

Toad Hall Nursery

23-25 Bury Mead Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1RT



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

13 August 2015

28 February 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Outstanding	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Practitioners promote children's speaking and listening skills particularly well. They use the knowledge gained at training sessions very effectively to enhance these experiences for children.
- Practitioners gather plenty of very useful information about children's interests at home and in the nursery. They use this extremely successfully to support children's learning through play. The group rooms are full of activities and experiences that promote children's desire to explore and experiment.
- Practitioners effectively monitor children's progress from their individual starting points. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, are making good progress towards the early learning goals.
- Behaviour is excellent throughout the nursery. Practitioners are highly effective role models. They manage potentially challenging situations well. Children are quickly learning to express themselves in a positive way and to seek the support of practitioners to help them resolve any difficulties.
- Robust recruitment procedures and a thorough induction programme contributes significantly to ensuring practitioners have the appropriate skills, potential and willingness to develop these even further.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- There are some occasions where a small number of practitioners do not make the most of the opportunities to sustain children's learning or consistently expect the most from them.
- Practitioners do not always offer children as many opportunities to explore all aspects of learning in the outdoor areas.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- enhance the use of all opportunities for children to sustain their learning and ensure that all staff have the highest expectations about what children can achieve, so that children's learning is accelerated
- extend opportunities for children who prefer to learn outdoors.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in each group room and the garden. She conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector, practitioners and children had wide-ranging discussions at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation relating to the management of the setting, including safeguarding, children's progress and self-evaluation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to at the inspection.
- The inspector checked the evidence of the suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children and the suitability of the committee members.

Inspector

Alison Reeves

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

The quality of teaching is good. Practitioners are skilled at including mathematics in a variety of situations. Children quickly develop skills that enable them to count, to group objects and to describe the size and shape of things they see. The most skilful practitioners promote children's early learning very effectively. Occasionally, practitioners interrupt children with questions when they are busy and engaged or offer them too much help. This limits children's chances to finish what they are doing for themselves. Children are good decision makers. They choose from a wide variety of experiences offered indoors, selecting the things that particularly spark their curiosity. The opportunities to fully explore all aspects of learning outdoors are sometimes less extensive. Children are well prepared for school. They have a positive attitude to learning and demonstrate good concentration skills. Children enjoy listening to stories and are eager participants. Practitioners make good use of their observations to plan for children's learning.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children is outstanding

Key-person working is highly effective. Relationships are very strong and this supports children in feeling confident and secure at nursery. Each key person has an exceptional understanding of children's individual needs, routines and stage of development. Children are rapidly acquiring independence skills appropriate to their age and stage. Children enjoy the opportunities for playing outdoors, gardening and caring for the nursery pets. Practitioners continue to enhance the outdoor areas and to provide children with plenty of fresh air and exercise. The carefully planned menus and rigorous monitoring of children's dietary needs contributes significantly to children developing a positive attitude towards food. Meals are social times where practitioners talk to children about food, health, hygiene and family life. The nursery has a number of very successful initiatives in place to promote children's health. The high-quality display materials offer a wealth of information about learning, childcare practice and local events.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision is good

Practitioners are well qualified and continuously put their training to good use. They understand the Early Years Foundation Stage. Practitioners have clearly defined roles and understand their responsibility to safeguard children. They take prompt action where there are concerns and use the appropriate local authority services for guidance and advice. Managers monitor the quality of the provision and use the regular programme of supervision effectively. This is having a very positive impact on enhancing the quality of teaching, especially for the youngest children. Successful evaluation of practice and target setting is helping practitioners to secure improvements. They regularly seek the views of parents and children. Parents speak very positively about the team of practitioners. They particularly value the support they receive in helping their children to settle in and the ongoing information about learning. Partnerships with other professionals are good. Practitioners work closely with the local children's centre and health professionals.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY239470
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	870064
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	107
Number of children on roll	189
Name of provider	Carerom Limited
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2011
Telephone number	01462 450354

Toad Hall Nursery was registered in 2002. The nursery employs 39 members of childcare staff. Of these, 31 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including one with Early Years Professional status and three with Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

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