

# Kings Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127306
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Cilla Rachel Mullane
<b>Setting Address</b>	King George's, Playing Field Pavilion, Park Ave, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 1QX
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<b>Registered person</b>	Kim Beech and Karen Williams
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Kings Nursery opened in 1998. It operates from two rooms in a pavilion. It is situated in a park in Sittingbourne, Kent. A maximum of 46 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09.00 to 15.00 during school terms. All children share access to the outside park.

There are currently 66 children aged from two to under five years on roll; of these 46 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery has experience working with children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs nine staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from an early years advisor.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

A good proportion of staff hold current first aid qualifications so children would be well cared for in an emergency. Satisfactory written records are kept regarding accident(s) and medication, but parents do not consistently sign the records to acknowledge the entries, and although parents give permission for medication to be administered, staff do not record when it is given.

Care is taken to ensure that children receive healthy and nutritious snacks, such as fruit and vegetables. Information is displayed for parents regarding children's snacks, reinforcing the message about the importance of healthy food. Also at snack time, children are encouraged to make healthy choices when offered milk or water. Children can access drinks easily in the pre-school room, so are learning the importance of keeping their bodies hydrated. Staff sit with the children at lunchtime to eat their food, showing by example the importance of healthy eating.

The nursery is adjacent to a large playing field, and an enclosed children's play area with equipment such as climbing apparatus and swings. Children therefore benefit from regular play outside in the fresh air. However, there is no planning for outdoor activities, to ensure that all areas of learning are included. Also, physical activities do not consistently challenge children; they generally play within their capabilities. When exercising, staff point out the effect of physical activity on their bodies, for example, showing they are out of breath, so children are starting to recognize the importance of exercise.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff work hard to set out the children's environment on a daily basis. Children can choose from the activities set out, but in addition, they can ask for favourites, and in the pre-school room, children eagerly discuss and choose from an activity book. Children in the pre-school room also benefit from access to a craft trolley, but children downstairs do not readily have access to materials which they can use to express their creativity. The role play area in the pre-school room is well-equipped, and children make the most of resources here.

Children are kept safe whilst attending the nursery. Staff's good awareness of fire safety means that children would be protected in event of a fire. Fire drills are practiced regularly, and children are able to explain what they need to do when they hear the whistle. Sensible procedures keep the children safe. For example, children are carefully accompanied on the stairs, and the two rooms are kept locked; staff are vigilant about securing the doors as they enter and leave the rooms. Children are safe as they arrive and are collected, as staff call parents in one at a time. Staff have been proactive in asking for mesh shutters on the windows, so children are safe upstairs.

Staff have a basic knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures, but have leaflets to which they can refer, if they had concerns about the children. They understand the importance of keeping records and not questioning children. Therefore children's welfare would be promoted. There is an appropriate policy regarding what would happen if a member of staff was accused of harming children, and staff are aware of what action would be taken.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children throughout the nursery are settled and happy, because staff are kind and caring, and feel it is important to make children feel secure. The youngest children are cared for in a small group, and the recent introduction of a key worker system means that they are cared for by staff who know them well. Group times are a strength within the nursery; staff working with the youngest children are skilled at holding their attention, telling stories which hold their interest, and make them laugh out loud. There are regular craft activities, and the pre-school children can often access their own resources and extend these, using their imaginations. However, the younger children do not have constant access to a craft trolley, and the activities are sometimes over-directed by adults, limiting children's chances to represent their unique and individual perceptions of the world, unrestricted by adult ideas.

Staff make regular observations of their keyworker children, and use these to ensure that children take part in activities which cover all aspects of the Birth to three framework. They then use these observations to plan children's next steps. Children's developmental needs should then be met when staff add appropriate activities to a daily plan, which will enable individual children to take part in activities which will challenge them and help them practice these intended next steps. However, staff do not always indicate which activities are intended for certain children, and instead staff bring out an unplanned selection of toys and equipment. Therefore this system is not working totally effectively, and activities are provided with the same learning objectives and outcomes for all children.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Staff work hard to plan the curriculum for the Foundation Stage; activities are planned to include all the areas of learning, but there is no planning for outside play, and challenging physical activity is given less weight than the other areas of learning. Staff observe children as they play, and use these observations to show progress down the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff consider children's wellbeing, and involvement in activities. Children's keyworkers use their observations of children's interests and achievements to plan a goal for them each term, which enables them to plan activities which will help children achieve this goal. This system is in its early stages and is developing; currently not all staff are consistently linking observations to children's progress down the stepping stones.

Self selection of activities and resources by the children is limited, as toys and equipment have to be set out and stored away daily, but staff appropriately recognize that children learn more effectively when they are interested in, and can revisit activities, so staff ask children what they want to do, using an 'activity book' with pictures as ideas, and quickly respond to children's requests for activities. Children are very keen to use this resource, chatting eagerly about what they wish to play with.

Currently not all children who receive funding for nursery education are benefiting from being observed and assessed with reference to the six areas of learning of the Foundation Stage: the current organization of the nursery means that some funded three year olds are being cared for, observed and assessed with the two year olds, but staff are aware of this issue, and are working to more thoroughly meet their needs.

Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

Children in the pre-school room are generally settled and ready to learn, because they feel secure having visited the room and the staff several times before moving upstairs. Children have good relationships with each other, for example, chatting and cooperating in groups, putting dolls to bed and cooking meals, when engaging in imaginative play in the role play area. Children's communication language and literacy skills are increasing when staff take opportunities to chat with them, asking questions to make them think. There are plentiful opportunities for children to practice pre-writing skills: they make marks in foam and are invited to write or represent their own names to label their work. Books are always available to children, and they are learning that print conveys meaning when staff read to them, showing them the words and the pictures. Children are really enjoying stories, because staff are skilled at holding their interest, and encouraging them to join in.

