

The Lisa Bennett Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 127560
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Inspector Cilla Rachel Mullane

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Registered person Kinder Groups 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?

Lisa Bennett Day Nursery opened in 1999. It is part of Kinder Groups Ltd, a chain of nurseries in Kent. It operates from a purpose-built mobile building that is specifically designed for nursery use. It is set within the grounds of South Avenue Infants School, near the town centre of Sittingbourne. The nursery mostly serves families from the local area, which is mainly residential.

There are currently 94 children from birth to eight years on roll. This includes 25 funded three and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week, all year round and is open for a small number of school-age children after school and in the holidays. Sessions are from 07.30 until 18.00.

There are 17 staff working with the children; 16 hold early years qualifications equivalent to an NVQ 2 or 3 and one member of staff is training. The setting receives support from an advisor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership .

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's good health is generally well-promoted. They are effectively protected from cross-contamination, and the spread of infection is limited. For example, in the kitchen, and during food preparation and serving, staff are careful to wear disposable aprons and gloves. They ensure that cloths of different colours are used for different types of tasks. Children are learning how to keep themselves clean; they use tissues and put them in the bin, they confidently use liquid soap after using the toilet, and a child looked at his hands after painting, and rushed to the wash basins. The babies' environment is kept clean, because visitors and staff are asked to wear covers over their shoes. Medication and accident records are maintained correctly, promoting children's good health. The procedure for dealing with children who become sick while at the nursery works well in practice, so the transmission of infection is successfully minimised.

The children's food is provided by a catering company, and staff are careful to ensure that this is served at the correct and safe temperature. Children's various special diets and allergies are successfully accommodated, and parents are informed of menus. Staff in the baby room keep babies' food in labelled containers in the fridge, but some food in the cupboard, needed for a special diet, is not labelled. Furthermore, staff keep their children's unlabelled food in the fridge, which compromises children's safety. Children who attend after school receive a snack, and know about healthy eating, for example, that the availability of crisps is limited as they are not healthy food.

Children play in the fresh air on a regular basis, as this is included in the general planning of the routine. They especially enjoy digging in the mud, finding bugs, and learn coordination and spatial awareness running and riding wheeled toys. However, physical activities which challenge older or more able children are infrequent. Also in the large outdoor play area, children have access to blackboards and painting, and messy play, such as sand. Indoors, children's small motor skills are promoted when they use scissors or carefully paint sponges. During after school care, children can opt to play outside, as there are staff available to supervise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery environment is well planned, with four rooms used for children of different ages, and a communal area where children can move around freely and share messy play. The space in each room is used well, enabling children to access different play and learning experiences in clearly designated areas, for example, there is a sensory area for babies, and older children have book corners with sort seating, and role play areas.

However, although there are some resources low down for children to self-select, some of these are inaccessible or poorly organised, for example, duplo in the books, and puzzles in with the home corner resources. Children access the toilet area independently when they are ready to do so, but they are not afforded privacy and dignity when using the toilets, as not all of the cubicles have curtains.

A high regard is given to keeping children safe within the nursery. Arrangements with parents and carers to ensure children are collected by designated adults are very thorough, with a

security system in place. The premises are secure, and staff are careful to check the identity of visitors and record their details in the visitors' book, so children are protected from intruders. Within the nursery, staff consistently use safe procedures to protect children from hazards, such as carrying hot drinks in sealed containers. Children are reminded to take care of themselves, for example, when they are asked to stand still when large equipment is being moved, and not to run on wet floors. Fire drills are carried out and records kept. Heaters in the playrooms become very hot, which compromises children's safety.

The child protection procedure is due to be reviewed, and refers to old guidance. However, staff are knowledgeable about the action they should take with concerns, and so can act in the children's best interests. Staff know what would happen if allegations were made against them, as there is a thorough and appropriate procedure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children throughout the nursery are secure and settled, forming trusting and positive relationships with each other and staff. Staff are kind and caring towards the children, for example, quickly responding to children's requests for cuddles. The emotional needs of young children and babies are understood, for example, staff are sensitive to the feelings of small babies, reassuring them when strangers enter the room. Staff working with all age groups know the children well, and respond to their individual needs. For example, children move to the next room only when they are confident and developmentally ready.

