

# Kittens Pre-School and Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY262079
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 May 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Mort
<b>Setting Address</b>	Veronica Street, Off Blackburn Road, Darwen, Lancashire, BB3 0AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 761 101
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Kittens Pre-School and Nursery
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Sessional 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 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?

Kittens Pre-School and Nursery is run by a voluntary committee and opened in 2003. The provision operates from within a single storey purpose built building located in the Earcroft district of Darwen. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There has been a recent additional build to incorporate a Children's Centre and the provision liaises with staff there to advise and support families. The provision is open each weekday from 08.00 until 17.00, except for the month of August and the Christmas holiday break.

A maximum of 36 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 71 children on roll. Of these, 64 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with special educational needs and where English is an additional language.

The nursery employs nine staff, all hold an appropriate early years qualification. The provision receives support from the local early years team and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a welcoming setting that is very clean and well maintained due to effective procedures being implemented on a daily basis. Equipment is of a good quality and suitable for children to use. Children are protected from risk of infection because the staff are very good role models to the children on hygiene practice. Children's health is promoted through the valuable encouragement given by staff. This enables children to develop self care skills. For instance, they know to wear their coats when playing outside, wash their hands after visiting the toilet and are very enthusiastic about cleaning their teeth after meal times.

Children's health is supported as staff undertake first aid training and written guidance is held. Individual and personal information is thoroughly discussed with parents to ensure their child's health and medical needs, if any, are identified and adhered to. A well organised system is in place to inform parents about the recording of accidents and medication administration.

Children's physical development, including those children engaged in the nursery's education provision, is thoroughly promoted. Children take part in planned or spontaneous activities designed to promote their physical well-being. They develop fine motor control, handling items, such as pencils, paint brushes, scissors and glue sticks. They learn how to move and control their body and negotiate physical space, for instance, in the use of outdoor climbing and balancing apparatus, the use of bikes and ball play. Children also enjoy dancing to music and use their body to move creatively in different ways.

Children begin to understand what constitutes a healthy diet due to good organisation that allows children to sow seeds that result in the growing of vegetables and strawberries that are picked and used for snacks or in the children's meals. Children's needs for drinks are fully met, a small fridge houses their milk cartons and they are free to self-serve drinks of water from the water dispenser.

Staff take full account of parental wishes and of a child's special dietary requirement. Parents are presented with a menu to keep them fully informed of the meals on offer. On the day of the inspection children enjoy their lunch of

Spaghetti Bolognese and rice pudding and raisins. Their emotional needs are supported and they develop their social and conversational skills whilst relaxing in the happy, unhurried atmosphere.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a purpose built environment. Their welfare is safeguarded through the staff's concern for their safety and well-being. Safety within the premises is given priority and policies reveal written risk assessments are carried out with control measures noted. To ensure staff and visitors are kept aware, some risk assessments are displayed in nursery. Suitable equipment is in place, such as finger guards to doors and a locked entrance with a bell entry system. Children play and rest in comfort as the staff check on a daily basis that the premises indoors and outside are safe and suitable for use.

There is a written emergency evacuation procedure and guidelines on display denote staff responsibility in this area. There is relevant equipment and emergency exit signs in place and fire drills are carried out. On the day of the inspection one of the double emergency exit doors was partially obstructed by resources.

Children's needs are well met. Staff are mindful of children's developmental stages and provide a wide variety of good quality resources. These are neatly stored with lower level storage enabling children to freely choose and acquire a sense of belonging and responsibility when they help to tidy up. Children learn to keep themselves safe, for instance, staff teach them not to run in the facility and to handle cutlery in a responsible manner.

Children's safety in the room is assured by staff's good organisation of the furnishings to create safe play areas. The planning of activities results in children of a similar age working on tasks together, with free choice play open to all. Children know where to find and return things. They make confident use of equipment and can, for instance, use paint brushes, sellotape, scissors, garden spades and the computer.

