evaluations the manager is able to compile her targets for improvement. Previous improvements, such as, providing more messy play in the baby room have allowed the children to investigate more sensory aspects of their play. Children have benefitted from evaluation and improvements because they have more activities to explore and investigate. The nursery's use of resources is outstanding. All staff are valued by the manager. This is reflected in the autonomy that staff have regarding the use of toys and equipment in their rooms to benefit the individual children being looked after in each. Staff are greatly encouraged in their professional development and can book themselves on to work shops and courses. The range of toys and equipment, and the way children are individually allowed to use them is also exemplary. Through the use of self initiated play children make excellent use of resources.

The excellent use of equality and diversity procedures are immediately apparent in the nursery. Due to the high numbers of children attending who speak English as an additional language staff have become extremely proficient in using words from children's individual home languages. Currently there are children from Russia, Poland, Germany, Holland and Latvia attending. Posters and labels reflect the wealth of different languages used. The staff also proficiently promotes the use of timelines and picture prompts to communicate with the children. The support extends to those parents who also do not speak English. The manager has a speaking pen which translates key words and sentences into a variety of languages. She also has access to the Kent County Council translated documents service. Some staff speak other languages themselves. Therefore, the excellent use of procedures allows children who speak English as an additional language immediate and positive communication with staff. The nursery also has a qualified, experienced Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. There are currently no children attending with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery has good procedures in place to allow staff to access additional services from other health and welfare professionals. They also foster good links with other carers, such as, foster carers, grandparents, childminders and other care provisions by allowing parents to share the children's learning journey record with them and allowing them to comment in them if they want. In this way the partnership working ensures that children are supported well. The procedures used by staff to engage with parents are outstanding. The manager sees the importance of helping parent's to understand how the nursery operates and that their children are treated as individuals. Parent's anxieties are treated seriously and staff do all that

they can to allay their fears. For example, new children are regularly photographed during their first few days of settling in so that parents can see children are happy even though they may cry when they leave. This has been particularly effective for parents who have little English and are unable to have a full discussion about the settling in process. Parents have excellent verbal exchanges with staff each day allowing staff to modify procedures for each child's needs. Therefore, due to these discussions, children receive excellent consistent care.

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

The nursery provides a welcoming, homely atmosphere for children and their parents. The settling in procedures are exemplary. Procedures encourage parent participation and there are no limits to the amount of time spent on pre-visits. Staff do all they can to prepare for new children starting and this is reflected in how quickly many of the children settle. For example, staff spend time discussing children's likes and abilities with their parents in order to plan initial activities. In many instances the children themselves indicate to parents they are ready to be left. They happily wave goodbye. This shows that children show they feel safe in the setting, not only through their body language but their eagerness to stay and play for extended periods.

Children have a good time at the nursery. All children enjoy messy play activities using activities such as jelly play. During the recent snowy period the older children collected the snow from the garden in trays for the babies and toddlers to use indoors. Their pictures and drawings are displayed throughout the nursery. They show a variety of craft mediums used by children. The rooms provide good amounts of free floor space which children use well. They can make dens using portable play frames decorated with different backdrops. This helps them to utilise other play equipment as they select items to make a doctor's surgery or shop. The boys particularly enjoy hero play in their dens. Children have access to and effectively use microscopes, torches, recording equipment and the computer which is always available in the pre-school room. They happily snap away with the child friendly digital camera. The pictures they take are displayed on the digital photo frame situated in the entrance area. They have cosy book areas where they enjoy being read stories by staff or look at the pictures for themselves, sometimes with friends. Most toys are at low level and children can self select. This develops their decision making skills as children choose what to play with. There are opportunities for physical play both inside and outdoors. The ranges of skills that children master as they play are good and will be of benefit to them in the future. Children make good use of the toys and equipment because they are readily available. The children are observed as they play. The observations contain good assessment of the children's abilities and the summative assessments contain instances of children's achievements. They identify the children's next steps which are progressed into the good activity plans for each week. The activity planning clearly shows which children are targeted for the various activities each week. Parents can also choose to identify children's next steps from their home observations. The records show that the majority of children are making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals within the limits of their age and stage of development.

However, because observation and assessment is focused on each individual area of learning and not cross referenced to the other areas when applicable, children's individual levels of progress may not be as accurate as indicated in the records and could be significantly higher. This means that children's individual achievements are not always acknowledged in the observation records when they happen.

Children are offered an excellent range of meals and snacks which are exceptionally healthy and nutritious. The nursery uses a meals delivery service which provides a very varied, three week menu. It consists of cooked food as well as prepared uncooked vegetables and fruit allowing the children to experience different food textures when they eat. The older children are confident enough to serve themselves their meals. Inside and outdoors they access water using their own water bottles outdoors. They can pour their own drinks. They use the nursery's excellent hygiene procedures and are proficient in self care.

Extensive hygiene procedures are in place for the babies and toddlers which the staff implements implicitly. The children can use the outdoor play space all year round and can choose to free flow out into it when they want. The garden offers some excellent physical play facilities. The ground is soft flooring allowing the children to take some risks whilst playing on the climbing frame. The children use the play house exceptionally well as it affords them a den-like atmosphere where they can read books or role play. The children have an excellent interest in the wildlife that visits the garden, namely Cyril the Squirrel and his friends Susan and Stephen. They put out food for them every day and take photographs of their antics in the trees. They use magnifying glasses and bug boxes to examine mini-beasts and create projects from their findings. Each year they are involved in planting and caring for an exceptional range of vegetables and fruit from Logan berries to Pumpkins.

The children sampled them and were helped to develop the links between produce and shops. Children adopt a healthy lifestyle because the procedures used by staff are outstanding in promoting healthy eating and active play. Children make a good contribution to the setting. They are able to make their views known to staff and are confident in talking to visitors. They know the rules and can act upon them. They are helpful at tidy up time and live up to staff expectations. Because staff challenge the children about safety issues the children can talk about the nursery's rules and how to keep themselves and other's safe.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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