Children are starting to understand the meaning of numbers. They practice counting at group times and snack times, thinking about, for example, how many cups are needed. Songs such as Five Currant Buns help them think about calculation and subtraction, and this is brought to life when staff introduce real pennies to pay.

Although children play in the fresh air quite often, staff do not identify different learning intentions in the planning, or think about providing activities which challenge children. Children enjoy activities such as playing with the parachute, and are encouraged to think about the effect of exercise on their bodies. Children are making very good use of the role play area, creating scenarios, and making good use of resources such as pretend food. Craft activities are often planned by adults, such as making decorated Easter baskets, but children are encouraged to extend the activities, for example, cutting up their own decorations, rather than using the prepared resources. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing through activities such as discussing where Barnaby Bear has been on his holidays, and identifying destinations on the map. They learn about nature and life-cycles when they grow sunflowers from seed.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff know the children well, and appreciate their individual personalities. They endeavour to meet individual children's needs by making observations in order to identify their intended next steps. However, this is not always successful, as activities are not always planned with reference to the observations. Children learn about diversity within society from activities such as the celebration of festivals from other countries, for example, Chinese New Year. Different countries and cultures are brought to life for children when they take Barnaby Bear on holiday, and bring back photographs. Holiday destinations are then plotted on a map of the world, making geography and travel more relevant to children.

Overall, children's behaviour is good as they learn what is acceptable and become aware of their own and other's feelings. Staff's consistent use of praise and encouragement help children to behave well, and they act as good role models, setting a good, positive example for behaviour. Games, such as those involving turn taking with dice, help children to understand rules, fairness and turn taking. Staff speak positively and kindly to the children, explaining why certain behaviour is unacceptable.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory.

The Birth to three matters poster is displayed, and parents are given verbal information about this framework when their children start at the nursery, and again given verbal information about the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning when children move 'up' to the room where the funded children are cared for. There is no written information about the Foundation Stage for parents to take away and read, for example, there are no posters, and it is not mentioned in the prospectus. Parents receive relevant information about children's activities via contact records. However, the older children's activities are not displayed for parents. Parents are aware that the nursery keeps written information about their children's progress, and that they need to ask to see these records. However, they will receive written termly reports, with information such as progress linked to the areas of learning. Parents are given a telephone number to contact Ofsted with complaints, but the procedure does not reflect current guidelines, and this is a breach of regulation. Children generally benefit from staffs' supportive and friendly relationships with parents. Parents' are welcome to stay in the nursery to settle their children, and children can bring familiar items from home to help them feel secure. Children are cared for according to parent wishes, for example, they give written permission for photographs to be taken at the nursery. Currently, some funded children are being assessed using the Birth to three framework, as opposed to the six areas of learning relating to the Foundation Stage, so progress records for parents are not helpful.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. For example, a member of staff told a story about Jack and the Beanstalk using puppets; lots of the children were spellbound.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

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

The nursery is organized so that the funded children are cared for in one group upstairs, and the two to three year olds are looked after downstairs. At the moment, this is not totally effective, as a few funded children have stayed downstairs, when they have been ready to move up. However, this problem is being addressed, so that children can benefit from being grouped according to their needs. Staff organize their time well, cooperating as a team, and sharing responsibilities. Teamwork is a strength, and staff make positive use of staff meetings, discussing issues which directly effect the children, such as the use of the Birth to three framework. The staff group is well-qualified, so children are cared for by knowledgeable practitioners.

Most required documentation is in place, (with the exception of the complaints procedure, which does not reflect current guidance), including an accurate record of the children's attendance, and the registration certificate is displayed, informing parents of the nursery's conditions of registration.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

Management and staff are willing to learn and make changes in order to improve the care and education of the children. They are developing the use of the Birth to three framework to meet the needs of individual children, and trying to ensure the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is delivered effectively to all children. Management are aware of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. They feel that they are good at communicating verbally with parents, and that the children are happy and contented. They are working to address weaknesses which they have identified, such as improving the use of observation and assessment to inform planning.

They have made recent improvements, such as introducing a keyworker system, which has had a positive impact on the care and education of the children. They have recently sought feedback from parents via a questionnaire. They have successfully addressed the recommendations of the last inspection, improving care and education for children, although some work, such as making effective use of assessments, is on-going.

Most areas of learning are equally covered in planning, with the exception of activities which challenge older, more able children.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection it was agreed that the nursery could improve the care of the children by appointing designated members of staff for behaviour management and learning difficulties and disabilities, by ensuring that the attendance record is accurate, by implementing a key worker system and by recording medication given to children. All these issues have been successfully addressed.

It was agreed to improve the nursery education of the children by identifying children's next steps in the planning of activities, by providing children with more opportunities to write their name and form letters correctly, and by allowing children to become more independent by providing them with more access to toys and equipment. The system for using children's planned next steps to inform the planning is developing, they have regular opportunities to practise pre-writing skills and children have access to a craft trolley and an activity book is used for them to identify what they would like to play with.

### **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):

- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures
- develop the complaints procedure in line with current guidance

- ensure that parents sign to acknowledge the entries in the accident record, and keep a signed record of when medication is given
- provide children with a range of materials to help them to represent their unique and individual perception of the world, unrestricted by adult ideas.

### **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 effective use of observations in order to identify individual children's next steps in learning, and use any information gained from observations to inform the planning of activities (also applies to care)
- continue to improve the organization of the nursery, so that funded children are observed and assessed with reference to the areas of learning and the early learning goals
- provide parents with information about the educational programme and their children's progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure that the planning, including that for the outdoors area, covers the breadth of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and that all children are regularly challenged by activities to promote their gross motor skills (also applies to care).

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)