



Kid Ease Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY278153 |
| Inspection date | 15 November 2006 |
| Inspector | Margaret, Ann Sandfield |
| Setting Address | Triangles, Poulton Close, Dover, Kent, CT17 0HL |
| Telephone number | 01304 204653 |
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| Registered person | Kid Ease 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?

Kids Ease Nursery is one of a chain of nurseries run by Kid Ease Ltd. It opened in 2004 and operates from six rooms within a two-story purpose built premises, in Dover, Kent. A maximum of 96 may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open from 07:00 to 18:00 each week day for 51 weeks a year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The provision serves the local area and surrounding villages.

There are currently 54 children aged from three months to under five years on the roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with additional educational needs, and supports a number of children who are by-lingual.

The nursery employs 18 members of staff. Of these, 13 staff, including the manager holds appropriate early years qualifications. There are currently 3 members of staff working towards an early year's qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a very good understanding of the importance of taking regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They have opportunities to develop their physical skills as they participate in vigorous play on a daily basis. Each day children are offered a variety of energetic physical activities outdoors, weather permitting. Children enthusiastically play with a range of resources, including ride on toys and balancing equipment. They confidently ask for additional resources to be taken outdoors for them to play with. Weather permitting they can play outside for quite some time. They benefit from opportunities to use more challenging apparatus as they balance along tyres, upturned milk crates and climb onto the pre-school fort. They play hide and seek with staff and pretend to go on a bear hunt. As a result children are developing good co-ordination and understanding of spatial awareness. Babies and toddlers have opportunities to have fresh air. They play in the garden or go out for walks in the local community. This helps children of all ages to develop control of their bodies and learn about how exercise has a positive effect on their health.

A well planned snack time encourages pre-school children to try a variety of fresh fruit. Staff and children chat about the different fruit they are encouraged to taste. Children are beginning to have a good understanding about healthy foods, which support their own good health. Children and babies food is prepared by outside caterers and bought into the nursery earlier on in the day. Sometimes it arrives several hours before it is required and kept warm in the catering trays. Meals are generally a one pot casserole type meal, which is detailed on a menu over a three week period. These are displayed for parent's information. Meals, snacks and drinks are provided in accordance with their dietary needs and parents' wishes.

All children have regular breaks timetabled into the routine. Not all routines help prevent the spread of infections, although nursery children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care when they wash their hands before lunch, snack times and after using the toilet. Snack monitors and staff fetch the fruit and milk from the kitchen for snack time. However, they do not wash their hands before handling or preparing the fruit. Staff do not use appropriate surfaces for the preparation of the fruit and bacteria can harbour in the cracks on the trays. This does not support children's good health. More care is taken with the preparation of food and bottles for babies. Toddlers can help themselves to drinks in between times from individual feeder cups placed on a low table. This facility was not available for older children to prevent them from becoming thirsty. Babies and toddlers are provided with additional protection, as staff and visitors are required to remove outdoor footwear or cover footwear with covers provided by the nursery, before entering their play area.

There is a clear policy and procedure to follow, in the case of sick children, to prevent the spread of infections. Accident records are shared with parents. All relevant information is

recorded in the medication record, which adequately supports children's good health. There is a suitable, easily accessible first aid kit available in each room and sufficient qualified first aid equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is ensured across the setting because practitioners are vigilant and identify risks removing these from children. There is a secure and safe entrance system via the vestibule and again for each area of the nursery. Staff and children regularly practise the fire drills. Babies and children efficiently and effectively evacuated the building when the fire alarm was activated for a practice drill. Procedures ensured all babies; children and adults are accounted for. This ensures everyone on the premises are prevented from coming to any harm should an emergency of this nature happen in reality.

The premises are warm, welcoming and well ventilated. There is plenty of natural light. There is a fully fenced secure outdoor play area directly accessed from the children's play rooms. Children can use the toilet independently once they are competent as they are directly off of the playrooms. Effective systems are in place to ensure all resources and equipment is safe, clean and well maintained. Children self-select activities from a suitable range. These routines and procedures provide all children with a safe environment in which to relax and play confidently and safely.

The provider has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is being safeguarded and promoted. Most staff employed to work with children hold a current first aid certificate. The staff follow clear, sound procedures to ensure babies and children arrive safely and are also kept safe when being collected. Only persons authorised to do so are allowed to take them home and the records on individual children include details and description of these persons. They have a concise lost child procedure. Staff and children regularly practise the fire drills and evacuate the building effectively. Staff have an adequate knowledge and understanding of how to deal with any child protection issues, although the procedures do not mention Local Safeguarding Children's Boards in their procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children generally enjoy their stay in the nursery. Most children speak openly and confidently to their peers and staff. Many of the children settle quickly and join in activities when they arrive. Toys and resources are easily accessible for children to self-select the activities of their choice, which meets their needs and interests. These are either set up around the room or stored in containers. Children happily play by themselves, in small groups or all together in group games. Younger children and toddlers are given more adult support and encouragement. They regularly use a very well resourced sensory room, which stimulates and mesmerises them, giving them joy. Babies and children are involved in daily opportunities for art and craft work which contribute to their creativity. Not all displays are created from scratch by children and contain significant staff input. Children are supported by the staff who generally know them

very well. As a consequence staff are able to build on what children themselves know and can do.

