



Toybox Day Nurseries Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY239643
Inspection date	26 January 2007
Inspector	Carol Mansell
Setting Address	Saxon Local Centre, Off Chambers Way, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, SG18 8AT
Telephone number	01767 313139
E-mail	toybox2.biggleswade@virgin.net
Registered person	Toybox Day Nurseries Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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.

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?

Toybox Day Nursery is one of two privately owned day care provisions. It was registered in October 2002 and operates from a purpose built facility in Biggleswade. The provision is registered for 142 children at any one time and is open each weekday from 07:00 until 19:00 all year round, except for bank holidays. The setting operates a breakfast club from 07.00 to 08.45, the after school provision operates from 15.30 to 19.00. The setting also operates a holiday playscheme which is open from 07.00 to 19.00 during all school holidays.

There are currently 137 children from eight weeks to five years on roll for day care and 30 children registered for the out of school facility with children attending aged from five to twelve years. There are 29 three-year-old and four four-year-old children who receive funding for nursery education. The provision currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and supports children with English as an additional language. The setting employs

43 staff, of these 34 work directly with the children, 22 of the staff including the nursery manager hold an appropriate early years qualification and two staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy as the staff ensure they have access to fresh air and exercise on a daily basis. Very young children are wrapped up warm in their pushchairs and taken outside for short periods. Older children recognise the need to wear 'our hats, gloves, scarves and boots' when they use the outdoor area. They understand the need to take off their boots when they come back inside and change into their indoor footwear. They are learning that this helps to keep the rooms clean and everyone healthy. Children benefit as staff have a clear awareness of maintaining the rooms at an adequate temperature as there are notices around the setting giving a clear indication of the optimum temperature. This helps to keep children healthy. All children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs. Staff check them regularly and complete a sleep chart so parents can recognise if sleep patterns are changing. This ensures the children's individual needs are met. Babies and toddlers are learning the importance of hand washing. Staff are good role models, adhering to strict hand-washing procedures themselves and making sure that even tiny babies have their hands washed. Children are learning the importance of using soap when they wash their hands before snack time, lunch time, after using the toilet and before participating in cooking activities. Children clean their teeth in the setting and recognise that this is an important part of their daily routine. The children understand and follow simple good health and hygiene practices which helps to keep them healthy. Children with additional health needs are safeguarded as staff have received appropriate training. They have written information from parents and provide continuity of care for the children. Staff record accidents, incidents and any medications administered. However, some medication records have not been signed by parents and written consent is not sought in line with the National Standards regarding emergency medical advice or treatment. This potentially compromises children's well-being.

Children are well nourished as they are provided with home-cooked meals on the premises and have healthy snacks each day. All staff have a clear awareness of children's health and dietary needs as there is a comprehensive system in place alerting staff to children's individual needs and this includes the kitchen staff. Babies and young children have their dietary needs met as the staff work in line with parents' wishes. Babies are safeguarded as staff follow strict guidelines regarding bottle feeds. Staff ensure that if a bottle feed is not used within appropriate timescales it is discarded and a fresh feed made. Provision is also made for parents who wish to breast feed their babies. This helps babies to stay healthy and well-nourished. Babies benefit, as the staff hold them close whilst bottle feeding. They make lots of eye contact and talk gently to the babies. This helps them to feel safe and secure. Children are encouraged to eat their meals. They are provided with the appropriate cutlery for their stage of development. Staff offer lots of praise and encouragement and support the children when needed. This helps children to build their independence skills. Older children are able to make independent choices at breakfast time and when attending the out of school provision. After school children are provided with

a range of bowls containing ham, cheese, celery, peppers, lettuce, grapes and carrot sticks, they are also offered a wide range of bread products. The children make their selections and sit with their friends as they eat. This enables them to make decisions and enhances their social skills. Children have access to drinks throughout the day. Staff generally encourage the children to pour their own drinks at meal times. This ensures the children do not become dehydrated.