Children are protected from harm due to the manager's sound knowledge of child protection issues. She is confident in her role and has contact details of the relevant outside agencies. The staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area. Policies and procedures are in place to keep staff's knowledge updated and parents informed.

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

The provision is good.

Children play very co-operatively in well maintained rooms that are decorated with their work. All children remain very interested and motivated throughout the day due to staff listening to them, engaging them in conversation and using open ended questions. Children are confident and approach staff to initiate a conversation. They are completely at ease and secure as they receive smiles, cuddles and praise from the staff, whether a guided or free choice activity.

Children's enjoyment at nursery is very much evidenced through the documentation in place that includes many photographs of their work and play. Children benefit from staff having good knowledge of how to plan and deliver quality care and learning for young children. Staff have training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework and children are presented with resources and activities to stimulate their thinking process, promote handling skills and social interaction. For instance, the younger children sit comfortably together to paint their clay gingerbread figure and to share a colouring and cutting activity. Recording of the younger children's work and play at the moment is photographic, in that each child's file has photographs in that show the child engaging with various resources.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children are invited and encouraged to participate in activities, such as colouring pictures, scissors work, painting, movement to music and singing. Staff skilfully extend children's learning and the current theme of road safety is enhanced as children are invited to listen to and join in the conversation of visiting speakers. A road safety person engages the children's attention and uses props to promote road safety. In addition to this two police officers visit and children

have the message of road safety reinforced and are given the opportunity to see inside a police vehicle.

Younger children develop hand-eye coordination as they use the stacking containers and jigsaws. Older children develop concentration span and handling skills as they look at books, listen at story time and use construction toys and creativity materials. Photographs illustrate that children's all round learning is well promoted. They, for instance, learn about the seasons of the year, that trees lose their leaves and they use brushes and a wheelbarrow to sweep and collect the fallen leaves. Other photographs show children use hammers and nails, search where water has gone after it is poured into different shaped pipes and learn how to look after the nursery's pet rabbit.

Children are aware numbers carry meaning and delight taking part in the number rhymes, where they understand diminishing numbers. Their creativity is developing well as they adopt roles on a theme in imaginative play, for instance, choosing to be a police officer, a driver or a pedestrian in their play regarding road safety.

Staff involved in the planning and delivery of the Foundation Stage have a good knowledge of its requirements and offer children interesting and stimulating play opportunities to lead them along the stepping stones of learning. The planning of the environment and use of resources assists teaching and children's learning in making every area accessible and meaningful to children.

Children enjoy a broad range of well presented continuous provision, which encourages them to become independent learners and consolidate existing skills. For instance, after a focussed activity they can, if they wish, continue at the table and repeat or alter the activity as children do when their work with scissors is complete. Children's work is filed and this clearly illustrates their having taken part in activities in line with the Foundation Stage curriculum but there is little evidence of evaluation by staff, to be able to then plan for the next steps in children's learning.

Children make independent choices about their play and choose items due to open access shelves. They are very interested in information communication technology because the computer is made readily available for use and management provides programmable toys and cameras. Children are becoming confident communicators and ask questions of the staff, the inspector and of each other. They are animated and enthusiastic. They spend their time purposefully and thoroughly enjoy exploring a wide range of interesting play materials that offer optimal challenge.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff demonstrate excellent awareness of how to plan and provide for equal opportunities for all children. Children develop immense confidence and positive self-esteem through the interaction, care and attention they receive from staff. Each child is treated with care and the utmost respect. They thrive due to staff knowing them well and providing the right balance of praise and encouragement.

Children are offered a wealth of interesting and stimulating opportunities to further their understanding of the wider world. They gain insight into the cultures and beliefs of others by celebrating different festivals, such as, Chinese New Year and Easter. They are very much aware

of the needs of others and readily share and take turns, for instance, in the use of creativity materials and outdoor equipment. They view written words in different languages and take part in learning simple sign language. In addition to this resources are made available to promote positive images of gender and disability, as children access books, dolls, jigsaws, pictures and posters.

