

# The Kids Academy Chelmsford

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY365137
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 June 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Daly
<b>Setting Address</b>	Moulsham Junior School, Princes Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9DG
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<b>Registered person</b>	TKA Management Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 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?

The Kids Academy is one of two settings operated by TKA Management Limited. It opened in 2005, moving to the new premises in 2008. It operates from five rooms within a purpose-built premises within the grounds of Moulsham Junior School in Chelmsford. A maximum of 66 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting opens on five days a week all year round, with the exception of Bank Holidays and one week over Christmas. Session times are Mondays to Fridays from 07.30 until 18.00. There are currently 94 children from two to eight years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting also cares for children over eight years of age. Children from the local community and surrounding areas attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who have English as a second language. The setting employs 10 staff, with five holding appropriate early years qualifications and eight working towards further qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority, the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PSLA) and 4Children.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy through staff demonstrating a sound awareness of positive hygiene practices, for example, by ensuring that the premises are clean before children arrive. They clean the tables and table clothes with antibacterial sprays before allowing children to sit to eat their snacks and lunch. Children are encouraged to be independent when using the toilet and are aware that they must wash their hands by understanding that their hands can carry germs and therefore the risk of infection. However, children's health could be potentially compromised by staff not reminding them to wash their hands after searching for bugs and occasionally prior to eating their breakfast. Children are protected from cross-infection during nappy changes by staff following good procedures such as wearing disposable gloves and aprons and disinfecting the changing mat after each child. Children sleep or rest in cots or on sleeping mats, but their welfare is not being fully protected from cross-infection by not having their own bedding.

Children are being well protected through all staff holding first aid qualifications to ensure that they can effectively handle any minor injuries. Staff obtain written permission from parents and carers for them to seek medical advice or treatment for their children in the event of an emergency. They follow the setting's written sickness policy to protect children from the spread of infection and maintain good information regarding children's health backgrounds to ensure that they know which children have asthma.

Children's individual dietary needs are well met through staff requesting information from their parents and carers about any dietary requirements and allergies. Children attending for full day care enjoy a nutritious mid-day meal, while parents and carers of children attending the pre-school have the option to provide a packed lunch for their children. The nursery provides three-weekly rotated main meal menus to ensure that children have a varied diet, for example, cottage pie, sweetcorn, cauliflower and carrots in a savoury sauce. Children are able to make choices at breakfast and snack times and to taste a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Pre-school aged children's snack time is linked to their learning, for example, when being offered a variety of crackers, being asked what letter crackers begin with and staff telling them that carbohydrate provides energy for their bodies. All children are able to make decisions and to help themselves to drinking water throughout the day to avoid becoming dehydrated. Some school aged children's independence is being encouraged, for example, by some helping to prepare their own breakfast.

Children enjoy opportunities to experience physical activities contributing to their good health. School aged children enjoy playing ball games in the school playground, while nursery aged children enjoy riding their small bicycles to the local supermarket. Children have small soft play blocks to climb over, but potentially some children's large-scale movements are not being fully challenged. Children are taken on outings to enjoy the outdoor environment, although pre-school aged children are not given daily opportunities to benefit from the fresh air to enable them to develop a positive sense of well-being.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to move freely in a child-friendly environment to enable them to explore while being under appropriate supervision. Their safety and security are of high priority, with effective closed-circuit monitors, key padded access and daily written risk assessments ensuring the fully safeguarding of their welfare. Some rooms have bright posters and children's work displayed to provide a welcoming atmosphere for them and to develop their sense of achievement by seeing their creations on display. Children have an adequate range of resources and equipment suitable for their ages and developmental needs. Toys are maintained to a decent standard by staff monitoring and immediately removing any broken toys or other hazardous items to fully safeguard children from injury.

