



Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Regents Place

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	156518
Inspection date	06 March 2007
Inspector	Liz Corr
Setting Address	1 Triton Mall, Regents Place, Longford Street, London, NW1 3FN
Telephone number	020 7383 7176
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Registered person	Kidsunlimited Nurseries
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 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?

Regents Place nursery, opened in 2001. It is one of a large group of nurseries owned and managed by Kidsunlimited. It operates from three units on the ground floor within Triton Square Mall, close to Warren Street, in the London borough of Camden. The nursery opens each week day from 07:30 until 18:00 for 52 weeks a year.

Children are cared for in five individual rooms and are grouped according to their age. All children share access to an outside play area which is just outside the nursery.

There are currently 71 children on roll. Eight children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery caters for children in the local community and families working in the area.

The nursery employs 17 staff who work with the children, 13 members of staff hold relevant early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the Early Years service in Camden.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted by a range of positive procedures practised by staff. Hygienic procedures are in place for nappy changing and hand washing. Babies and toddlers are provided with individual flannels for washing their face and hands before and after meals. There are good facilities for older children to practise independence skills as they are learning to wash their hands by themselves. However, appropriate hand drying facilities are not always available and children are given toilet paper which, is unsuitable for hand drying.

Young children are able to fully take part and enjoy messy activities such as corn flour. Staff practise good hygiene by cleaning tables and floors appropriately afterwards. There are good procedures in place to ensure each child has a clean sheet with their names on at sleep time however, if these are laid out early, children walk over them in their shoes, as they go to lay down.

Children's health is safeguarded as there are appropriate procedures in place for the administration of medication and recording of accidents. There are sufficient numbers of staff with a first aid qualification, therefore children are adequately cared for if they become ill or have an accident.

Children are provided with a well balanced and nutritious diet. Meals are cooked on the premises and individual dietary needs are catered for. Children aged from two to three years have some discussion with staff at meal times. However, children are not learning to enjoy this as a social occasion, where they learn independence skills and chat about their day and the good food they are eating. The organisation of meal times means staff often leave the table to collect drinks, puddings or flannels, this unsettles children. There are occasions when meals arrive late and children are not fully occupied while they are waiting. Staff make some attempts to stimulate the children and sing some familiar songs with them but they become increasingly restless. Although when the meal arrives children are not rushed and are able to finish their food in their own time. They eat well and enjoy their meals.

Arrangements for ensuring young children are able to access drinking water when they need it are not well organised. Staff tend to rely on children pointing to cups or indicating they want a drink by sitting on the mat. Drinking water is available for older children at all times therefore, they are able to help themselves to water when they are thirsty.

Children enjoy regular outdoor exercise which contributes to their good health and physical development. They access a satisfactory range of equipment which helps them to develop physical skills as they run, jump, climb and balance. They also benefit from regular sessions of yoga and babies enjoy baby massage sessions.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are provided with a welcoming environment, attractive displays decorate the hallway, some groups rooms have decorated their rooms brightly with displays of children's work, although, this is not consistent in all rooms. There is ample furniture for children to rest, eat and play. They eat comfortably using age appropriate chairs and tables and rest in appropriate cots or floor mats.

Children are protected by the good procedures in place that identify and resolve safety hazards. A senior member of staff is responsible for carrying out daily checks including, removing unfolded buggies, to keep emergency exits clear. Although problems with the entry system have been reported, this has not been resolved. This means there are occasions when adults are able to enter the premises without staff's knowledge. This compromises children's safety.

Regular emergency evacuations take place at various times of the day. This ensures that staff know the procedure well and children learn how to keep themselves safe. Clear records are kept and fire safety equipment and alarms are regularly checked and tested.

