



Kids 1st Day Nurseries - Hexham

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY337358
Inspection date	08 February 2007
Inspector	Jayne Utting
Setting Address	Maidens Walk, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 1DR
Telephone number	01914 618 877
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Registered person	Kids 1st Day Nurseries
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kids 1st Day Nurseries – Hexham opened in July 2006 and operate from new purpose-built premises providing eight large playrooms with integral supporting facilities including separate sleep rooms, milk kitchens, a dining room and an indoor soft play area.

There are also beautifully landscaped adjoining outdoor play areas which are accessed directly from the children's rooms. Situated next to Hexham General Hospital, the nursery offers care and education to parents of children in the local and wider community and also for staff of Hexham General Hospital.

A maximum of 110 children from birth to eight-years-old may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 0.730 until 18.00 all year round. There are currently 25 children on roll. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 10 staff to work directly with the children. All staff working on the premises are appropriately qualified and suitably experienced for the positions they hold.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The children enjoy a wide range of delicious and highly nutritious snacks and meals that are planned and prepared on site, taking children's needs and preferences into consideration. The provision of such well balanced and nutritious meals, which include lots of freshly prepared fruit and vegetables, promotes the children's good health overall. Parents are able to provide food for babies if they wish, and extreme care is taken to ensure that this is stored and reheated appropriately for them. All staff have an excellent awareness of hygiene, including food hygiene, which ensures that food is appropriately stored and prepared in a scrupulously clean kitchen. Planned activities, such as fruit tasting encourages the children to try out new textures and tastes, such as mango, kiwi and strawberries, broadening the children's experiences of food and promoting healthy eating.

Children and staff all sit together at lunch time at beautifully set tables in a dedicated dining room. Staff take full advantage of this excellent learning opportunity, talking to the children about their food and activities during the morning, helping their social and language skills to flourish. Staff are alert to children's requirements and help them to master the use of their cutlery through a variety of highly effective techniques. Older children are given the opportunity to serve food themselves, which promotes their independence. Excellent forward planning means that children are able to help themselves to water when they are thirsty. Jugs and beakers are readily available throughout the nursery, and this combined with photographic examples of how to pour water into a beaker encourages children to use their initiative and become independent from the earliest age. The babies are given regular drinks of water to ensure they remain hydrated throughout the day.

Highly effective procedures are in place to deal with children who are ill. These alongside highly effective practices, such as the staff and children wearing indoor shoes in nursery and the cleaning of tables with antibacterial spray, all protect the children from common illnesses and the spread of infection. There are excellent nappy changing facilities and staff take steps to ensure that health and hygiene practices are complied with, such as the wearing of gloves and aprons and the wiping down of mats with disinfectant after use. Staff provide soothing words and smiles to little ones as they work with them, and small toys are available to keep them content during nappy change. Staff act as exceptional role models to the children. For example, they explain to them the importance of washing their hands before snack and after coming in from the garden. Low level sinks and accessible soap dispensers, along with photographs showing how to wash hands and clean teeth, encourages children to develop independence in carrying out these tasks for themselves from a very early age. Excellent advice and guidance like this helps the children to make the connection between good hygiene and good health. Up to date, accessible and excellently organised details relevant to children's health, whether they have any allergies for example, are held securely on site and in each room, informing staff's day to day practices, thereby safeguarding the health of the children in their care.

The excellent daily routine provided by the nursery ensures a balance of quiet and busy times and provides children with the opportunity to develop a number of physical skills. Children who are not yet fully mobile are encouraged to crawl and shuffle to get from one place to another. They practice new skills, such as pulling themselves up using staff and low level window sills as supports. Babies love to stand at the windows and look outside into the purpose built garden. Older children climb up slides, rock on giant tigers, play camps and build towers and trains with cardboard boxes. All children have daily access to a beautifully designed outside play area, where they are able to enjoy a vast range of activities, such as running, climbing, following the animal paw print trails, or pushing buggies around. Excellent opportunities such as these allow the children to develop their gross motor skills and so aids their ongoing physical development.