A small number of children from the neighbouring schools attend in the holidays, and after school. They relax after the structured school day, choosing craft activities which they enjoy, or burning off energy on the school field. Staff respond to their interests, recognising that this is their time to enjoy themselves.

The nursery is making satisfactory use of the Birth to three matters framework in the planning and provision of activities and care for babies and toddlers. For example, babies enjoy a calm cosy environment, with staff who put their needs first, and who provide a good range of enjoyable and purposeful activities. They play on the floor with the children, responding to their needs and interests, so they feel secure and are starting to become competent learners and skilful communicators.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Staff demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, and how children learn. Planning of activities is clearly linked to the areas of learning, and staff can accurately describe the learning intention of activities. The environment is mostly set out so that children have ready access to a range of resources from which they can self-select, and thus initiate their own activities. Staff support the children's learning, and are sensitive regarding when to leave children to develop their own play, or when to intervene, extending and supporting their learning. Children can therefore learn at their own pace, and practise and consolidate skills. Staff are skilled at communicating with children, so their thinking and vocabulary are developing. Staff know the children well, and so can respond to their interests, and offer an appropriate level of challenge. A system is being developed whereby children can indicate on a pictorial list what interests them, what they enjoy, which will help staff meet the needs of

less confident or vocal children. Plans show that children take part in activities which promote the areas of learning sufficiently, with the exception of activities planned to physically challenge older and more able children.

As a result of satisfactory teaching, children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

The environment throughout the nursery is set out so that children can make decisions and choices regarding their play and learning. They are therefore becoming confident and independent learners, asking for activities which they enjoy, and initiating their own play. For example, a child says the babies' flour is in a tray in the hall, and asked to play with it. Staff take opportunities to help children act independently, for example, collecting their own cutlery and plate of food at mealtimes, fastening their own coats, and going to the toilet independently.

Opportunities for children to mark make and practise pre-writing skills are plentiful within the nursery. Therefore children are making good progress in this area. Children spontaneously label their work with their name, they draw on blackboards outside, and babies through to pre-school children enjoy making marks in flour. Children are looking at books as these are readily accessible throughout the nursery, and are therefore learning to care for them, and that print conveys meaning.

Staff make the most of chances to count and use mathematical language with the children, talking about what happens if you add more water to something that is full, and counting as they play. Children often count on their own; at snack time children at one table enjoyed counting their own and others' fingers and toes, and questioning their friends, asking 'how many is this?'.

Children are able to be creative, as craft materials are available for self selection, and children initiate their own activities. For example, children carefully paint sponges and print in different colours. However, the role play area is not always attractively presented, and the resources are muddled, so children are not encouraged to engage in imaginative play.

Children are gaining knowledge and understanding of the world, learning basic science when playing with magnets. When playing with water, they are fascinated when they pour water and make a wheel move, thinking about why it starts and stops. They are fascinated by worms which they dig up in the garden. They engage in imaginative and role play based on their own first-hand experiences; two boys pretended together to take the register, making marks on paper if their friends were present.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff have a secure knowledge of children's individual personalities and interests, and therefore can generally respond to their individual needs. However, all children are encouraged to sleep at the same time, so their individual routines are not accommodated in this respect. Children rarely experience trips into the local community, so opportunities are missed to learn about their local environment. The celebration of festivals helps children to learn about different countries and cultures.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcomed into the nursery, and their needs are met because staff work with other professionals and parents to help them reach their potential.

Children are generally well behaved, when busily occupied with meaningful activities. They are learning about fairness and turn taking during the daily routine, and when playing games. Staff frequently praise children, and thank them for their help or contributions, effectively promoting good behaviour. However sometimes the organization of resources and activities leads to poor behaviour. Children throw pretend food when the role play area is poorly presented, and kick each other on a soft mat, and staff do not always manage this effectively and consistently. For example, they sometimes use negative language.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory.

