



Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Cambridge Science Park

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221633
Inspection date	09 January 2007
Inspector	Emma Bright
Setting Address	319 Cambridge Science Park, Milton Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 0WG
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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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kidsunlimited at the Cambridge Science Park is one of a national chain of nurseries run by Kidsunlimited Nurseries. It opened in 2000 and operates from a purpose-built, two storey building situated on the Science Park, on the outskirts of Cambridge. A maximum of 165 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open five days a week from 07:30 to 18:00 all year round. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 168 children aged from five months to under five years on roll. Of these, 37 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area as most parents travel to work in or around the Science Park. The nursery currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 35 staff. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are currently working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children are very well nourished; they benefit from the expertise of the cook who liaises with staff to make sure that special diets and allergies are carefully catered for. Well planned menus provide balance and variety which ensure that children's nutritional needs are very well met. Children readily tuck in to their lunch; many ask for second helpings and they enjoy the social occasion that meal times provide as they chat with staff and their peers. Babies' dietary needs are very well met. An effective system is in place to ensure that bottle feeds are given correctly and staff share clear information with the cook about which babies are being weaned onto solids. This ensures that babies' nutritional needs are safely met. Children learn about healthy eating through practical experiences such as growing food or cooking; they enjoy making fruit kebabs, confidently naming the range of fruits they have carefully placed on the skewer. They help themselves to fresh drinking water when they need it so that they are well hydrated.

Children are well cared for if they become unwell or have an accident because clear information is gathered from parents and records are in place to make sure that appropriate care is given. Accurate details of children's medical needs are recorded and most staff are qualified in paediatric first aid so that they can act swiftly in an emergency. Thorough recording systems ensure that parents are well informed of any accidents their child sustains whilst at the setting. Children effectively learn about personal hygiene through regular routines such as washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating; they explain "you wash your hands because germs make you poorly". Staff wear gloves and aprons when changing nappies to prevent cross-infection and they act as good role models, wiping down surfaces before serving food to help children to stay healthy.

All children learn about leading a healthy lifestyle through everyday, practical experiences. Older children enjoy running around outdoors in all kinds of weather and they particularly enjoy being outdoors in the dark. Babies enjoy being wheeled around the outdoor area, whilst they observe the older children at play. This helps all children to understand the importance of regular fresh air and exercise. Children develop good physical coordination as they confidently pedal and steer their tricycles, and younger children excitedly 'toddle' after the hoops and balls. Indoors, all children explore a range of movements as they engage in 'animal yoga', baby massage and relaxation, and they all enjoy dancing and jumping to music. This helps them to develop good muscle control, feel relaxed and develop a sense of overall well-being. Children and babies sleep and rest when they need to so they are happy and content.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is enhanced by very good security procedures to restrict access to the setting and prevent them from leaving the premises unaccompanied. High handles prevent children from accessing areas, such as store rooms and the kitchen, without adult supervision. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of children to ensure their safety, particularly during mealtimes. For example, children carefully blow on their food before they eat it because they know "it's a bit hot". Children's safety in case of fire is given high priority; they regularly practise the emergency escape plan and explain that "you go outside" for the fire drill. This means they all know what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation and are familiar with the routine.

Children move freely indoors, safely accessing equipment and activities to follow their own interests. Staff ensure that the environment is welcoming and well prepared for children's play; a good range of quality toys and resources are readily available, which stimulates children's interest and enhances their development. Resources have been carefully selected to support children's play; they are cleaned and checked regularly to ensure that they remain safe and in good condition.

Risk assessments and thorough daily checks by staff further promote children's safety. Detailed safety policies and procedures are clearly implemented by staff, for example, documents are in place to record any existing injuries or concerns, which ensure children remain safe. Children are well protected and kept safe from harm as all staff have a clear understanding of their role in child protection. All staff receive child protection training during their induction at the nursery and regularly update their knowledge so that they are able to act in children's best interests. The designated person ensures that any concerns are dealt with effectively, so that children's welfare is fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and enjoy their time at the nursery; they separate readily from their parents and carers, settling into their activities on arrival. Children are confident and play happily together, and they enjoy warm and affectionate relationships with the staff who are sensitive to their needs. This contributes to the children's sense of belonging and helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Children benefit from the good range of activities and resources on offer, which they access easily so that they can follow their own interests. For example, they explore their imagination in spontaneous activities. They wear pots and pans on their heads as they 'go to the moon' where 'it is raining' and staff join in the fun as they all 'moonwalk in space'. Although staff provide a variety of experiences, some activities and routines do not consistently challenge or enable children to extend their independent learning.

Babies benefit from an interesting range of practical activities that follow the 'Birth to three matters' framework, such as messy play and music sessions and they eagerly explore the 'treasure baskets'. They are becoming independent learners and enjoy rolling balls along the floor, excitedly crawling after them. Staff make good use of everyday routines to engage and extend babies' skills; they ensure that equipment and materials are easily accessible so babies explore

