

Koalas Swindon Opportunity Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY344140
Inspection date	05 June 2007
Inspector	Charlotte Jenkin
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Registered person	Koalas Opportunity Group
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of 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.

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 outstanding. 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?

Koalas Opportunity Group was first established in 1987. It operates from Saltway in the Middleaze district of Swindon. A maximum of 20 children aged from birth to under eight years may attend the provision at any one time. There are currently 25 children on roll and of these, seven receive funding for nursery education. The setting is open for four morning or afternoon sessions a week for 49 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The provision employs five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in warm, welcoming and well maintained premises. They thrive as their health is well protected by staff who implement meticulous hygienic routines. For example, toys and equipment are cleaned and well maintained, nappy changing routines are hygienic and food

preparation areas are cleaned regularly. Children are encouraged to learn about the importance of hand washing through daily routines, such as before eating and after using the toilet, and younger children go to the toilet and wash their hands before snack independently. Children benefit from staff's up to date knowledge of first aid, and their awareness of the correct administrative procedures to follow if children have an accident or require medication whilst in their care. Staff attend specialist training to ensure they are able to meet individual care and medical needs for the children attending, including administration of drugs and intimate personal care. The sickness policy is formally shared with parents and children are not, therefore, exposed to unnecessary illness. Children are encouraged to keep themselves healthy whilst in the sun, with staff applying sun cream and encouraging them to wear sun hats.

Children are encouraged to develop their awareness of healthy eating through the nutritious snacks they enjoy whilst in the setting. Information regarding children's dietary needs is gained from parents and any requirements are catered for. Staff are all aware of individual children's needs, hence, they are not at risk from foods they are allergic to. Drinking water is available to children at all times, with labelled water bottles for younger children and cups and a jug for more able children to help themselves. These are taken outside during physical play and children are encouraged to increase their intake of fluid during hot weather and when engaged in physical activity. Children and their families learn about the importance of healthy eating through activities that help them learn about the different food groups and how their bodies benefit from these. Suggestions for easy and nutritious recipes are displayed and these have been prepared at home, offering children access to healthy and nutritious meals. Children's dietary needs are exceptionally well met.

Children have access to regular fresh air and exercise as they play outside daily. They demonstrate a sound awareness of space, themselves and others, as they avoid obstacles and negotiate appropriate pathways. Children run around and are able to change direction and stop. They have opportunities to balance, and do so with appropriate support where necessary. Children develop skills in throwing, kicking and retrieving balls, and enjoyed sitting and balancing on a large ball. They ride the tricycles with confidence and use their feet to push the pedals. Children have access to a wide range of activities that support their hand to eye co-ordination, including, threading reels, building blocks and solving puzzles.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in bright, stimulating and child friendly premises, where space has been adapted and organised effectively to meet the needs of the children attending. Children have access to areas for eating, messy play, for engaging in quiet activities and plenty of floor space for play. Children are welcomed into the group with attractive displays of their work and with named pegs for their belongings. Thus, helping them feel secure and valued as a member of the group. The group has an extensive range of toys and equipment that meet the individual needs of the children attending. Specialist equipment is organised and arranged in advance of the children's arrival, and toys are stored in low level shelves for the children to select themselves. These free choice opportunities encourage the children's confidence and independence.

Children play in safe premises, free from risks, as staff implement a range of safety measures daily to promote safety and prevent accidents. For example, sockets are covered, access to the kitchen is restricted without supervision and the premises are all secure. Children, therefore, move around the setting with confidence are able to play in safety. All activities are assessed with respect to any risks they may pose to the children, including art and water activities. Staff

are, therefore, proactive in promoting children's safety. The garden is enclosed and children are well supervised at all times, and have access to a wide range of safe and suitable equipment.

The group formally shares its child protection duties with parents in the welcome pack and this actively promotes the children's well-being. All staff have attended a level three training programme and their knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures demonstrate their commitment to protecting children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enter the pre-school and settle quickly, separating from their carers with ease. They are warmly welcomed by the staff who greet them as they enter, helping them develop a sense of belonging in the group. They quickly choose the activities they wish to engage in, for example, solving puzzles and exploring the water. Children form secure relationships with the staff as they confidently request assistance, for example, one child wanted to go on the rocking horse and staff quickly responded to this, ensuring they have their needs well met. Children are encouraged to develop independence regarding self-help skills according to their abilities, for example, they are encouraged to put aprons on their own, go to the toilet independently and get a tissue to blow their noses. Children demonstrate a sense of belonging in the group as they are aware of the routines, for example, getting their name when they enter and helping tidy away the toys before snack time.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Four regular staff work with the funded children and they are all very experienced and well qualified. They have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and are confident in helping children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals according to their individual stage of development. Staff are innovative and flexible and utilise children's interests and everyday experiences to help them learn new skills and develop a positive attitude towards participating in new activities. Planning is extremely clear, shows clear links to the stepping stones and has clear learning outcomes for each individual child's stage of development. However, planning to encourage children's gross physical skills is limited and does not ensure children have access to all areas of this, including the development of the outdoor area. Staff evaluate activities with regard to both children's enjoyment as well as their learning, and any adjustments made to continually improve opportunities for them.

