

Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Mansion House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	134018
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Inspector	Jan Leo
Setting Address	Apsley Road, Summertown, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 7QZ
Telephone number	01865 511237
E-mail	
Registered person	Kidsunlimited Limited
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 Mansion House Day Nursery opened in 1992. It operates from three rooms in a converted Victorian Manor House in the Summertown area of Oxford. It serves the Oxford University staff and students. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 49 children may attend the nursery at any one time and there are currently 53 children from four months to five years on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports 16 children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens from 08:00 until 18:00 during week days for 50 weeks of the year. It employs 13 staff who work with the children, and a cook. There are eight members of staff, including the manager, with appropriate early years qualifications to level 2 or above. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children get regular bouts of fresh air and exercise in order to stay healthy. Each group of children has a designated outdoor area with ample space to use large equipment and develop their physical skills. The babies sit outdoors to benefit from fresh air, when weather permits, and play in the conservatory by open windows when the ground is very wet. The staff operate a key worker system to provide continuity of care, and they get to know their key children well in order to help them settle quickly and feel emotionally secure as soon as possible. There is no back up system however, to ensure children continue to receive the same high level of support when their key worker is off. Young children sleep according to their needs and all have individual bedding to avoid the spread of infection. The staff, throughout the nursery, follow a rigorous hygiene regime, wearing gloves and aprons appropriately to prevent the spread of germs, and teaching children to keep themselves clean from an early age. The management monitors the cleaning processes to ensure they remain effective, and standard of hygiene remain high. The children benefit from staff enforcing their sickness policy, insisting that parents collect sick children promptly to relieve distress and avoid risks to others. The children eat 'home cooked', nutritious meals prepared on site by the cook. She has a very effective system to identify special diets and ensure there are no mistakes when staff serve the food to the children. Children have free access to drinks and the babies have a wide step to climb on, in order to encourage movement when they want to reach their beakers. The staff endeavour to make sure children only drink from their own cup, but most of the containers look very similar and there is currently no way of helping babies to recognise their own.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are safe because they consistently receive a high level of supervision and staff are dedicated to their work. Consequently, they routinely follow formal procedures, such as signing in and out of rooms to help maintain ratios and preserve safety. There is a secure entry system and all visitors sign in as a record of their presence. The record of children's attendance is accurate and clear, and safety procedures are well thought out. The children have ample space to move around safely, both indoors and out, and all areas of the building are light, welcoming and in good condition. The children have easy access to an extensive range of resources to help them develop and learn. All staff check toys and equipment whenever they are in use, in order to remove hazards and keep children safe. Some staff have completed child protection training and the staff induction includes instruction in the safeguarding process. The management reinforces the staff's understanding of child protection by reviewing the policy at team meetings and this also helps to keep staff up to date. Useful reference material is on file to remind staff of the process and help avoid delay. Staff display their safeguarding policy for parents and carers to see but the policy is too high to read and does not contain contact numbers to make referrals easy if families have concerns about the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children play exceptionally well and thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery. The staff in the baby room spend much of their time sitting on the floor to play with the children, talking to them constantly and encouraging involvement. Throughout the setting, all staff show genuine