The specially designed areas in which the children sleep ensure that they are able to do so peacefully. Babies home routines are followed closely with relaxing, calming music played to help them off to sleep. Older children have their own specially labelled mat to sleep on when they are tired, and provision is made to ensure all children are able to sleep as they require.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The premises are extremely welcoming, well organised and comfortable for children to use safely. Children access the designated childcare areas freely, with close supervision and excellent support from staff. They ensure the premises are safe and secure so that children are very well protected. Robust safety measures have been taken, for example, a secure main entry system with finger scan controls, as well as security systems to each room, CCTV and internal telephone links throughout the building. This combined with daily risk assessments, ten minute sleep checks and highly vigilant staff, safeguard the children's safety and well-being in a highly effective way. The outdoor area is extremely well planned and as a result is really safe and secure for children to play in. All staff hold current first aid certificates which means that children receive immediate appropriate attention if required. Children's accidents and the administration of any medication are recorded meticulously. Participation in regular fire drills helps to raise the children's awareness of how to stay safe in emergencies.

Excellent guidance from staff ensures that children are encouraged to be aware of safety both in and outside the setting, in daily routines and activities. For example, children are encouraged to tidy up during the nursery session, staff explaining clearly to them why it is important to do so. This encourages the children to begin to take responsibility for their own safety and well-being. Children learn other ways to stay safe through reference to highly effective nursery procedures, which the staff consistently reinforce. The children are reminded to walk, not run in nursery for example, and they know to place the mat at the bottom of the slide when playing on it.

Children are extremely well protected during outings, with detailed risk assessments undertaken prior to any excursion. Babies are appropriately restrained in buggies and children know to stay close to staff, holding hands to ensure they stay safe when outside the nursery environment. Older children are taught to stop, look and listen before they cross the road, with staff alert to the potential danger around them.

Children choose from an excellent range of resources that are well organised to allow them safe and independent access whatever their age. Toys are in an immaculate condition and remain this way through routine checking by staff for breakages or any other problems. All staff show an excellent awareness of child protection issues. There is a comprehensive child protection policy in place and all staff have a thorough understanding of what to be aware of, who to contact and what to record. This ensures children are well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are given maximum support to help them settle quickly into the nursery environment, benefiting from the staff's sensitive and calm approach to their care. Staff have an excellent awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is reflected in the actual care of the children. Through the highly effective key worker system, staff plan a wide variety of innovative and exciting activities which are based on children's individual needs, preferences and abilities. Through detailed planning and ongoing observations, highly skilled staff are able to encourage all children to take the next steps in their learning, helping them to see ways to extend their play and encouraging them to maintain concentration and develop confidence in their unique abilities.

Babies have a wealth of experiences to stimulate their awareness of self, promote learning and knowledge and their general well-being. They listen to a wide range of relaxing or lively music, shake, rattle or bang colourful bells and bottles of beads and rice, to make their own delightful music. They thoroughly enjoy their time in the sensory corner, absorbing the different lights, sounds and colours with staff giving them lots of support. Other activities, such as playing in water and exploring baked beans ensure that children experience a range of sensations to stimulate their senses and provide them with excellent opportunities to vocalise their enjoyment. Children have access to wide range of real life, commercial and natural resources. For example, children play enthusiastically with several cardboard boxes, building towers and making trains with them, as well as taking time to explore the textures of the different materials that have been glued inside. A homemade den, packed full of different lights and textures, provides a wealth of enjoyment for the children as they play monsters in a cave. Children of all ages have excellent opportunities to represent and experiment using a good range of media, such as paint and play dough. This introduces them to the concepts of colour, texture, form and balance. Children play enthusiastically in the well planned, exciting outdoor area, where staff are on hand to help children take an interest in the environment and stimulate their imagination.

Children build extremely positive and very caring relationships with the staff who respond well to each child's differing needs. Well organised and efficient staff deployment ensures that staff are always on hand to reassure the children if they feel uncertain about something, such as when a visitor calls. Staff are extremely affectionate towards the children and are completely focused on them and their play. As a result, all children are happy, secure and confident in the setting.

Staff have an excellent understanding of how children gain independence and they are given the freedom to explore and investigate themselves through a range of stimulating activities. Weekly plans are organised to allow for flexibility and spontaneity, which gives scope for each

child to choose what they want to do and introduce their own ideas. For example, the chance finding of a chrysalis in the garden leads to a whole fantastic new activity on the butterfly life cycle, which is totally engrossing for all the children. In addition, the superbly organised nursery environment allows children of all ages very easy access to an excellent range of stimulating and top quality resources, encouraging them to make independent choices, allowing their play to evolve naturally and at their own pace.

