

Inspection of Toad Hall Nursery Berkhamsted

Gossoms End, Victory Road, Berkhamsted HP4 1DL

Inspection date: 22 July 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children show their enjoyment of attending this welcoming nursery. They settle quickly and build secure relationships with staff. Children enjoy their play and become engrossed in this. For example, older children pick mint and add this to the 'carrot and blueberry soup' they are making. They concentrate as they add further 'ingredients', comparing the colours of their mixture to the plants they are growing. Children persist at tasks, responding to staff's enthusiasm and their belief in children's abilities. For example, young children persevere at arranging bricks until they are satisfied that these represent the large, medium and small bowls in their story.

Children respond to staff's high expectations and their good role modelling. Their behaviour is good and they consider the needs of others. For example, older children pour glue into pots and ask their friends if they would like help with this or would like to try it themselves. Specific activities help children understand healthy practices. For instance, children using toothbrushes to clean laminated pictures of teeth explain how the brush removes food from the teeth. Vigilant staff ensure children are safe and support them in understanding safety. For instance, children finish playing with coloured dough and decide to pick up the dough from the floor 'in case someone slips over'.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Managers and senior staff show a genuine enthusiasm for their work and are committed to the nursery's continuous development. They act as good role models and staff reflect their commitment and positivity. A key strength of this nursery is the manager's meticulous attention to promoting staff well-being. She skilfully tailors support to meet staff's individual needs. Staff report that they feel very well supported and able to carry out their roles.
- Staff understand the nursery's curriculum and adapt this to reflect children's needs. They assess what children have learned and understand what they need to learn next, offering activities that support children in making good progress. Secure monitoring means that any gaps in children's learning are quickly addressed. Staff's good knowledge of each child ensures that additional funding is used effectively to further support children's development.
- Children have many opportunities to experiment. Older children determine what materials to use when they make a model of 'planet earth'. Staff value their ideas as children test these out, for example mixing paint, glue and glitter and using sticks and wooden spoons to apply this.
- Staff support children well in developing their language and communication skills. They talk clearly with children and check that they understand new vocabulary. For example, children looking at a book learn about 'street vendors'

in New York, remembering this when they later return to the book. Babies repeat words, such as 'duck'. This is later reinforced when they go out to feed the ducks.

- Staff support children of all ages to develop an enjoyment of books and reading. They read with enthusiasm and animation, capturing children's attention and helping to bring the books to life. Young children use props to act out a favourite traditional story. They remember some of the words and predict what will happen next.
- Thoughtful daily practices aid children in gaining a practical awareness of differences. For instance, babies and young children are comforted when they look at photographs from home. These also initiate discussions about different family compositions, traditions and cultures.
- Staff demonstrate good teaching skills and, on occasion, these are of a higher quality. Children show that they thoroughly enjoy their interactions with staff. However, staff do not consistently promote children's development to the highest level possible.
- Parents speak positively about the nursery. They highlight staff's good communication and feel that staff take time to understand children and support them well. Staff provide practical information about activities, enabling parents to build on these with their children. Furthermore, staff work well with other professionals, helping to ensure that children's needs are understood and met. This particularly supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and they make good progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support all staff to continue to develop their practice, to raise the quality of teaching to consistently high standards.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY465422
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10351758
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	77
Number of children on roll	143
Name of registered person	Careroom Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP910483
Telephone number	01442 871777
Date of previous inspection	15 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

Toad Hall Nursery Berkhamsted registered in 2013. It is one of several nurseries run by Careroom Ltd, which operates Toad Hall Nursery Group. The nursery employs 27 members of childcare staff. Of these, 23 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education places for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kelly Eyre

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of this provision.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed staff interaction with children during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed two joint observations with the manager.
- Meetings were held between the inspector, the manager, the company's head of early years and the joint head of nursery operations. The inspector looked at relevant documentation and saw evidence of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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