Children use the outdoor area regularly throughout the day. Each age group is allocated a separate section of the outdoor space which helps to keep them safe. Many children use a variety of wheeled toys confidently. Staff offer appropriate support to the less confident children which helps to build their self-esteem and confidence. All children have ample room to run around and explore. They have access to a number of swings and boat swings as well as a wide range of bats, balls and other outdoor equipment. This helps to build their large physical skills. Children attending the out of school provision benefit as they work with a sports coach and participate in a wide range of activities, such as sports tournaments, cricket, football and swimming. This helps children to increase their physical skills and to stay healthy. Children participate in a wide variety of indoor activities. All children attending the nursery join in with the 'Tiny Mites' singing session. They enthusiastically join in with familiar songs and action rhymes. This helps them to learn to follow simple instructions and builds their self-confidence. Children participate in a variety of art and craft activities. They enjoy building with a wide range of construction toys. This helps them to build their creative skills and to refine their fine physical skills. Children in the after school provision vigorously play with the air hockey table and the skittles. They offer support to other children, helping them to improve their aim and knock down all of the skittles. This helps children to build harmonious relationships and to increase their confidence and self-esteem.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit, as the premises are secure and suitable for their purpose. The use of CCTV and a swipe card system ensures staff are aware of who is accessing the premises which helps to protect children from harm. Staff greet parents and children into a well lit and attractively decorated setting. They ensure children's work and information for parents is displayed attractively which helps to keep the parents informed about the setting and children recognise that their work is valued. Children use safe and suitable resources and equipment as staff check them regularly. Children alert the staff to any damaged or unclean items which helps them to stay safe. Children in the nursery have access to a wide range of resources and activities. Staff set out some resources and provide opportunities for the children to make independent choices from other toys and equipment that are suitable for their age and stage of development. However, resources in the after school club are not displayed effectively to allow children to make informed choices. This potentially hampers children's independence skills and does not encourage them to take an interest in what is available.

Children are safeguarded as staff check the temperature of the water, sleep room and the main play areas regularly to ensure they are maintained at an appropriate level. Staff encourage children to wear soft footwear indoors and are good role models, wearing slippers themselves. This helps to protect children from accidental injuries. Babies and young children are protected

from accidental injury as staff are very aware of those who need supporting with cushions and others who are able to sit unaided. This ensures children's individual developmental needs are met. Children understand the need to take care when participating in an art and craft activity. They recognise the need to be sensible when using the scissors 'because they are sharp'. This helps children to learn to keep themselves and others safe. Children are protected as staff conduct periodic fire drills. This helps children to understand the emergency evacuation procedures which ensures they stay safe. Children are generally protected as staff complete risk assessments on the premises and activities. However, some ice patches remain untreated when children are playing in the outdoor area. This potentially compromises children's welfare. Children attending the after school club are not always protected from harm as staff do not always take reasonable steps to minimise risks. They are unaware of children hiding in inappropriate places such as, under the electronic air hockey table and in the alcoves underneath or behind stacks of chairs. This compromises children's well-being.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff have appropriate policies and procedures in place and share these with parents. This ensures children are protected from abuse or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children participate in a variety of planned and spontaneous activities throughout the nursery provision. Babies and young children enjoy exploring the space around them and a range of familiar resources help them to feel safe and secure. Staff rotate the resources to ensure children remain interested and appropriately challenged. Babies and young children are cared for by staff who have a clear understanding of their developmental needs. Staff give lots of attention to the children. They sing to them and gently rock them if they become distressed. Staff are aware of new children who are still settling into the provision. They ensure the children can access a favourite toy or resource such as, the swing seat, which helps them to feel safe and secure. Young children enjoy exploring the wide range of resources available and move between the two rooms confidently. They benefit, as staff interact well with the children, they ask open-ended questions which helps the children to enhance their language development. Children eagerly participate in song time before they have their snacks. They patiently sit in a circle and wait for their turn to choose and play a musical instrument. They exchange smiles with the staff and other children as they choose either a quiet instrument or a noisy one. This helps children to make decisions and builds their self-confidence. Young children show an interest in what they are doing. They use their imagination well, making cups of tea and dinner for the staff and visitors. They take the dolls to the window and show them the garden explaining that later they can go outside to play football.