All children are very welcome in the setting and management is fully committed to providing suitable staff training and first class resources where children have additional needs. A sensory room is provided and an additional room for small group work or for individual teaching to take place. The superb planning and organisation to promote inclusion is undertaken in consultation with parents. This, together with links to outside agencies, enhances all aspects of this area of the provision. All staff are made aware of the arranged procedures and these are very effectively put into practice, thus promoting all children's involvement and complete integration in the nursery on a daily basis.

Children are fully supported and gently guided. Their behaviour on the day of inspection is exemplary. A happy, settled atmosphere permeates the setting, due to staff working diligently and in a calm and consistent manner. Children play alone, in twos or work in small groups at focussed activities. Children are extremely polite and, for instance, ask when they want to play outside, inform staff if they are going to the toilet and ask politely if they may have more of the food and drink at lunch time. They say 'please' and 'thank you' spontaneously, both to staff and to each other. Children rapidly learn responsible behaviour and how to care for their environment. They tidy up without being asked, replacing items in the relevant box or drawer.

Partnership with parents and carers, including those whose children receive funded nursery education, is excellent. Parents actively sought out the inspector to offer their positive comments and opinions about the setting. They spoke extremely highly of the manager and the staff, whom, they say, have a very professional and friendly approach. Parents are thoroughly involved in their child's care at the nursery and some take up the invitation to stay and play. They are made aware of the policies and procedures within nursery including how and where to take a concern. They are asked to contribute to nursery life by sending in resources and in the invitations to take part in social and charity events. Additional general information for parents is available to view on the attractive notice board and both the nursery and the committee send out news letters.

Management are proactive in informing new parents about the setting and the arrangements for the delivery of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the nursery education, in the information made available to them and arranged meetings. Explanatory notices throughout nursery illustrate the intended learning outcomes for children and why certain resources are set out or activities taking place. Parents are kept updated about their child's progress through invitation to attend meetings and share in decision taking when their child's work is to be filed. They can then view their child's individual records. These include the portfolio held for a child that demonstrates their learning journey along the 'Birth to three matters' framework and along the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment procedures mean that safe and suitable practitioners work with the children. The stable staff team receive opportunities to attend additional training to refresh their knowledge base and update their skills. This enhances the care and learning of children.

For instance, staff have had training and deliver the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. Staff have also attended a course on the 'Birth to three matters' framework which is being implemented.

Leadership and management is good. The chair of the committee visits twice a week. She talks to the staff and children and makes herself available to parents. On the second day she discusses the running and routine of nursery with the manager. This exchange of information is noted and used at committee meetings to keep all informed about the provision. The manager fully influences practice in her daily role, ensuring safe and effective running of the day care provision. There are clearly defined roles for the staff, some of whom have an area of responsibility and ongoing communication through staff meetings. These support staff in their delivery of quality care and education.

Children flourish in a setting where there is good organisation of physical space and resources. Children have access to all indoor areas and an enclosed outside play area. These give ample space for free movement and safe exploration, thus the opportunity to promote children's care, learning and development is maximised.

Documentation is in place to enable staff to plan activities, resource suitable toys, books and equipment and record children's work as they make progress through the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Policies are in place and information held about children safeguard their well-being. Paperwork held is in line with the National Standards for day care and is concise and jargon free. It relates to the planning and delivery of a good childcare facility. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

At the time of the last inspection recommendations were left for some paperwork to be reviewed and updated. This has been taken on board. Partnership with parents continues to be promoted, as the revised policies are readily available to them. At the separate nursery education inspection there was a recommendation that children be given more opportunity to be aware of their own written name and to write it. This has been addressed, children begin to recognise their own name as they see it displayed daily on a board. They choose and move this name card to show their attendance. In addition to this a name card is in their drawer and they are encouraged to use it to write their name on their work.

### **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):

- promote children's safety by ensuring that the fire exit door remains unobstructed

### **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):

- use observations and assessments of children to identify learning needs and plan for the next step in children's learning.

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)