Children are safeguarded from abuse and neglect. Good procedures ensure that appropriate action is taken if there is a concern about a child or, an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies have good opportunities to be creative. When they play with corn flour they are helped to make sense of what they see, smell and touch as they explore the different textures. They enjoy opportunities to make music and play with instruments with staff who sing with them. They are delighted during an activity using shredded paper, they enjoy sitting in it, clutching at it and laugh as staff gently let the paper fall on to their heads and faces. They respond well to familiar adults and are comforted when their Key Workers attend to them if they are upset. Staff ensure that all appropriate individual details are recorded and permissions in place before children start. However, not all babies receive a settling-in period and therefore are not familiar with staff or their Key Workers. Consequently, children are not fully secure in their new surroundings. Added to this babies do not spend sufficient time with their Key Worker and are cared for by the other staff in the room. As a result young children may be changed and fed by several different members of staff during the day. Therefore children are not sufficiently attached to one member of staff who can help them to feel secure and special.

Young children are provided with an adequate range of activities and experiences and the environment is organised so children can easily access the toys and equipment. Although children aged between one and two years are not always sufficiently challenged or stimulated. During some periods of the day there is very little choice for them and they tend to wander around aimlessly. In general, the range of equipment on offer is limited and staff rely on sharing equipment from other rooms. Each room has a home corner and book area but they are not

very inviting or well resourced. This limits children's interest and development in early reading and imaginary play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some staff have received training for the Foundation stage and demonstrate a sound knowledge of the early learning goals. However, there are periods in the day when staff cover from other rooms who have no training or experience in this area. Activities are planned in advance and provide children with a satisfactory curriculum. Staff have systems in place to observe, evaluate and identify the next steps in children's learning but this is not always put into practice to fully challenge children. The resources are organised to enable children to make choices and access them independently however, the book area and home corner are not well resourced to fully promote children's interest and development. Staff use sufficient techniques for questioning the children to extend their thinking and vocabulary. However, this is dependant on their experience and training. Children are excited when one member of staff reminds them that she has a baby. However, the conversation is not extended and the children soon lose interest.

Children are making secure progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Some children have developed firm friendships and happily chat to each other during activities. They enjoy carrying out tasks together such as, tidying up the home corner after use. They are praised for their hard work and as a result develop good self esteem. They happily engage in conversations with visitors, talking about their pictures and activities and are keen to know if the visitors are good friends too.

Children are developing their communication, language and literacy skills as they chat to each other during play. While children are playing with play dough, they talk to the adults about how they made the dough earlier in the day. They describe how they added sparkly paint and explain, you have to look carefully to see it. They have appropriate opportunities for practising early writing skills as they draw and paint. They make good use of the writing area as they write shopping lists using picture symbols. They enjoy using the envelopes and talk animatedly about their pictures inside. However, the book area is not well stocked and many of the books are old and torn. Therefore their interest in books is not fully promoted.

Children are beginning to explore numbers as they count the coloured sticks on their play dough which represent birthday candles. They count confidently together from one to ten. They are given opportunities to explore shape and space and use mathematical language such as 'how many ' as they build towers from Lego bricks. Staff ask them 'How many bricks do you think we will need to make this tower taller or longer?'

Children are making satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are involved in activities that help them to learn about the different cultures and beliefs of the staff and each other. Children also have access to some resources that promote positive images of diversity, although there are limited resources in the home corner and book area.

Children are developing a good knowledge of colour, texture and shape during creative activities. They enjoy making play dough from scratch, adding interesting resources to make the dough

colourful using sparkly paint. They make shapes that become birthday cakes and use coloured sticks to represent birthday candles. They discuss how the flour felt sticky on their hands when they added water. One boy excitedly shows the adults his chalk drawing on an easel of a firework display. He links this to a real experience he had obviously enjoyed.

Children have appropriate opportunities to develop their fine motor skills as they carefully manipulate the small coloured sticks for use with play dough. They are showing a keen interest in the writing area and are using pens, pencils and scissors with confidence. They carefully cut or tear off pieces of masking tape to seal their envelopes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children receive appropriate care because there are good systems in place to record their needs. Staff meet with parents before children begin their placement, to find out about their individual feeding and sleep patterns. Young children learn Sign with your Baby to help pre verbal children learn to communicate their needs.