and experiment independently, therefore developing their individual skills and interests. Babies form good relationships with staff who are sensitive to their needs. For example, babies' early communication skills are developing through warm interaction with the staff, who respond positively to their talk. Babies' well-being is enhanced by the high level of communication between staff and parents, which ensures their individual needs are met.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from staff's good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn through practical, meaningful activities. Planning is in place and provides an interesting range of activities and experiences that cover all areas of learning. However, some activities lack challenge and stimulation, which means children do not benefit from a richer learning environment. Children's achievements are linked to the stepping stones, and observations inform children's assessment records, which show that they are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children's independence skills are developing well; they concentrate and persevere in tasks that stimulate them. Their behaviour is good and they have good turn taking skills as they negotiate for popular resources, politely asking "Can I have a turn?". Children demonstrate an awareness of the needs of others as they help to tie each other's shoelaces, carefully explaining that it is "So you don't fall over". Children understand that print carries meaning as they look at the menu, describing it as a 'food map' and they dictate their stories to staff who write down their ideas. They look at books alone or together which they handle with care and respect and thoroughly enjoy listening to well-read stories. In addition, children's continuing interest in books is encouraged through a library system which allows them to take books home to share with their parents. Children are confident communicators; they initiate conversations with each other and adults, using a wide range of vocabulary to express their ideas and talk about what they know. For example, they explain that when the seasons change "There are no leaves on the tree in winter, but in spring they all have five leaves".

Children find out about and identify living things; they grow vegetables in the garden which they tend and harvest. They competently use everyday technology in their play, such as tape recorders and calculators, and skilfully use the computer with a range of programmes. Children develop their understanding of numbers, counting and calculation in a range of activities, such as singing and during the daily routine when they count how many children are present. They know precisely how old they are, for example "I am three and three quarters" and "I am three and a half". They also know which number is the bigger as they remark "So I am older and that's the difference!". Children enjoy talking about events in their own lives that are important to them and share them readily at circle time; they talk about their feelings, expressing themselves competently asking staff "Did you miss me when I wasn't here at Christmas?". Children express their imagination by re-enacting familiar scenarios in the role play area. They cook in the home corner and request that the oven door is not opened "because the cake isn't ready". Children enjoy making up and telling their own stories. For example, in the outdoor area they explain that "Two swans live behind the bush. One is called Thomas the tank engine and one is called Andrew".

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the setting's strong emphasis of working with parents and carers. Good settling-in procedures that are based around their individual needs help to support children in the transition between home and the setting. Parents receive clear and detailed information about the setting so they know about activities and events, and have daily opportunities to discuss their child with staff. Clear, written daily records are shared between staff and parents, and this ensures parents have additional information about their child's day. This helps children to settle quickly and ensures their individual needs continue to be met. All documentation is in place to share information with parents and carers so that they know about the setting's policies and procedures.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their behaviour is good and they work together co-operatively, such as helping one another to tidy up. Staff act as good role models, using positive language to reinforce the rules of the setting and as a result children work harmoniously together. Staff set clear boundaries, which helps children learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit from the good support they receive and staff work proactively with parents and other agencies to support these children's needs. This ensures they are fully included in the nursery. Children play with a good range of resources that promote a positive view of the wider world and they enjoy talking about their own families, which helps them to understand about their differences and similarities.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive early education is good. Staff seek parental views about their child's needs, interests and achievements before the child starts, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Regular parents' evenings, with daily written and verbal contact continue this good practice of sharing information. This clearly contributes to children's well-being in the setting. Parents know that they can view their child's records at any time and meet regularly with their child's key worker, which means they are informed of how their child is progressing and developing. However, parents have fewer opportunities to support their child's learning at home. This means that children do not benefit from the sharing of activities with their parents that would further enhance their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a welcoming and attractive environment which provides plenty of space for them to move around safely and independently. They are happy and content because staff develop caring relationships with them. Effective recruitment procedures ensure that the staff have enough experience and the necessary qualifications to carry out their role. All staff are rigorously vetted to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. The induction procedure and detailed operational plan, with up-to-date information for staff, makes sure that all members of the team are secure in their knowledge of their roles and responsibilities. Over half of the staff team hold early years qualifications and appraisals identify areas for professional development to further improve staff's knowledge and understanding in early years practice.

A good system is in place to facilitate promotion opportunities for staff and to enable them to take responsibility for sharing their skills and supporting their colleagues.

Staff work well together as a team and the good adult:child ratio enables staff to work flexibly to support children's learning in small groups and on an individual basis, when appropriate. All required documentation is in place and comprehensive policies underpin the good practice in promoting positive outcomes for children. Good settling-in procedures ensure that parents feel secure in the care their child receives and this means children settle readily and become confident members of the nursery.

The leadership and management of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Regular meetings enable staff to work effectively as a team and all staff participate in an ongoing self-evaluation of their practice, which they use this to identify areas for further development. However, systems to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education are not yet fully developed to ensure that children have access to rich learning experiences. Children benefit from the staff's knowledge and understanding of how children learn and their ongoing commitment to further training to update their knowledge and practice. Staff work well together as a team and demonstrate enthusiasm to create a learning environment that promotes positive outcomes for children. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to provide additional resources that reflect diversity in culture and ability. The nursery has developed the range of resources and this means children have further opportunities to learn about diversity and the wider world through their play.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider agreed to ensure staff understand about the planned learning intentions for activities and to improve the use of the children's assessment records. Staff have attended training to further improve their knowledge of the Foundation Stage, which means they are clear about the learning opportunities in order to support children. Children's assessment records are used to monitor their progress and staff use the information to plan the next steps in children's learning.

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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- continue to develop activities and everyday routines to ensure that children are consistently challenged to further enhance their independent learning (this also applies to nursery education).

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 further opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning
- continue to develop the system for monitoring and evaluating the provision for nursery education to ensure that children consistently have access to rich learning experiences.

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