The sheer number of staff seeing to the babies and toddlers makes it difficult for them to accurately assess the baby's needs. For example, one child was laid down to rest that was not ready for a sleep for a further hour. Staff record all children and babies routines in a contact book, describing times they feed, have bottles or drinks, sleep and what they enjoy doing. Parents also use these books to share information with staff. Several staff have undertaken the Birth to three matters training and are implementing it. Staff plan for some daily activities to cover the aspects. Displays of the aspects and children at play enables parents to see how they plan to meet their children's needs. Staff also provide photographs of children at play, which informs parents and allows children to revisit special events.

Sessions at the nursery are a mixture of free play and adult directed play. The routine for older children sometimes impacts negatively on the children's learning and enjoyment as they no sooner get engrossed in an activity and it is time for tidying up. This does not enable children to get the most from the resources or activity, as they are unable to play for as long as they wish. One child was able to continue with his play by asking for the sand tray to be placed outside, during an outside play session and the staff happily facilitated him.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff plan the curriculum to promote progress towards the early learning goals and inclusion of all children. Children are making adequate progress towards the early learning goals. Most staff working with children regularly have a basic knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and provide a sufficient range of activities in each of the areas of learning. They plan to cover the contents of the early learning goals by focussing on a particular concept. The links to the learning outcome are very narrow and focuses on just one of the areas of learning. This does not encourage less experienced staff to understand the wider impact that a specific activity can have on children's learning. The daily plans denote specific areas of learning and children's proposed next experience. Plans include a section for reflective practice notes, both for planned activities and resources. Staff observe what resources children choose to use or not use, during free play sessions and plan for improvements. Most teams of staff are clear about what is expected of them and understand how children learn. However, some teams work together more effectively than others, which impacts on children's learning and enjoyment. Staff provide routine plans, information on the foundation stage and labelled art and craft displays for parents.

Daily self registration provides children with good opportunities to recognise their name and develop a sense of belonging. Children receive encouragement to develop an enjoyment of books and develop reading skills. Children clearly enjoy listening to stories and are very much involved in a well delivered interactive story time session. They confidently retell part of the narrative and correctly guess what happens next. Children know what books are available in the book corner and confidently fetch another book of their choice for staff to read. Children are beginning to learn the importance of language through signs, notices and labels. Staff help the children to develop their communication and language skills during snack and lunch times

and again in circle times. Children are encouraged to recall and talk about events in their own lives and those of their families.

On other occasions opportunities to arouse children's thinking are missed when staff fail to ask open-ended questions, stimulate their interests, and build on what they already know. For example, they have few opportunities to practise using positional language. Several opportunities for children to develop an understanding of simple problem solving and calculating through practical activities are missed. There are very few opportunities for children to reinforce mathematical concepts as activities relating to mathematical development are less evident. Staff missed several opportunities to encourage children to count through practical routines or use number words or mathematical concepts generally. Children are given some opportunities to reinforce their mathematical skills during action rhyme times. They receive good opportunities to sing nursery rhymes, building up a repertoire of songs. This is both planned for, and spontaneous.

Opportunities for children to develop their skills in designing and making are available for much of the sessions. Children enjoy playing with a pile of flour in a tray for an extended period. They were allowed to continue with this play for as long as they wish. This contributes to their creative development and helps them get the most out of the activity. Some thought is given to the organisation and provision of role play resources. They are encouraged to play in a post office and eagerly offer to open it up when a staff member wanted to buy a stamp. Children excitedly play with a new selection of musical instruments for the first time, thoroughly enjoying being creative. Consequently children's imaginations are being appropriately stimulated. Creative development is not sufficiently supported by the provision of dressing up clothes. Many are stored in a cardboard box and are not invitingly arranged in order to entice children to use this role play resource.

Their physical development is encouraged during the many opportunities for vigorous physical play both inside and outdoors, weather permitting. The outdoor area is inviting for children and there is an adequate range of both large apparatus and smaller resources that are of a good quality. This gives the children choices. They are given good opportunities to build on the development of their small muscle skills. They have access to floor puzzles, construction toys, mark making table and one-handed tools during craft activities. Children are also encouraged to cut their own fruit up at snack time. Children are competently using the computer, completing programmes by themselves or with suitable adult support. Both indoor and outdoor activities promote children's fine and gross motor skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit because secure relationships are established between practitioners and their parents. This is enhanced through relaxed and friendly communication as parent's register their children and place their child's contact book in a box. There are flexible settling in procedures. This provides both formal and informal opportunities for information to be shared about children's individual needs, interests, family and home circumstances. Consequently, practitioners develop a good understanding of children's individual circumstances, which ensures all children are valued as individuals.