Parents enter the nursery confidently, and staff are available to chat about their children's progress and achievements. They know about their child's activities from these informal chats, and are given ideas to enable them to be involved in their child's learning, and continue this at home, such as when they are asked to bring in food with interesting textures to help with a theme about the senses. Parents of babies receive useful information about their child's food and sleeps. Parents are adequately informed about the nursery's policies and procedures, as these are available in the entrance area, and they are given a very brief summary. However, the complaints procedure does not fully reflect current guidelines. Parents have little knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, areas of learning or the stepping stones (although there is a clear and colourful display, and there is a summary in the children's individual folders). They are aware that developmental records are kept regarding their children's progress, and they are given these weekly to take home and comment upon. Children's folders also include a weekly diary, which contains a positive and interesting record of activities and achievements.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery meets the needs of the children for whom it provides care and education.

The high proportion of suitably qualified staff means that children are cared for by knowledgeable practitioners who understand the needs of young children. Staff induction and appraisals help to ensure that staff do a good job. Space in the nursery is used well to meet the children's needs; children are accommodated in small groups according to their age and stage of development. The pace of the routine is generally appropriate to the needs of the children of various ages, and includes quiet times, free play and adult directed activities, meals and snacks and sleep/rest times. However, all children are encouraged to sleep after lunch, which does not meet individual needs. All documentation required for the smooth running of the nursery is kept efficiently.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

The nursery is managed by the Kinder Company, who provide a support worker to help promote consistency within the organization, and to support staff and supply training. Children enjoy a variety of play and learning experiences, because activities are planned in advance, encompassing the six areas of learning, and appropriately linked to the early learning goals.

Staff regularly observe children in their play, identify their intended next steps and then match children to the activities. This is not always successful when the targeted child does not attend on the day of the activity. However, staff know children well, and routinely respond to children's interests in the provision of activities, so children are generally adequately challenged and making progress.

Managers have satisfactory processes in place to evaluate and monitor the quality of the nursery in general, such as discussions at staff meetings, peer observations and parent questionnaires, which have been carried out as part of the Kent Quality Mark, but are not ongoing. However, there are few systems in place to specifically evaluate the success of the nursery education programme. There is no system to check that the six areas of learning are given sufficient weight, and as a result, children's physical development is paid slightly less attention than the other areas of learning. Management is generally aware of the nursery's strengths, such as health and safety, and weaknesses, but they have no formal plans for development of the provision of nursery education in particular.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the nursery education provision be enhanced by the provision of opportunities to use technology, reducing the emphasis on using work-sheets, and by providing staff with more information about planning and assessment systems. Competent staff plan appropriate activities for the children.

It was also recommended that parents' policies are shared with parents. Parents receive a brief summary, and the full policies are displayed.

Furthermore, it was agreed that the children's safety be improved by reviewing safety of the gates, supervision of the swings, and the system for recording children's attendance. Children can now play safely outside, with good supervision, and the register is accurate and kept up to date. It was agreed that the safety of staff be enhanced by the provision of a child protection statement which clearly includes the procedures to follow where there are allegations against members of staff. Staff are protected and informed, as this is now in place.

Finally, it was recommended that children's care be improved by ensuring that the staffing levels are consistent throughout the day, in order to meet children's needs effectively. The staff to child ratio is consistently upheld.

Complaints since the last inspection

A complaint was received in relation to National Standard 1: Suitability, National Standard 13: Child Protection and National Standard 14: Documentation.

The provider was asked to forward child protection policies and documentation to Ofsted relating to National Standard 13: Child Protection. The provider responded to this request appropriately.

A meeting took place with the provider to discuss how they are meeting the National Standards.

The outcome of the meeting was that appropriate changes have been made by the provider in relation to National Standards 1, 13 and 14.

The provider remains qualified for registration.

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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 suitable behaviour management strategies are used consistently by staff
- further encourage parents to improve their knowledge and understanding of their children's curriculum: the Foundation Stage or the Birth to three matters framework (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 the planning of activities based on children's individual interests
- develop rigorous systems for monitoring and assessing the quality of the nursery education
- improve the environment in the pre-school to increase the self selection, and make the role play area more stimulating (also applies to care)
- ensure that older and more able children are challenged by the planned physical activities

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