



Toybox Day Nurseries Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY239643
Inspection date	28 November 2005
Inspector	Paula Durrant
Setting Address	Saxon Local Centre, Off Chambers Way, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, SG18 8AT
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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 opened in October 2002 and operates from a purpose built facility situated behind the Saxon Gate Leisure Centre on the outskirts of Biggleswade. A maximum of 112 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open five days a week from 07:00 until 19:00 throughout the year.

There are currently 137 children from eight weeks to five years on roll for day care

and 19 children regularly attend the out of school facility. There are 21 children who receive funding for nursery education. Children in attendance live locally. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and there are systems in place to support children with English as an additional language. The nursery employs 44 staff, 39 work directly with the children, 19 of the staff including the nursery manager hold an appropriate early years qualification, 11 staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nursery Association. It receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a comfortable, well ventilated and clean environment. Good written health and hygiene procedures are in place. Staff consistently wear protective clothing and tie back their hair when serving food. Equipment and resources used by the children are cleaned frequently. For example, high-chairs and table surfaces are wiped down with antibacterial solution after each use and toys that are mouthed by babies are sterilised daily. Children's health is maintained in the event of a medical emergency. Most staff hold a first aid qualification and there are sufficient first aid resources in each room. Medication and accident records comply with the National Standards.

Children are beginning to develop an understanding of how to stay healthy as they follow the daily routine. Older children know to wash their hands prior to eating following use of the toilet facilities and when returning from outside play. Younger children do not always benefit from developing an awareness of good personal hygiene as babies do not fully participate in the hand-washing routine and toddlers leave the bathroom with wet hands. Provision of toothbrushes and toothpaste enables children to care for and protect their teeth. Children are encouraged to brush their teeth following mealtimes. Although staff have rigorous written health and hygiene guidance this is not always consistently put into practice. Staff do not always wear disposable gloves or aprons when changing nappies or cleanse the changing mat in-between each child. Poor implementation of written procedures potentially increases opportunities for cross contamination.

Children receive a varied and nutritionally balanced diet which effectively incorporates individual dietary needs in line with parental wishes. Strong procedural systems ensure excellent monitoring of food provision to support children's safety and welfare. Children have regular access to water throughout the day and supplementary drinks are offered at meal times.

Children benefit from weekly swimming sessions and a unique sports specific programme for under fives taught by an external Physical Education instructor. Children have daily access to the garden. Provision of warm clothes and additional footwear such as 'wellingtons' means that children can go out to play regardless of the weather conditions. This means children receive regular access to fresh air, to

exert their energy and to develop increased physical control as they climb, ride bicycles, dig in the sand and throw and catch balls. Although provision of equipment in the garden is suitable for younger children it does not enable sufficient challenge for children who are physically able and competent in their agility. All children are able to rest and be active according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

This well designed and effectively monitored nursery gives high priority to children's safety and welfare. Practitioners help keep children safe in the nursery and on outings because they fully understand and comply with safety requirements. All necessary safety measures are in place. Rigorous risk assessments are undertaken frequently. Access to the premises is vigilantly monitored by an effective security system and through the supervision and management of the entrance area. Visitors to the nursery are requested to provide identification and to record their presence on site in the visitors log book.

Children use a sufficient range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources which are well organised in child height furniture to encourage independent access. Staff skilfully explain safe practices, such as the need to pick up items dropped on the floor, so that other children do not fall or hurt themselves. Older children learn about road safety as they are transported and walked to school. This helps children to learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Staff protect children well. Strong recruitment and induction procedures ensure that adults are suitable to work with children. This includes experience, training and vetting checks. Children remain the primary focus of care in this well organised and managed setting. Staff are vigilant in their practice and are confident in their knowledge of child protection, reporting concerns appropriately to senior staff. Open relationships between home and nursery ensure that children's needs remain the single important factor. The child protection coordinator ensures that procedures are up to date and that staff understand their responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The provision of care is variable between the different age bands. Babies, toddlers and out of school children receive good quality provision of activities that challenge and stimulate positive learning outcomes. Staff have taken on board the new 'Birth to three matters' framework although they have yet to receive formal training. Planning systems clearly link to the correct components of the framework, however focus on one main activity and limited emphasis to the use of further resources throughout the day does on occasion hinder less experienced staff. For example, children aged two to three-years receive insufficient challenge to explore and experiment due to limited planning and organisation by staff. This means that during change over periods some children are left to wander and behavioural disputes occasionally erupt.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most children are making steady progress through the Foundation Stage. Staff use their knowledge and experience to provide a suitable variety of play experiences. These keep children happily occupied, but do not always challenge the older, more able child. Much of the play equipment set out for children does not have any clear, identified learning intention. This leads to a heavy reliance upon staff's individual abilities to extend learning through play and variable quality of interaction. Staff have limited training in the Foundation Stage, covered initially through their childcare courses. Although planning mechanisms are in place restricted emphasis towards medium term aims and limited monitoring of the education curriculum means that systems do not currently effectively guide staff in progressing children through stages or ensuring all aspects of the Foundation Stage are covered equally. Assessment records are maintained with sufficient frequency. Parents have the opportunity to access these records and to contribute to their child's developmental profiles.

