

Allington Day Nursery (Kinder Groups Ltd)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	126970
Inspection date	03/09/2009
Inspector	Susan Jennifer Scott
Setting address	Ash Grove, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 0AB
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Allington Day Nursery is one of seven nurseries run by Kinder Group Ltd. It opened in 1997 and operates from four rooms in a purpose-built building on a school site. There is before and after school provision which uses a room and other space in the school building. It is located in Allington on the outskirts of Maidstone.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 71 children at any one time. No overnight care is provided. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. Children from the nursery share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and the school grounds are also available for use.

There are currently 70 children aged from six months to under 8 years on roll. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language and children who have special education needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 13 staff. Eleven of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

The group receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents have positive relationships with nursery staff. They benefit from the introduction of learning records that establish starting points in the information provided by parents. This ensures that children make progress in their learning and development as staff plan their experiences based upon individual needs and interests. Children are all included but the support for children with special educational needs are not always realistically tailored to enable good progress. The manager has identified improvements to the quality of children's experiences and is enabling the staff team to identify training they will benefit from. Children who attend the after school club benefit from good relationships between the school staff and the club staff, and children's contributions are also sought and valued.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure all practitioners are familiar with the content of the areas of Learning and Development in order to support children's learning and development
- create a stimulating environment that offers a range of activities which will

- encourage children's interest and curiosity in the outdoor environment
- involve children in learning which takes them into the local community, such as walking to shops, or invite members of the local community into the setting to share their expertise
- provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning
- provide records about the vehicles in which children are transported, including insurance details and a list of named drivers
- provide opportunities for children to relax, rest quietly, or sleep, away from normal playspace and without disturbance
- keep individualised planning realistic while maintaining a focus on broader learning outcomes, particularly when constructing individual learning plans for children
- clarify the record of risk assessments to show clearly how identified risks have been minimised

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

A two way flow of information ensures staff and parents are aware of children's achievements and any concerns. The staff use record sheets and daily contact books to ensure that the provision meets children's needs and informs parents of any concerns. Children's confidence is enhanced in the toddler and pre-school rooms through the use of a toy bear and accompanying book which goes home with each of them in turn and promotes links between home and the play school. This initiative provides good opportunities to demonstrate and share experiences the children have at home which can be discussed at the nursery. When children first begin at the group their individual requirements and development are noted, through the use of an individual tracking book shared by staff and parents. This enables staff to support them and enable their progress. For children who attend the after school provision, information is shared at meetings with the reception staff to assist the process of assessment and deliver appropriate activities. Several parents have positive relationships with staff and express satisfaction with the service they receive and the progress their children make, they can access the policies and procedures by request and these are summarised in information provided when their children start at the nursery.

The manager has just returned from maternity leave after a number of staff have been in charge at the nursery. Staff are sometimes uncertain regarding practice issues although a stable team is developing which is enabling the development of sound practice amongst staff. Staff have recently changed the way in which they gather information about children; they use their observations to identify plans and track children's progress effectively. The manager has clear intentions and has begun to implement measures such as regular contact time with staff and an in-house training programme which is resulting in the development of staff confidence in implementing procedures. The self evaluation is partially completed, and has identified some general improvements. The systems for identifying, monitoring and tracking changes are supported by room meetings and whole nursery staff meetings. The self evaluation form provides some evidence these

have been used to identify changes that result in priorities. There have been improvements in the building and children benefit from refurbished toilets and some improvements to the nappy changing provision. Other improvements to practice in learning and development as well as welfare have been implemented since the last inspection. Staff recognise when there are weaknesses and the manager takes action to remedy these. For example, two insecure fence panels and some stagnant water in the outside play area were addressed after discussion with the inspector.