Older children enjoy using their initiative. They choose resources after breakfast time and seek out friends to join in their play. Children love to use the dressing up clothes, confidently choosing an outfit and putting it on themselves, seeking adult support if needed. This helps children to make positive relationships. Children enjoy exploring a variety of malleable materials. They show a great deal of curiosity and delight when mixing water and cornflour together. They

explore and experiment with it, pushing their fingers into it. They try and pick it up and watch in awe as it liquefies and cascades back into the tray. Children in the after school club have access to a range of suitable resources. Some children work well together helping other children to enhance their physical skills. Staff work with the children when playing with the skittles, maintaining their interest throughout the game. Some children choose a selection of art and craft resources and chatter happily as they sit at the table drawing and colouring. Staff display children's work around the setting which helps them to feel that their work is valued. This helps to build self-esteem and confidence. Children generally lack focus in the after school club. They have access to resources, however, these are not stored effectively to allow children to make their selections. Children enjoy playing with the construction toys and work collaboratively building their models. However, they lack other resources such as, dressing up clothes to allow them to further develop their imaginative skills.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage and provide a reasonable range of activities and experiences which generally cover the areas of learning and mostly meet the needs of individual children. However, teaching has some minor deficiencies. Staff miss opportunities to extend children's understanding as they do not answer questions readily. This limits the support that children receive to enable them to achieve as much as they can. Children are inquisitive and try to use their initiative. However, staff are not fully aware of what children are trying to do and this limits their ability to support children as independent learners. For example, children place a piece of ice in a sunny spot outside to see what happens. One member of staff discusses the possibilities with the children whilst another member of staff instructs other children to crush the ice.

Children sit happily in a circle after breakfast time and wait whilst the helpers place the photo cards and name cards in the centre of the circle. They wait patiently whilst staff instruct them to pick up their own cards using the phonic sounds to identify whose turn is next. When children move to the upstairs room they find their name cards and post them in the posting box. This helps children to recognise their own name and the initial sound of their name. Children bring in objects which are relevant to the letter of the week. For example, one child brings in a pot with some holly leaves and another brings in a toy hammer. Staff show the children the objects and give the children opportunities to name them. This helps the children to feel that their efforts are valued. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. They explain that the writing on the back of the cover is called 'the blurb'. This helps children to understand that print has meaning. Children enthusiastically help the staff to count the number of children who are present at registration. They are secure in the order of numbers and easily recognise that 24 comes before 25 and that 26 comes after it. Children have a good understanding of different shapes and recognise that a circle does not have any sides. Some children are able to recognise a cone from pictures in a book. Staff offer praise and encouragement which helps to build children's confidence and self-esteem.

Children enjoy imaginative play. They move around the rooms with shopping trolleys imitating adult conversations. They use construction toys to represent a mobile phone and engage in role play based on their own experiences. This helps children to make sense of their world. Children use the outdoor area confidently. They access the resources that are available and

enjoy exploring the grassed area on a frosty morning. Children run around to warm up. Staff support them by getting the children to feel their heart beating faster. This helps children to understand the impact of exercise on their bodies. Children are learning to use programmable toys. This is a new concept for them and some children find it difficult and drift away from the activity. Children participate in cooking activities. They recognise the different shapes of the cutters and select which shaped biscuit they will make. Some children have made the dough and watched as the ingredients are added together, observing the changes. Other children are simply given a lump of dough to roll out to make a biscuit. Some children use their initiative and make more than one biscuit. However, staff supervising this activity do not recognise children are making decisions in the number of biscuits they can make. This does not support children's independent learning. Children raise questions with staff regarding disabilities. Staff do not provide answers to their questions which does not increase children's awareness of difference and diversity.