Parents are well informed about the group through a variety of different ways, including opportunities for parents to participate in 'stay and play' sessions. They have also been actively involved in the garden project, sharing their ideas, raising money, as well as helping landscape the area with staff and their families. Parents contribute to their children's contact books and receive regular newsletters. There is information clearly displayed on the parent notice boards. They are provided with copies of the pre-schools policies and procedures, which includes the complaints procedure. This has recently been updated to reflect recent changes in legislation. Parents are well informed about the curriculum, pre-school topics and activities. All records are kept safe and secure in a lockable filing cabinet and remain confidential.

All children are valued and respected as individuals. There are resources, which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity and gender, as well as multicultural posters. However, not all are easily accessible to children. They provide support for the diversity of families living locally, by providing information on babies developmental needs in several languages. They celebrate a range of festivals. This would help make families feel welcome and ensure children's positive attitudes towards others are further established in these early years. Overall children learn about equality and justice through their play.

Children generally behave well. They show care and concern for each other, sharing and taking turns and playing well together. They chat happily and confidently during activities and are comfortable in the presence of less familiar adults. Children are developing good self-esteem through opportunities to voice their opinions, take decisions and make choices. Children are given lots of praise and encouragement. Staff are generally good role models, which encourages the children to remember their manners. Children are given consistent messages by staff and on most occasions reminders about what is expected of them and why. Children quickly follow staff when its time to tidy up. Generally the atmosphere remains calm and provides children with a suitable learning environment. On most occasions children and adults have warm relationships. Staff provide a meaningful range of activities and resources so that children have both times to relax as well as be active. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The registered person ensures that the required adult to child ratios is consistently met. They support children's needs effectively and safeguard their well-being. They ensure that there are a minimum of two adults on duty at all times. They follow robust recruitment procedures to ensure people working with children are thoroughly vetted. They delegate duties, for example, they have appointed a special educational needs co-ordinator and behaviour management co-ordinator. The manager and deputy are qualified and experienced. They strive to keep abreast of current childcare practice and, as a result, provide satisfactory care for children. Staff are encouraged to undertake further supplementary training courses, when they are available. They also provide 'in house' training.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are available, which contain relevant information and contact details. These impacts positively on the quality of care children receive, because generally adults working with the children know what is expected of them. For example, all staff sign in

and out of the nursery and insist that all visitors do the same. The registration certificate is displayed in a way that makes it easy for parents to see. Suitable organisation of activities, space and resources result in all children receiving adequate care. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Consequently, children's health, enjoyment and achievement are being promoted well.

Leadership and management are satisfactory Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff effectively monitor how well the children are making progress and this information is shared with parents. The setting is committed to improving the care and education for all its children and knows what needs improving most. The setting does assess its own teaching skills strength and weaknesses as they have implemented systems to critically analyse their routines and practices. Although this is a fairly new process, it is beginning to impact positively on the care and education children are receiving. These assessments are undertaken both formally and informally and includes evidence of reflective practice. There is a section in the planning for critically analysing how well the activity and methods meets children's needs. They demonstrate how they would plan and provide for the inclusion of children with special educational needs and for children from diverse ethnic backgrounds. They have a clear vision on how they want the setting to run and the equipment and resources required to improve the standard of education the children are receiving.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting was asked to ensure systems are in place to safeguard children's welfare, so that people who have access to children are suitable and improve staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They were also asked to implement rigorous systems to improve their quality of care and education provided and continue to develop planning and provision of a balanced range of resources in line with the Birth to three matters framework. As well as improve standards of cleanliness and develop an appropriate partnership with parents, in order to share information on their children's care and education. This the setting has adequately addressed by implementing or improving systems and routines and providing an on-going training programme for staff.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted received three complaints.

The first complaint related to National Standard 8: Food and drink. This involved an allegation that the provider was withholding drinks of water, whereby an Action was raised following discussion with the manager and deputy. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

The second complaint related to National Standard 2: Organisation and 12: Working in partnership with parent and carers. This involved an allegation regarding security on the premises, and unavailability of the manager, whereby an Action was raised following examination of relevant documentation. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met

the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

The third complaint related to National Standard 6: Safety, 7: Health and 12: Working in partnership with parents. This involved an allegation made about the setting not obtaining consent for administration of medication; not being asked to sign an accident report on the same day the accident took place; the failure to inform the parent/carer that her child had a grazed knee; and the failure of the setting to keep the complaint confidential. The provider investigated the complaint and submitted a report together with supporting evidence. Ofsted was satisfied that the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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.

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 all staff and children follow sound hygiene routines before handling and preparing food to safeguard children's health and wellbeing
- develop systems to ensure drinking water is always readily available to prevent children from becoming thirsty

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 staff increase their use of open-ended questioning skills to stimulate children's interests, build on what they already know to promote their language development
- provide opportunities for children to practice mathematical skills through practical daily routines
- increase staffs knowledge on how to provide a learning environment that fully challenges children and enables them to make the most of their time at nursery

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