interest in the children and talk to them about things that are important to them, in order to raise self-esteem. The children choose what to do and where to play, accessing resources independently to develop their own interests. The children remain well occupied throughout the day. Some play happily alone, climbing up the slide and gingerly squeezing their leg through at the top, in order to come down without help. Others link with friends to play ball or spin the hoola hoops. Most express themselves very well but some younger children occasionally miss a few play opportunities when their key worker is off and there is no one specifically looking out for their interests. Staff prepare activity plans for each group of key children in all age groups. They decide on specific challenges to help individual children and, as a result, all make good progress. The children participate in adult led activities to enable key-workers to monitor the progress of children in their group, and they are reluctant to let other children join them in an activity when they show an interest. This temporarily dampens children's enthusiasm for learning, but they swiftly move on to find an alternative activity.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff are extremely enthusiastic in everything they do and join in activities to make learning fun. For example, children and staff take turns to play the washing machine game with the parachute, twisting the cloth around gently before pulling it tight to spin the central player. Loud giggling ensues and children are eager for their turn. Senior staff know instinctively when to change the activity to keep children focused. They plan a varied and suitable programme for all to join in and successfully increase challenges to suit different abilities. The planning however has insufficient detail to ensure all children continue to work at an appropriate level if regular staff are absent. The children have a well laid out room with easy access to tools and equipment. They access resources freely and successfully make their own games. One said 'I can hear the sea' holding her empty beaker to her ear and remembering listening with shells earlier in the week. Others copied, giggling at their joke. The children use what they know from previous experiences putting things into a relevant context. For example, when told there were no more yogurts, a child said 'there are three left'. She then received an extremely clear explanation about why it would not be fair to have another if there is not enough for everyone, learning about sharing and fairness at every opportunity. The children follow themes to learn about other cultures and benefit from a well-equipped role-play corner to extend their knowledge and reinforce their understanding. Staff monitor the resources in that area to ensure the play value remains high, but they do not always act quickly to replace equipment and encourage mark making for different purposes. For example, the Children's Choice Restaurant proved a great hit, with tables laid and an open/closed sign for the door, but menus and order pads were missing, hampering early writing practice. All children talk to visitors to find out about their presence and share personal details about their brothers, sisters, pets, and interests. They speak clearly and make themselves easily understood. The staff keep notes on children's achievements and update children's progress records on a weekly basis before preparing the short term planning. This ensures the programme links closely with children's current interests and suits their stage of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children feel valued and respected because staff show great interest in what they do. The staff and children are a diverse group and they share information about their home cultures in order to promote acceptance and understanding of different beliefs. The staff tailor care and education to suit individual children and help them thrive. The children form very good relationships with all staff and benefit from having good role models to follow. The staff work

extremely well as a group and give consistent messages to help children know how to behave. The children learn to share and take turns, and they form a lively community of sociable individuals. The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff ensure children's progress records are available for families to see, and they include samples of children's work as good evidence of progress. Parents and carers help in translating favourite stories into different languages to be included in children's learning, and they have access to planning to stay up to date with the education programme. Staff provide regular newsletters about the service and display policies and essential information on an uncluttered notice board in the entrance hall. Some information lacks detail but the staff are very approachable and share information verbally in a friendly manner. The manager operates a monthly drop in clinic to discuss concerns with parents and carers in private in order to keep communication open and ensure everyone is happy with the service on offer. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All children settle quickly and thrive because of the strong bonds they form with the staff. They consistently learn about health and safety as they play in order to develop good habits for later life. The staff join in activities to make the day fun and help children reach their full potential. The leadership and management of the provision are good. All three levels of management work well to provide a reliable service of high quality. The staff, which are responsible for the day-to-day running of the nursery, provides children with a wide range of opportunities to help develop new skills and interests and keep them well occupied. As a result, all children behave well and enjoy their day. The site manager follows clear and thorough procedures to monitor the effectiveness of the setting and keep standards high. All feel well supported by management at head office and value the opportunity to continue their personal development and help in raising standards. The staff have all documentation, required by regulation, in place but the organisation regarding paperwork is a little inconsistent. For example, whilst staff display some policies very well, others are located in different places, making it difficult to find them quickly. The failure to collect policy is on file but not made easily available to families to ensure they know the consequences of being late. The complaints log contains relevant information for parents and carers to see on request as required by regulation.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, there were three recommendations made to improve the quality of care and two to improve nursery education. The provision was required to produce risk assessments for outings, display Ofsted's contact details for parents and carers, and review planning for babies and toddlers to provide more outdoor opportunities and meet their individual needs. The staff now routinely produce risk assessments for outings to improve safety for the children. They have Ofsted contact details in the entrance hall where they are easy to see by all who use the provision, in order to make it easier for families to pass on any comments they have about the service. The staff in all rooms now complete planning for their key children and set specific targets to help the children progress at a rate to suit them individually. This ensures they get a full range of indoor and outdoor opportunities and make good progress.

As regards the nursery education programme, the staff were asked to make better use of written records and planning, and add flexibility into the routine to help develop role-play and ensure children have time to finish what they are doing. The staff now plan in a manner that all staff can understand and, when used in conjunction with observation records, the key workers know

exactly how to move their group on and how to increase challenges. The planning however does not clearly identify goals to ensure learning can continue at an appropriate level if staff are absent. The staff now include free play sessions at regular intervals and give children warnings before changing the activities, to ensure they have time to finish their game. They also appreciate the value of play when it holds children's interest for extended periods, and they adapt the day to take full advantage of such activities, making sure learning is relevant.

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.

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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 all information is easily available for parents and carers, to be of full value, such as essential telephone contact numbers

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):

- routinely encourage purposeful mark making during both free play and organised activities
- clarify the aims of activities in the planning to ensure the standard of learning remains high during staff absence (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