Children are curious and show wonder when they look at ice that has formed in the outside area. They support each other and help when changing into dressing up clothes. They share books with friends and enjoy tranquil moments when sitting quietly looking at books alone. Children enjoy experimenting with eggs in line with their topic of Humpty Dumpty. They choose a surface such as, a soft cloth, a tray of sand, packaging or the floor and wait to see the results. Children are interested in the activity and share the camera so that everyone can take a photograph to show the end results. Children work collaboratively throughout this activity and relate well to others. This helps to build their social and emotional development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy participating in planned activities such as food tasting. They eagerly try Greek, Indian and Chinese food, experiencing the different flavours during the food tasting week. Children generally benefit, as most staff provide activities to increase their awareness of different cultures, ethnicity, gender roles and disabilities. Children celebrate different festivals. They make divas for Diwali and dragons for Chinese New Year. Children in the Acorn class lack access to resources which actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices as they have only been open for a few of weeks and the resources are still pending. They participate in a range of planned activities which helps them to become aware of the wider society. Children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are included fully in the life of the setting. Children benefit, as staff have accessed additional training to enable them to provide appropriate support. This ensures children's individual needs are met. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of children in their care. They ensure children with additional needs have access, alongside their peers to the facilities, activities and play opportunities provided in order to promote their welfare and development.

Children are beginning to recognise the behaviour expectations of the staff in the Acorn room. This is a new venture and children are testing the boundaries. Children benefit, as staff stay calm when dealing with behaviour issues. They are consistent in their approach which helps the children to feel safe and secure. Children enjoy being chosen as the room helper. They

assist a member of staff in changing the weather chart. The helper asks the other children 'what is the weather like today?' When some of the children call out the answer the helper reminds them 'no, don't shout. Put your hands up'. This helps children to work harmoniously with others and helps to build their self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit as staff provide parents with verbal and written information daily. Babies and young children are cared for appropriately as staff ask parents to complete an information sheet which gives a clear picture of the differing needs of the children. This ensures staff are aware of children's sleep routine, eating habits and what type of comforter they use at home. This ensures children receive continuity of care. Parents have a clear awareness of the activities that are provided for the younger children as they are invited to a parents evening and staff display relevant information regarding the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff also speak to the parents regularly and parents know that they can ask to see their children's records at any time. Parents have a good understanding of the setting's policies and procedures as copies are available within the setting and on the nursery website. This ensures children are cared for appropriately and that they receive continuity of care.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff provide information for parents regarding the Foundation Stage, showing clearly the activities children participate in. Parents are actively involved in sending items into the setting in line with the letter of the week. They receive newsletters and letters seeking additional consents such as, those sought to enable children to participate in food tasting activities during food week. Children benefit, as parents attend parents evenings and know that they can see their children's records at any time. This gives them a clear idea of how their children are progressing. However, staff do not update the information they received from parents when children first attended the nursery. Staff do not have a clear awareness of what children like to do at home or of any new interests the children have developed. Parents do not have an opportunity to share their observations and be involved in their children's learning in a meaningful way.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who have completed appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of child development which ensures children's individual needs are met. Children benefit, as high staffing levels positively supports their care, learning and play. Students on placement in the setting support the main staff well. They have built good relationships with the children and offer lots of praise and encouragement to the children particularly at lunchtime. Staff deployment in the setting is generally good except for the after school club which potentially compromises children's well-being. Group sizes generally contribute to the children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. The management of the setting have a clear focus and strong vision regarding the personal development and achievements of all the staff and children. They actively seek appropriate training courses to enhance the provision for the children. Staff ensure parents have access to the comprehensive policies and procedures both in the setting and via the nursery website. These generally work well to promote