There is a good selection of policies and procedures, including safeguarding and complaints information, available to parents and carers if they request access to these. Some of these documents are summarised in the information provided to parents when their children begin at the nursery, although there is no information provided about the minibuses or cars used to collect children from school. There are secure systems to recruit, interview and vet adults who work at the nursery. All staff hold police checks and any staff who are not checked are not allowed unsupervised access to children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are making progress and enjoy their time in the nursery. They are able to explore using varied resources and equipment, and have plenty of opportunities for small group, large group and individual activities. Babies and children benefit from playing in a varied environment that offers sufficient space for them to access a range of resources and equipment, and who enjoy access to outside areas for play and learning. The children also enjoy opportunities to explore the school grounds, consisting of hard surfaced areas and a field, used when the school is closed. For example, children at the nursery have been able to use the grounds during school holidays and the afterschool club frequently use these grounds. There are several rooms accommodating different age groups in the nursery, although the two rooms for children under two years are not always used. This means staff can ensure children always have a staff member with them when visiting the toilet, and another to stay with those who are playing. However, this does not offer babies the chance for them to sleep undisturbed when they are in the same room as others who are playing and can be distracting.

Staff read books to them, discuss their experiences and assist with a 'plan, do, review' sequence to allow children to plan their own play experiences each day, although the self evaluation form notes that staff require more training on how to spontaneously provide new experiences for children. The planned activities and the quality of children's experiences is dependent upon the staffs' knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is sometimes varied and can result in insecure practice as not all staff are confident in their knowledge of the foundation stage to support children's learning and development effectively.

Children benefit from learning about their environment when they explore and play outside and enjoy learning how to handle the two resident guinea pigs. They experience fewer opportunities to learn about the community from visitors, such as

firemen or nurses and do not learn from outings in the locality. This means their experience of everyday life such as buying items from a shop, or posting letters is limited.

Children are all included in the activities and experiences organised and staff work hard to support their individual needs and make sure they feel secure. However, the individual learning plans for children with special education needs and/or disabilities sometimes set targets which are not broken down into realistic steps to enable children to achieve these easily. Children with additional languages have access to a variety of posters and toys reflecting diversity but cannot always access opportunities to develop and use their home language in play and learning.

Children are able to explore using varied resources and equipment. They benefit from playing in a varied environment that offers good opportunities for access to outside play at frequent times during the day. However, the outdoor environment is not organised to offer a full range of play and learning experiences. Staff read books to them, discuss their experiences and assist with a 'plan, do, review' sequence to allow children to plan their own play experiences each day, although the self evaluation form notes that staff require more training in how to spontaneously provide new experiences for children.

Children are kept safe through the clear procedures for protecting them and the good understanding that staff have about child protection. The staff are aware how and when to refer any concerns to the appropriate agency. This provides safeguards for the welfare of children, as does the information provided for parents on how to raise complaints or concerns. Children are protected in an emergency because staff practise evacuations and a record of these is completed. Staff promote children's safety through routines, such as the procedure for the collection of children from the nursery. Visitors details are recorded and the main door is only opened by staff, although the staff do not introduce the inspector to children and inform them that it is safe to talk to her. Daily risk assessments are usually completed, any hazards are noted and, mostly addressed. Occasionally, objects are left on the steps to the outdoor play area and collected water on the sandpit cover is not emptied which does not provide consistent messages for children about keeping safe.

Children learn about self care and healthy routines as these are encouraged through good procedures that promote children's independence, such as, washing their hands and dressing themselves, sometimes with help, for outdoor play. Children's individual dietary needs are catered for and healthy snacks are enjoyed, when children sit at tables in small groups. Children are able to pour their own drinks whenever they want one, or staff will assist them if requested.

Children develop skills through the everyday activities, such as, learning to share with others. They learn to take turns by using a large timer which helps them to see when they have had their time on the bikes. Children in the afterschool club are able to develop an awareness of rules for a harmonious existence through discussion with staff and they contribute their suggestions to a list of these, which is displayed. Occasionally the children receive inconsistent messages when there

are conflicts between them, as staff do not always provide support to enable them to understand right and wrong behaviour.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met