Staff know each individual child's needs and stage of development thoroughly. They regularly observe children at play, both during focus activities and spontaneous play. Observations clearly show children's achievements, both with respect to their individual targets and the stepping stones. Examples of children's work are kept, as well as photos of them engaged in activities. This enables a portfolio of children's progress throughout their time in the group to be created, and is also a valuable reminder for parents of their experiences in the group.

Children communicate with confidence, both verbally and using non-verbal methods to ensure their needs are understood. For example, pointing, using sign language and pictures. Children begin to learn that words have meanings, for example, recognising their names when they enter the group. They respond to simple instructions and develop good listening skills, recognising animal sounds during a computer game. Children develop skills in counting objects, for example, during snack time they counted the number of pieces of banana the staff cut up. They engage

in solving simple problems, making sure there are enough pieces of banana for all the children. Children participate in fun activities to develop their understanding of mathematical language, for example, the story of Goldilocks enabled children to develop their awareness of big and little and heavy and light. Through playing games they compare numbers, seeing who has the most and the least animals.

Children observe change over time as they grow flowers and vegetables. They have created a digging area in the garden where they plant seeds and tend to the plants. Children regularly explore their local environment and increase their awareness of the natural world, making time to jump in the puddles when it rains, and explore the coldness of the snow. Children have frequent chances to develop their senses, through exploring a range of materials and have access to a fully equipped sensory room. Children enjoy joining in with singing activities and in exploring the sounds musical instruments make. They have planned activities to experiment with paint and glue, but are not encouraged to independently access the art area and choose the materials they wish to use to represent their own ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are valued and respected by staff who know them extremely well. They are fully aware of each child's stage of development and support their individual needs effectively. Children have frequent opportunities to value and respect the lives of others. They regularly learn about other languages, for example hearing stories read in German, and experience other means of communication, including sign language. Children with learning disabilities have their development fully supported within the specialist group and are consistently supported to enable them to reach their full potential. Staff work with a multi-disciplinary approach and have regular meetings with other professionals working with the children. Each child has individual play plans and these have challenging yet achievable targets.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children engage in hands on practical activities that help them talk about significant events and that enable them to gain an awareness of other cultures. For example, finding out and engaging in activities that help them learn how people in other countries celebrate Easter. They frequently explore their local environment, and for example, they jump in puddles when it rains and explore the snow.

Children's behaviour is good. Staff work well together in a consistent manner to encourage children to learn right from wrong. They use sensitive methods for managing children's behaviour and ensure these are appropriate to each individual child's stage of development. Staff regularly praise the children for their achievements, and this helps the children feel good about themselves and develop the confidence to try out new experiences. Children are encouraged to share and take turns and, for example, when using the computer together they respond positively to the suggestion of using a sand timer to decide when each person has their turn.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are very well informed of the groups policies and the procedures they are required to follow. They have easy access to activity plans and know in detail the activities their children are involved in daily. Parents exchange information with staff daily regarding their child's progress. They receive invaluable support from staff regarding how to support their child's development, accessing specialist equipment and in attending multi-agency meetings. Communication between staff, parents and other agencies working with the children is excellent and ensures that children's progress and achievements are shared. Parents are fully involved in their child's learning as they are welcomed into the

group at any time. They are able to view their child's play and learning in progress, and gain valuable insight into the progress they are making, enabling them to carry this forward at home.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

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

Children are cared for by suitable and well qualified staff, who are committed to obtaining higher professional qualifications. They regularly attend training to support their professional development and share their expertise within the group. This ensures children regularly have access to new experiences and hence, enhances their learning opportunities. Children benefit from the high adult to child ratios as they receive excellent adult support ensuring their individual needs are fully met. Staff support the children during activities, interact with them during their play and encourage their development at all times.

All required documentation is stored securely and is readily available for inspection. Staff implement all policies and procedures of the group in a way that successfully promotes the children's welfare, care and learning. All required consents are gained from parents regarding their children participating in activities and routines, ensuring they are cared for in line with parents' wishes.

Leadership and management is good. The highly motivated staff work extremely well as a team and share all responsibilities of the group, including contributing to planning and leading curriculum areas. The strong leadership of the experienced manager ensures staff have access to ongoing training and development, and enables them to work in a supportive environment. All staff are committed to providing high quality care and education for the children attending. They continually reflect on their practice and make adjustments to enhance the children's care and learning opportunities, and frequently attend training to enable them to provide the children with new and exciting experiences.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration no complaints have been made to Ofsted that has 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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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):

- improve the programme for physical development to ensure children have access to the full curriculum and have their development fully monitored in this area
- increase children's independence in selecting and using materials and resources of their choosing to represent their own ideas in creative development

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