children's health and ability to make a positive contribution. Babies and young children benefit, as they are cared for by familiar adults which helps them to feel safe and secure.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The different tiers of the management structure work well to provide firm foundations on which they are building for the future. The leadership and management of the setting contributes to the children making progress towards the early learning goals. However, a lack of communication sometimes impacts on the children's learning. Staff working with children receiving early education do not implement a systematic transference of records to ensure a smooth transition. This potentially hampers staff's ability to evaluate and improve the nursery education offered and to understand how the children have progressed and how they learn. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure staff adhere to the hygiene procedures; this refers to the consistent wearing of disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies and younger children's involvement in the hand-washing routine. Staff have improved their procedures as they wear fresh disposable gloves and aprons for each individual nappy change. All children are included in the hand-washing routine and are learning that this is an important part of keeping them healthy. The provider agreed to improve the outcomes for children from birth to three by continuing to develop the 'Birth to three matters' programme, and to ensure staff are deployed effectively and make full use of time, space and resources to enhance the quality of stimulating learning opportunities for children aged between two and three years, in order to maintain interest and promote positive behaviour. Staff have accessed training regarding the 'Birth to three matters' framework and displays around the setting help parents to understand the activities provided within this framework. This ensures the younger children participate in interesting and challenging activities which helps them to progress to the next steps in their learning. The provider agreed to further extend opportunities for children to develop their physical skills through the provision of increased levels of challenge in activities and give greater emphasis to health awareness. Children benefit as staff ensure they use the outdoor area during both the morning and afternoon sessions. Staff generally ensure the children are suitably challenged and through the different topics are learning the importance of being healthy.

At the last inspection the provider agreed to enhance the provision for children who receive funded early education. They agreed to continue to develop staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage, for example through access to formal training; continue to develop planning systems making full use of medium term plans in order to provide a cohesive curriculum that plots and progresses children's learning in stages and ensure evaluation and monitoring is undertaken periodically, and to ensure that all staff receive appropriate training to enable them to meet children's needs effectively which refers to dietary impact on the children. Staff are increasing their understanding of the Foundation Stage and new staff have been employed who bring experience and a clear understanding with them. Planning systems are in place for long, medium and short term planning, involves all room staff and is checked by the management. Children benefit, as staff evaluate and monitor the care and education provided and ensure all staff are aware of dietary implications. This ensures children receive appropriate care and education. This ensures their individual needs are met.

Complaints since the last inspection

On 26 May 2005 concerns were raised about the behaviour of a staff member. These concerns relate to National Standard 1: Suitable person. Ofsted made an unannounced visit to the provision on 27 May 2005 and as a result set four actions. These actions were under National Standard 7: Health, to ensure that the premises and equipment are clean; National Standard 11: Behaviour, to ensure adults do not use any form of physical intervention unless it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, other children, an adult or serious damage to property. Ensure that any incident is recorded and the parent informed of the incident on the day; National Standard 13: Child Protection, to ensure that there is a written statement which includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer (in line with the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures); and National Standard 14: Documentation, to ensure that Ofsted is informed within 14 days of allegations of abuse by a member of staff or volunteer, or any abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises. The provider remained qualified for registration.

On 15 August 2006 Ofsted received concerns regarding the failure to observe dietary requirements of a child. A childcare inspector conducted an unannounced visit to the provision on 17 August 2006 to inspect against National Standard 8: Food and Drink, and National Standard 12: Partnership with parents and carers. The provider informed the inspector that they had addressed the concerns themselves, introduced procedures to review all needs of children and reviewed methods of sharing information with parents. However one recommendation was set under National Standard 2: Organisation, with regard to meeting the continuing training needs of staff to ensure children's needs were met. The provider remained qualified for registration.

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 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 written parental permission is obtained to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment and ensure records of medicines administered to children are signed by parents

- ensure potential hazards are made safe or inaccessible to the children, this refers to stacks of chairs and air hockey table cable in the after school club and patches of ice in outdoor area
- plan and provide activities and play opportunities which allow children to use their imagination and which are appropriate for their ages and interests, this refers specifically to the out of school provision

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):

- ensure methods, expectations and questions challenge and support children to achieve as much as they can
- seek and value parents' observations of their children and act on them to ensure parents are involved in their children's learning in a meaningful way
- ensure there is a systematic transference of records to enable staff providing early education to have a clear understanding of children's attainments

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk