



Kaleidoscope Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY312272
Inspection date	16 November 2006
Inspector	Annie Williams
Setting Address	Methodist Church Hall, Bartholomew Street, Dover, Kent, CT16 2LH
Telephone number	01304 212067
E-mail	
Registered person	Kaleidoscope Childcare Ltd
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?

Kaleidoscope Childcare is one of three childcare settings run by Kaleidoscope Childcare Limited. It opened in 2005 and operates from two rooms of the Methodist church hall in Dover, Kent. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is currently open each weekday from 09:00 to 12:00, although they are registered to provide full day care should the demand be there. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 23 children aged from two to under five years on roll; of these eight receive funding for nursery education. Children mainly come from the local area with some children coming from surrounding towns and villages to attend the speech and language therapy unit within the pre-school, which is funded by the health authority. The pre-school supports a number of children with learning difficulties/disabilities.

The setting employs six practitioners; three of the practitioners, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. A specialist practitioner is in post with speech and language qualifications to support children and one practitioner is studying. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The environment is cleaned to an adequate standard because practitioners work hard to ensure that it is clean enough for children to play. Careful thought has been given to nappy changing areas thus ensuring children's privacy and dignity is respected. Effective procedures introduced by practitioners make sure that snacks are prepared hygienically, for example, they use appropriate cleaning materials to keep surfaces clean and germ free. Children learn about the importance of keeping themselves clean because practitioners give those gentle reminders to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before snack time and after visiting the toilet.

Medicine and accident procedures are clear and understood by practitioners so that children receive the required treatment and parents are informed. A sick child policy is in place so that parents know that children with infectious illness do not attend and practitioners are quick to contact parents if their children become poorly at the setting. This is helpful towards protecting others from infection. A first aid kit is easily accessible within the setting and there are two practitioners who have up-to-date training to enable appropriate treatment to be given to children in the event of a medical emergency. Most parents' permissions are in place to enable practitioners to respect their wishes related to emergency medical advice or treatment.

Children learn to make healthy choices because practitioners provide a choice of healthy snacks and drinks. Children eagerly visit the snack table and eat a range of healthy food, such as dried and fresh fruit. Milk or water is offered at snack time and water is available throughout the session for children to keep their bodies hydrated and quench their thirst.

Outside play activities are not included in the planning, but children receive daily opportunities to be involved in rigorous physical play; they play outside in fine weather and when it is wet practitioners provide physical play, such as music and movement. In addition children practise their large muscles skills by climbing and balancing on equipment in the play room, such as the slide and balancing bench. They confidently use the apparatus displaying control of their bodies and an awareness of others. Younger children use the apparatus with gentle support from practitioners, for example, holding children's hand to guide them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The environment is welcoming to the children because practitioners prepare the play areas before children arrive. A recent commitment from practitioners to improve the surroundings for children means that the décor of the play room is bright and clean. The play room

surroundings are further enhanced by the attractive dividers and drawers used for resources and to define play areas.

Procedures for the safe arrival and collection of the children are successful because practitioners supervise children leaving the building and ensure that children leave with authorised adults. Because the building is open to other users during the pre-school operation, security pads have been added to the pre-school room to contribute towards keeping children safe and sound. In other areas of the building practitioners are vigilant to make sure children are safe.

Fire detection equipment is accessible in areas of the building and fire drills are carried out periodically. Consequently, children are familiar with how to leave the building safely in the event of an emergency. Attention has recently been given to ensuring that practitioners can quickly alert others to possible fire, for example, by making the fire whistle more accessible.

A daily check list is in place to highlight risks, such as loose heater guards, but they are not always successful in identifying that the covered heater is too hot and mats present a possible trip hazard. A range of toys and equipment is available to all the children and cover all areas of development. Toys are kept clean through a cleaning rota and sometimes children join in toy washing to give them a responsibility for their environment and contribute to their independence.

A red shirt is worn by practitioners so that they are easily identifiable to children and adults as a safe person within the setting. Recent training attended by the supervisor means that she is up-to-date with knowledge and understanding of issues related to safeguarding children's welfare and the registered person has a thorough understanding of procedures. However, the remainder of practitioners are insecure about safeguarding children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily and enter the play room readily. A practitioner is always on hand to support younger children who need care and attention in the early settling in period. If they wish, children are able to bring along a comfort to help them feel more settled. The play area is clearly and attractively defined for separate play areas, for example, a cosy book area and a large space for building or playing with the cars and garage. This gives children the space they need to spread out when they are building and helps them know what is out to play with. Books available for children contain familiar characters who they are interested in, such as Fireman Sam. This attracts children to the books and they snuggle up on the big cushions to share a book with a practitioner.

There is always an art and craft activity available for those children who prefer to glue and stick or paint. Occasionally these activities are too adult directed and concentrate more on the end product for display rather on the actual exploring and investigating that takes place by the children. Opportunities are available on occasions for children to explore and investigate alongside practitioners, for example, they explore and make marks through the use of shaving foam and corn flour mixed with water.

Children clearly enjoy the singing sessions at pre-school and join in enthusiastically with actions. Because practitioners work closely with speech and language therapists, children benefit from an individual programme delivered by a specialist practitioner. However, sometimes children's play comes to an abrupt end because they are not reminded of their withdrawal into the short session of therapy. Birth to three matters is included in the overall planning but is used alongside activities for the Foundation Stage and not based on children's interest and therefore, is not always meaningful to the children, such as sticking on a pre-drawn picture of Pudsey bear.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Practitioners have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and as a result children are making satisfactory progress in their development.

Children are friendly; they arrive happily and settle quickly to their play. Children make choices in their play from the range that practitioners set out. They display appropriate concentration levels on their chosen activities and play alongside and sometimes with their friends. Together they play and talk with practitioner's gentle support, for example, when they play with the dough, rolling and cutting shapes or building. Practitioners support children's play and language by describing to them what they are doing. Children are learning to share and take turns, for example, as they wait to go on the slide.

Children are learning to take care of their environment through their involvement in the daily routine, such as sweeping up and washing toys. Opportunities to extend children's independence are not always extended, for example, at snack time and independent self-selection of toys. Children really enjoy stories and benefit from practitioners' support in the book area; they learn how a book works and are beginning to understand that print carries meaning. Children receive daily opportunities to recognise their own names through the system of registration when children stick their name to the 'We are here' board. There is a specific writing area where children have the opportunity to write, but this is not extended to other areas in the play room and overall practitioners do not act as role models for the children to encourage them to write for a purpose.

Counting features regularly throughout the session and calculation is introduced to the children through rhymes, such as, 'Five currant buns'. Shape, space and measure is explored through the daily routine of emptying and refilling containers in the home corner, tidy up time, making dough and sand and water play.

The computer is a popular choice amongst the children and supports their learning; they laugh out loud as they click on the screen to 'Dora the explorer'. There is a regular routine so that children become familiar with what happens next. A photograph time line is planned to further support children's understanding. At the moment no prior warning is given to children about changes in the routine so they can finish off what they are playing with.

There is an attractive pretend area that contains new and attractive equipment to support children's play. Children visit the kitchen and make dinner with the dried pasta and peas provided by practitioners. Music is a regular feature of the session; children join in enthusiastically with songs and actions and sometimes use musical instruments to accompany their musical session.

Children explore different materials at pre-school and join in with art and craft activities, such as painting and collage. Although the pre-cut templates show the hard work of practitioners, they do not enable children to explore their own imagination in art and design.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily and most settle quickly to play. The praise and encouragement given by practitioners contributes to children's positive behaviour. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported in the setting. Children identified as needing extra help are supported by a specific person to help them in their play and learning. The sign language 'Makaton' is used by practitioners to help children communicate if they have difficulty with speech and language and further support is provided by a specially trained practitioner who works closely with speech therapists.

Children explore the local community through local walks, such as to the post office and the bakers. Children find out about different cultures through planned festivals, such as 'Diwali' and 'Chinese New Year'. Children's awareness of differences in our society is further promoted through resources and posters in the group. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Parents are pleased with their child's progress and are greeted warmly by practitioners. They receive regular reports about their children's development within the setting and are informed about what is happening and procedures through the attractive prospectus and newsletters. A key worker system is in place but not always effective in forming relationships with parents to give them daily feedback and thought is not always given to cover absent key workers. As yet, parents are not involved in establishing children's starting points on entry and they do not yet contribute to children's developmental records. A questionnaire has been introduced to enable practitioners to gain parents' feedback related to resources and this is to be extended to include views on care and education.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Practitioners working at the setting have undergone checks to establish their suitability and three out of six hold a relevant early years qualification. A specially appointed person is qualified to support children in areas of speech and language. Recruitment procedures are rigorous to ensure that practitioners have the necessary skills to work with young children and all required checks are undertaken.

The registration certificate is displayed to keep parents informed and the attendance register confirms that the provider complies with the conditions of registration. Parents also sign children in at the beginning of the session but sometimes this can be confusing if the records do not match. All the required records for the safe and efficient management of the setting and for

the welfare and care of children are mostly well maintained and stored securely. At the moment, the systems to check that all documents have the necessary information and are maintained correctly do not always work, for example, obtaining all parents' written permissions and checking all children's key worker folders.

The daily routine is balanced so that children have time to be active and involve themselves in their chosen play. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and understood by practitioners. Practitioners are deployed well within the setting to support children in their play and learning. They move around the room to play with the children and help them learn.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Practitioners work hard as a team and set out resources daily to support children's learning. They display a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage which contributes to children's satisfactory progress. Planning and assessment continues to evolve. Planning is based on a theme, with activities to match the theme and stepping stones. Observations are made on children and provide useful information to practitioners, but the information is not yet used effectively to help practitioners plan based on children's interest, what they know and can do and what they need to learn next.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the quality and standard of care was judged as inadequate. As a result, five actions were made. These related to health and hygiene, safety, induction procedures and documentation. The setting has taken on board all actions and improved health and hygiene by setting in place systems for cleaning and nappy changing. Safety has improved through simple risk assessments; the security of heater guards and the covering of a gas tap and plug sockets. Practitioners are aware of the correct procedures to follow and documentation is mostly well maintained. Therefore, outcomes for children are satisfactory.

The previous inspection judged nursery education as satisfactory. There were two recommendations made related to improving children's opportunities for counting and calculating and revisiting information. The setting is developing these areas by ensuring counting is a regular feature of the routine and allowing children to revisit their play experiences as part of the daily routine. The nursery education remains satisfactory.

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):

- regularly review documentation to ensure that all necessary records are in place and maintained correctly
- obtain all parents' written permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment
- develop all practitioners' knowledge and understanding of child protection
- introduce a system to remind children about changes in routine [applies to nursery education also]

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):

- continue to develop the use of observations to inform the planning so that it is based on children's interests, what they can do and what they need to learn next [applies to care also]
- further develop partnership with parents by including them in establishing children's starting points on entry to the group and provide them with opportunities to contribute to their child's development records [applies to care also].

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