Children's awareness of how to keep themselves safe is being promoted, for example, through staff explaining to children how they must correctly hold and pass scissors to each other. School aged children know the reasons why they must walk inside the building to prevent hurting themselves or others. Children are taken on outings with their parents' or carers' written permission and staff are able to act in their best interests on such outings and to deal with any minor incidents by always carrying a first aid kit, a mobile phone and parents' or carers' contact details. There are sound procedures to ensure the safe delivery and collection of the children from Moulsham Junior and Infant Schools. Children attending from other schools are safeguarded by being collected by a taxi firm using drivers and escorts who have been through appropriate vetting procedures.

Children are learning about personal safety through practising emergency evacuation procedures to ensure that they know what to do if they have to evacuate the premises in an emergency. However, the registered person is in the process of meeting the recommendations made by the Fire Safety Officer to ensure the completion of pathways from the building leading to a place of ultimate safety to facilitate an orderly evacuation.

Staff's secure knowledge of child protection issues ensures that the protection of children from harm is given high priority. They recognise their roles and responsibilities and know how to implement the local child protection procedures. The detailed policies for non-collection of children and the arrangements for recording pre-existing injuries contribute to ensuring that children are being fully safeguarded.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children thoroughly enjoy the full range of activities and experiences provided by staff in a warm and very friendly environment. They have plenty of fun while playing and learning in an active setting. They play cooperatively with each other and arrange friendship groups.

Children are able to choose their activities by being able to freely help themselves to resources, for example, children attending the Breakfast Club having the choice from a variety of board games and DVD's. They thoroughly enjoy playing competitive games, reacting with cries of joy or dismay when winning or losing. These activities are helping children to learn about right and wrong and to understand the rules of games.

After school children enjoy many themed activities planned by staff, for example, 'mini-beast'. They respond to challenges and use imagination when participating in craft activities planned

around such themes such as making caterpillars by using a variety of materials. Staff observe and evaluate a planned core activity to help them to plan future activities for school aged children. Staff ensure that children have opportunities to complete their homework, while encouraging fun activities to further their learning, for example, by playing 'hang man' on the wall-mounted wipe board.

Children attending part-time day care are confident and independent when leaving their parents or carers at the entrance to the setting. They are eager to carry their 'school bags' into their rooms and are ready to participate and to have plenty of fun in a 'bubbly' setting. They take part in a range of planned activities designed to help them to progress and develop. Staff use both the 'Birth to three matters' and Foundation Stage frameworks to ensure that all children are provided with age- and stage-appropriate play opportunities through various inside and outside activities. Children are purposefully engaged throughout sessions, working and playing enthusiastically, either alone or with others. They are generally well behaved and are developing a clear awareness of right and wrong. Sensitive and caring staff show an interest in what children are doing and saying by using conversation to develop their knowledge and vocabulary. Children are building on skills promoting their confidence and independence, for example, when taking off their shoes when entering their play rooms. Children are considerate and helpful to each other, for example, by helping to take off a child's bib by undoing the neck fastening. Staff consistently praise children's achievements to raise their self-esteem and to develop their confidence.

#### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The manager and some staff members have a secure understanding of the stepping stones to ensure the provision of an appropriate range of practical activities covering all six areas of learning. The long and medium term planning ensures that all these learning areas are covered. However, the short term planning does not always include sufficient detail of what the activity involves, the resources required and the grouping of the children. This results in staff sometimes taking a more passive role through not being fully aware of the purpose of the core activities to fully promote children's learning objectives. In addition, children's learning is only sometimes being evaluated in terms of what they have learnt to inform future activity planning. Staff help children to consolidate and extend their learning, for example, by recognising letters, while others are being encouraged to write words. Staff have good relationships with the children and encourage them to become involved and to persevere with tasks. They use a variety of teaching methods, including open-ended questions and sensitive intervention with their play, to encourage children to try new tasks. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well known by staff to ensure the provision of individual educational plans and suitable play provision.

Staff gather verbal information from parents and carers to ensure that they know a child's starting point during their settling-in period. Children acquire new knowledge and skills by completing tasks linked to themes and topics. Staff sometimes track children at play to ensure the completion of very detailed observations and records of what they are learning during activities. However, this information is only sometimes transferred onto children's developmental records to ensure that they are making progress towards all the six learning areas.

Staff organise the learning environment to enable children to make choices from the readily available equipment and materials, while also having structured group activities. Children become involved and persevere with the achievement of their tasks with staff's encouragement. They benefit from staff's interaction with them encouraging their verbal skills when playing

alongside them. Children are generally busy and interested in their activities when working individually or in small groups, for example, when mark-making in shaving foam. They are developing their understanding of the rules and boundaries by knowing that they must stop what they are doing when staff count 'one, two, three'.

Children have a varied range of opportunities to develop their attitudes and dispositions to enable them to achieve in their learning. They are learning about relationships and increasing their social competence when confidently separating from their main carer. Children show great curiosity when looking through the magnifying glasses on their 'bug collecting' buckets. They show good levels of independence when pouring their own drinks and are becoming increasingly independent when dealing with their physical needs such as when putting on their shoes to go outside.

Children are making sound progress in communication, language and literacy by being given opportunities to imagine and recreate their experiences, for example, when creating 'small people' while playing with play dough, before using them as props when telling a story. Children listen and respond with enjoyment and attention during group story times, while some occasionally look at the available books for pleasure. Children are learning to recognise their own names when self-registering. They very confidently link sounds to letters, while naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. Some more able children can form letters to enable them to write their names and simple words.

Children participate in a range of different mathematical activities and are able to confidently count and to recognise the numbers up to 10. They consolidate their purposeful learning, for example, when using the cash till. When singing rhymes, they are beginning to solve problems with numbers, for example, 'five currant buns'. Children use size language such as 'big' and 'little', when comparing different sized circles. They have some opportunities to use positional language such as 'inside the tunnel', while their sand and water play encourages them to explore volume and capacity.

Children have many opportunities to develop a positive sense of well-being. They go on outings to stimulate their interest and curiosity in the local environment, for example, going to the local supermarket to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. After tasting a wide range of different fruits and vegetables, some children particularly ask staff to buy broccoli. They have varied opportunities to investigate and explore through first hand experiences in the outdoor environment when going to collect interesting items, for example, spiders for their 'bug boxes'. However, some activities are not being carefully structured by staff to ensure that they are relevant and appropriate and that their content matches the differing development levels of young children. Staff explained to children that they were going to look for different 'bugs', but children were not shown visual aids to encourage them regarding what they should be placing in their 'bug buckets'.

Children feel safe to take risks and to make mistakes in their creative pursuits. They mix different paints to create spiders, before sucking and dropping paint to create raindrops. They explore sounds and use imagination when playing a variety of musical instruments to demonstrate how different types of insects will move. They use imagination when 'moving like spiders', 'wriggling like worms', 'jumping like grasshoppers' and 'flying like butterflies'. They practise and refine their skills with a range of malleable materials, for example, when using hand-eye coordination to handle tools to roll and cut play dough and clay.

Children are making sound progress towards the learning goals from their individual starting points. However, the systems utilised by staff are not always formalised to observe, assess and record children's achievements to ensure progress to their next steps of learning.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are made to feel valued and treated with respect to help them to feel confident and good about themselves. They are beginning to develop an understanding of people's similarities and differences through being able to see a range of positive images and by playing with some toys and resources reflecting diversity. Children take part in celebrating other cultural events, for example, they made a large dragon to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Two-year-olds are learning alternative communication skills such as makaton, to enable them to have an understanding of how to communicate. Staff sign 'good sitting' when they wish children to sit quietly. Nursery aged children have a good sense of belonging through all having their own special bags to take their possessions to and from the setting. However, all nursery aged children's individual needs are not being fully met as all have to sleep or rest in cots or on mats after lunch. At the beginning of the day, siblings of differing ages enjoy their breakfast together and the whole age range play happily together until the older children leave for school.

Children are looked after by caring staff, who have a sound system to support children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) liaises with parents and carers and other agencies to ensure that these children's individual needs are effectively met. Staff devise systems and use an interpreter with children who have English as an additional language.