The scope for children to enjoy and achieve at this setting is outstanding. Highly skilled staff ensure that whilst the children have fun and explore, every learning opportunity is maximised, whether it is counting the number of children going out into the garden, or attempting to take those first steps. This provides children with the best possible start.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

There is an overriding commitment to equal opportunities evident throughout the nursery and its practice. Staff act as excellent role models for the children, fostering a positive attitude to diversity, ensuring children develop respect for individual and differing needs. An excellent range of resources including books, puppets, dressing up clothes and bright wall posters, are readily available and highly visible to the children. These introduce them to images of people of varying abilities and from other cultures and countries, encouraging them to celebrate the diversity of the world around them. Children relish the opportunity to listen to music from a variety of countries and proudly display the pictures they make whilst listening to the songs. The children have access to fantastic panoramic views of their local community from the outdoor area. This sense of community is reinforced through outings into their local town to choose a bauble for the Christmas tree.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are fully included in the setting and sensitively helped to participate fully in all activities. Staff provide one to one assistance for these children and work extremely closely with both parents and outside agencies to ensure they gain the maximum enjoyment and learning opportunities within the setting. Highly skilled and sensitive staff go out of their way to develop resources which enable children with learning difficulties and disabilities to participate fully in the setting alongside their peers. For example, staff have developed a picture book which enables children to communicate what they wish to play with, without the need for language.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They learn about sharing and valuing others through the excellent example provided by the staff. Staff are always there to gently support, praise and encourage children in their daily routines and activities, thereby developing their self-esteem, confidence and sense of belonging. Staff are calm and composed when they speak to children, and employ excellent behaviour management techniques, explaining clearly and calmly why certain actions are not acceptable. The children are very happy and content in the group and respond well to encouragement from the staff. They clearly trust and respect them as evidenced by the way they seek the attention and comfort of staff members when, for example, they are feeling tired.

The nursery has formed an excellent partnership with parents. Extremely detailed and informative information is given to parents before their child starts the nursery, combined with several induction sessions which enable both parent and child to become familiar with the nursery routines. New parents are able to remain on site and observe their children enjoying the nursery through vision panels in the dedicated parent's room. In addition, the nursery has a fantastic 'my day at nursery' book for new parents to view, which contains lots of photographs of children participating in, and enjoying all aspects of nursery life. Children's transition between rooms within the nursery is also sensitively planned, with the interests of the child being paramount. Staff discuss the move with parents beforehand, ensure staff in the new room are fully informed about the individual needs of the child coming into their care and take the child for several visits to their new room to get used to the new surroundings, children and staff.

Parents are able to participate fully in the exchange of information necessary for their child's ongoing care. An excellent daily diary system ensures that parents and carers are kept fully informed about day to day routines and significant events in the children's lives, including nappy changes, and sleep patterns. Parent's contributions to this book are highly valued by staff, ensuring the ongoing continuity of care for each child. Children's development files are available for parents to look at any time, on request. Information relating to planning and daily activities, as well as other general information about future events, is available on a dedicated parent's notice board. A well thought out, informative and comprehensive display on both the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage is available to parents and acts as a guide to supporting their children's learning at home. An excellent range of reference books about parenting issues is available for parents to borrow or refer to in the parent's room.

Parents have extremely positive views about the nursery, its staff and their commitment to the children. Parents report that they have 'absolute confidence' in the nursery and feel that their children 'benefit enormously from their attendance'. They value the comprehensive feedback they receive each day from the staff, and feel that they are working together with them to provide the best quality care for their children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The effective key worker system that the nursery operates ensures that the highly skilled staff have an excellent awareness of the children as individuals. This enables them to plan effectively to promote children's learning, based on their differing abilities and starting points. Staff make effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage as appropriate, maximising children's learning potential in all areas. Staff are extremely well supported, motivated and inspired by the highly experienced and skilled manager, who has a clear commitment to them and the nursery as a whole. There are regular opportunities provided for staff to discuss training plans or any issues they have regarding children for whom they are the key worker. Ongoing personal development is actively promoted and staff have access to a range of appropriate external training relating to the health, welfare, safety and educational needs of the children. This ensures that staff's already outstanding practice remains up to date.

An extensive and detailed range of policies and procedures, such as child protection, behaviour management, contingency planning and equal opportunities are used to inform practice and

protect the welfare of the children who attend. There are highly effective registration systems in place to record attendance, as well as effective recording systems for medication administration, accidents, high temperatures and allergies. These are all meticulously kept, monitored and efficiently stored. All staff are subject to rigorous recruitment and induction procedures. This ensures that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities, and confirms their suitability to work with children.

The nursery environment is brilliantly organised and completely child orientated, with clearly defined play and rest areas. There is an outstanding range of resources available, all of which are readily accessible to the children. Staff are totally committed to the welfare and enjoyment of the children and as a result, children are extremely happy and settled within the nursery, and totally engaged in their play.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

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. Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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