There are some opportunities for children to learn about the world they live in. Children have access to a satisfactory range of equipment to promote positive images of diversity, such as posters, books, puzzles, dolls and small world toys. However, resources to promote positive images in the dressing-up area have not been fully developed. Children benefit from some activities to promote awareness of the different countries they, and the staff originate from. Parents of children who speak English as a second language, are asked to provide a list of key words to help staff communicate effectively, to meet their needs. This helps to promote children's identity and self esteem.

Children are generally well behaved and benefit from the age appropriate strategies used by staff to promote their behaviour. Children are praised and encouraged as they build with construction toys, tidy up and when they follow instructions from staff. When younger children take things from each other, staff encourage them to be kind to each other and to take turns. This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. There are appropriate procedures in place to identify and support children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Younger children benefit from the satisfactory relationships between parents and staff. Effective information is shared before each child is settled. Daily information sheets provide parents with basic information about their child's day. Staff record how long they slept, what they have eaten, nappy changes and activities. Some parents commented that they are happy with recent improvements including a more secure management structure which, has helped to develop better communication systems. However, some parents thought it could be further improved. Parents feel that they and their child are warmly welcomed and any concerns they raise are acted upon. A complaints policy is available for parents but does not contain the correct contact details for the regulator. Complaints are recorded appropriately and actioned.

The partnership with parents of older children is satisfactory. An information board contains a daily update of the children's activities. Staff are available for further discussion at the end

of each day. Meetings are arranged for parents to discuss in more detail how their child is progressing towards the early learning goals. They are also invited to look at their children's records at any time. However, formal meetings do not take place at the beginning of the Foundation stage for parents to share what their child already knows. There are no formal systems in place to inform parents how they can work together in partnership to continue their child's learning at home. As a result parents are not fully involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a reasonably structured environment. A full range of policies are available for parents including one for complaints. However, this does not contain details of how to contact the regulator. Satisfactory communication systems ensure staff meet fairly regularly as a team and staff in each room discuss issues informally. Individual meetings between management and staff members have not been fully developed and therefore staff are not fully supported and guided. Most staff have a suitable qualification and further training has been identified to increase their knowledge.

Staff are deployed well to ensure that child to adult ratios are met. Good organisation ensures that each child has an allocated Key Worker however, this has not been fully implemented to ensure children receive personal care from their Key Worker. Information for parents of younger children is given through daily information sheets, information packs and discussion. However, there is little information displayed for parents in each room, such as, daily menus and activity plans.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The current management team consist of a temporary manager and two deputy managers. They demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the Foundation Stage. They are keen to ensure that staff continue to develop their knowledge in this area through further training and stronger partnerships with parents, in order for children to meet the early learning goals. The room leader demonstrates a firm commitment and vision for the future to ensure that the children benefit from an exciting learning environment. The appointment of permanent manager, who will soon be in post, will ensure that the senior member of staff in the pre school has more time to make the necessary changes. Some efforts have been made to improve the learning environment and advice has been sought form the Early Years Team in Camden. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection organisation of group rooms has improved to ensure that children aged under two years are cared for with no more than twelve children. Improvements have been made to menus so that food provided is healthy, well balanced and culturally diverse. Some improvements have been made to the variety of resources and activities for children under two years. Staff plan and provide activities using the Birth to three matters framework and as a result there are lots of opportunities for young children to be involved in creative play using natural materials. However, improvements in resources for imaginative play and the book areas have not been addressed.

Improvements have also been made for children during the Foundation Stage. The evaluation and assessment of children has been focused on to support the planning, however, this does not always follow on to ensure suitable challenges are provided for children. Children have access to more varied technology however, the variety of books to support children's learning remains outstanding.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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 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):

- improve organisation of meal times to give children aged from two years, opportunities to learn independence skills by encouraging them to serve themselves and ensure that all children have access to fresh drinking water at all times
- improve the organisation of the care for children under three years to ensure they receive personal care by their Key Workers
- improve the range of resources in the home corner and book area and include resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

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 that the assessment of children improves the quality of challenges for individual children
- improve information sharing to promote partnership with parents and to extend children's learning at home

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