Children are happy and settled and show a strong sense of belonging, and are developing friendship groups. They are confident in both small and large group situations and generally show a caring attitude towards others. They are beginning to learn how to take turns and to play together cooperatively. Children are generally involved in their play, although this does tend to focus on areas with adult supervision. They are beginning to assume some responsibility for their personal care, although staff do not explain the reasons for this such as when washing their hands or gaining a tissue for their nose.

Children speak with growing confidence and share their experiences with others. They listen well to stories, join in responsively, and have books readily available at all times. Children are beginning to assign meaning to marks and to developing their skills with sounds and letters. They are beginning to count, recognise different shapes, compare number and solve simple mathematical problems.

Children develop a sense of time and place through group and individual discussions and through the daily routine. Children have many opportunities to observe natural objects both inside and outside, and they enjoy exploring the world around them. Children use the computer and technological toys. They are developing their knowledge of other cultures and beliefs.

Children develop their physical skills through a wide variety of activities both inside and outside the building. These include activities to develop hand-eye co-ordination and large physical movements. However, there is insufficient emphasis on developing children's understanding of health and bodily awareness. Children follow routines such as washing their hands but are not clear about the reasons for doing this. They experience a wide variety of media as they paint, stick and mould malleable materials. Children's imagination develops through a variety of role-play activities, including a home corner, shop, office and launderette. They have regular opportunities to sing songs and play musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and children with special needs are warmly welcomed in the nursery. Practitioners ensure that resources positively represent the children who attend as well as individuals from the wider community. This helps children develop a positive attitude to others. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure the needs of all children are met. Inclusion is effectively put into practice. For example, staff give consideration to the positioning of activities and resources for a child who has recently undergone a hip operation and requires specialised seating. The chair is positioned purposefully to enable active group involvement allowing the child to play alongside their peers. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children are generally well behaved. They know the appropriate code of conduct such as saying please and thank you when asking for a toy or when receiving their meals, drinks, snacks or assistance from an adult. Behaviour only deteriorates when children become bored or when sessions come to a close. Older under three's are not effectively guided to take turns and share as staff fail to sit alongside and guide them in their play. Poor organisation of interesting and meaningful equipment and management of change over sessions leaves children bewildered and unsure of the expectations of adults.

Practitioners are conscientious and welcoming to parental input. There is a wealth of information which is easily accessible which includes general care and educational literature. Parents value the openness and honesty of staff. This supports the appropriate sharing of information in sensitive situations. Parents are highly complimentary about the level of service provided. Staff encourage parents to actively contribute towards individual assessment records. Therefore, children benefit from a two way sharing of information between parents and practitioners to enhance their learning. This underpins their progress in the nursery and consequently their ability to fully contribute to the provision. The nursery effectively communicates and fully shares literature and information about the educational provision and therefore the partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Staff use the curriculum guidance and their training in childcare to provide a suitable variety of play experiences to progress children's learning. Although formal training in the Foundation Stage is yet to be undertaken staff share the responsibility of planning, supporting each other as they develop their own systems. Monitoring and review of the educational content is only just beginning to take place. This means that some minor gaps have yet to be addressed. Robust recruitment and induction processes underpin the suitability and professional development of staff. There is a real commitment to training and minimum qualification requirements are met. All employees complete appropriate vetting prior to commencement of work to ensure the welfare and safety of children. Although written organisational procedures are strong, monitoring, implementation and ownership of these is variable within the staff

team leading to inconsistencies within practice. Overall, the needs of all children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection the nursery were required to acquire further resources to meet the needs of children aged five to eight years. Older children benefit in accessing a diverse range of good quality resources that are stored accessibly and maintained in good repair.

At the last Nursery Education inspection the nursery were required to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, review their short term plans, provide further detail to parents about the nursery education curriculum and extend their provision of meaningful print within the environment. Staff continue to seek formal training in the Foundation Stage. They currently make full use of the advisory teacher service and the curriculum guidance to support them in the delivery of their educational provision. Short term plans clearly identify what children are intended to learn balanced across all six areas of learning. Children benefit in developing an awareness that print carries meaning as the environment is suitably labelled with both pictorial illustration and the written word.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received two complaints, these related to National Standards 1 Suitability; 11 Behaviour Management; 13 Child Protection and 14 Documentation. The complaints related to suitability of a staff member. Child care inspectors made an unannounced visit to the nursery to investigate the allegation. The registered body has worked in partnership with Ofsted and other agencies and the allegation against the staff member was unfounded. As a result of the visit four actions were raised under Standards 7, 11, 13 and 14 with regards to nursery practice. All actions have been met. The provider remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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 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
- improve the outcomes for children from birth to three by continuing to develop the 'Birth to three matters' programme
- 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

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):

- 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
- 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.

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