Children are generally well behaved and play well together. They are fully aware of what staff expect of them through consistent care, activities and routines, for example, the sharing, negotiating and cooperating with each other. School aged children know the boundaries and understand the consequences of their behaviour on others, for example, as to why they have to be kind to each other. Staff have a calm approach to caring for children in all areas by ensuring that they are positive, good role models for them. They consistently praise children's achievements to raise their self-esteem and to develop their understanding of right and wrong.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They confidently make conversation with staff, visitors and other children. They are encouraged to learn the social skills of taking turns and saying 'please' and 'thank you'. They become very excited when trying out new experiences, for example, when going outside to dig for worms. Children care for each other, for example, older children passing the water jug to the younger children. They confidently talk about their life experiences, for example, their holidays, while others knew that they would be visiting the school which they are starting in September later in the day.

There are sound working relationships of staff with the parents and carers of the school aged children. Parents and carers speak positively about the care their children receive and feel able to speak to the manager directly or to telephone at any time to discuss concerns about their child's welfare. Parents and carers of pre-school aged children generally receive information about their children's day through written report sheets, which are discussed and given to them at the end of each day to encourage continuity of care. They also receive monthly newsletters.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery funding is satisfactory. They speak positively about how their children's education has progressed. They learn what

the themed topics will be through information in newsletters. However, systems do not inform them towards which areas of learning their children are working daily to enable them to become fully involved and to make a greater contribution to their children's assessment records. Some parents and carers become involved with their children's learning by talking to staff about the activity sheets taken home for completion by their children. They receive written termly reports on all six areas of learning and what their children's next term's learning will include. However, some parents and carers do not fully understand that there are six areas of their children's learning because the prospectus only provides very basic information.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a sensitive, supportive and caring staff team. They are being fully safeguarded by staff, who the registered provider has ensured have been vetted. There are clear action plans detailing how the majority of staff will achieve Early Years Child Care and Education qualifications of level 2 and above.

Children are grouped appropriately to ensure that they feel secure and confident, for example, when the reception children join the nursery children after school, the six and seven year olds have their own room. The care of the over eights does not adversely affect the care provided for the children of under eight, because they are cared for in their own room after school and during the school holidays. The three and four year olds move between rooms during the course of the day to provide them with a richer experience. The staff:child ratios are being maintained throughout the day, with the manager being supernumerary to enable her to deal with the day-to-day running of the setting for the benefit of the children's well-being.

The required documentation is in place for the safe day-to-day management and to promote children's welfare and safety. Staff demonstrate a secure knowledge of the policies and procedures, although the registered provider is currently arranging for their review to ensure that they fully safeguard the welfare of all children.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The registered provider has a clear vision for the setting to ensure the provision of the best possible outcomes for children through play and learning. He delegates the day to day running to the setting's manager, while the planning and monitoring of the nursery education is undertaken by the deputy manager and the key persons working with the children. Staff delivering the curriculum generally understand the clear and appropriate aims for the children's education. They are committed to further training and the registered provider is working closely with outside agencies to ensure that they have access to relevant guidance, support and training for the benefit of the children's development. The Manager and her staff review the quality of the provision and care practices, beginning to take steps to address identified weaknesses. Staff are now seeking to regularly evaluate and record on children's files what they have learnt to enable them to plan for their differing developmental needs.

Overall, children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.



## Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, 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 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 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):

- develop hygienic procedures to prevent the spread of infection (this refers to the bedding, cots and sleeping mats)
- ensure compliance with the recommendations made by the Fire Safety Officer (this refers to the pathways leading from the building to a place of ultimate safety)
- ensure that all children's differing needs are acknowledged and valued (this refers to the after lunch rest/sleep time).

### 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):

- ensure that short term plans include sufficient details to show the learning intentions and what the activities involve, evaluated in terms of what children have learnt to enable such evaluations to inform future planning
- improve systems as to how parents and carers are informed about the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones to enable them to make a greater contribution to their children's assessment records and next steps.

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)