

Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Crewe

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY268939

Inspection date

05/11/2009

Inspector

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Kids Unlimited, Crewe, was registered in 2003. The setting is part of Kids Unlimited, a privately owned chain. It operates from a purpose built, fully accessible building situated in one of Crewe's business parks on the south eastern side of the town. Children are cared for within five rooms located on two floors. There are secure areas available for outdoor play. A maximum of 132 children aged from six months to five years old may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open five days a week from 7.30am to 6pm all year round. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 39 children on roll aged from six months to four years old. All of these are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting receives funding for nursery education. The setting supports some children with special educational needs and disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 20 members of staff including the manager. There are two members of staff who have Early Years Professional Status. Nine staff are qualified to level three in early years and three staff are qualified to level two. The remaining six staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. In addition, the setting employs a cook. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

All children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development, and their individual care needs are adequately met. Improvements focus upon planning and providing for each child as an individual. However, safeguarding is inadequate because staff are not confident about what to do if they are concerned a child is being abused. Partnerships with parents and other involved professionals where appropriate are satisfactory, but links with other childcare settings that children also attend, are underdeveloped. Managers have sufficient commitment and capacity to make gradual improvements, but action plans and training have too little effect upon daily practice. Ongoing staffing issues and management changes mean that many weaknesses raised at the last inspection remain, despite numerous strategies and efforts to improve outcomes for children.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- carry out a full risk assessment for each specific outing taking into account the nature of the outing and the whether normal child ratios should be exceeded (Safeguarding and welfare) 05/12/2009
- ensure that parental consents are in place for every child, including for any necessary emergency medical treatment or advice (Safeguarding and welfare) 05/12/2009
- ensure that necessary steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection by keeping toys and equipment clean and staff vigilance with regard to wiping noses and cleaning hands (Safeguarding and welfare) 05/12/2009
- ensure that children can freely choose outdoor and active play which includes climbing equipment, suitable outdoor clothing and full use of the communal room (Organisation). 05/12/2009

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure all practitioners have an up to date understanding of safeguarding children issues and are able to implement the policy confidently
- ensure that regular staff appraisals are carried out to identify their ongoing training and professional development needs
- make contingency arrangements that ensure a consistent experience for children when there is staff absence and other disruptions, and improve staff deployment so that key workers and room leaders are able to maximise the time they spend with their key children
- make more spontaneous observations and ensure that all staff enthusiastically take opportunities to build upon children's interests and knowledge, including involvement in maintaining their environment
- develop working links with other childcare providers to ensure consistent and complimentary care which promotes the progress of children who attend more than one childcare setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are still unsure how to ensure that children are adequately safeguarded despite recent whole staff training, detailed safeguarding policies which are explained at induction, and displayed information. Managers audit procedures for risk assessments and daily checks which support safety. However, outings risk assessments are not always used for each outing, and staff do not act promptly to deal with the risks posed by wet leaves and some dirty toys. As a result, children's opportunities to play and explore outside are reduced and they are exposed to a greater possibility of cross-infection. Nevertheless, complaints records are full and in order and systems to check visitors to the setting are robust. Similarly, attendance registers are kept accurate and up to date as children and staff arrive and depart. Emergency evacuations are practised monthly and the nursery is kept generally clean and safe.

Policies and procedures are reviewed to reflect the EYFS, but some essential parental consent and information forms are not in place for every child. The vetting of staff is robust and audits of staff qualifications, deployment and practice across the nursery aim to secure improved consistency of care in each base room. However, staff appraisals are not frequent enough and despite monthly staff meetings, some staff do not understand the purpose behind changes and initiatives within the setting. For example, rolling snacks time, child self-registration and involvement in decisions, discussions and keeping the environment clean and tidy are under-used as opportunities to develop children's abilities, independence and confidence. Instead, processes take place with too little adult insight or communication, and the time taken on these activities is used as a reason why outdoor play does not take place.

Staff are able to engage regularly with parents because rotas provide for key workers to be available at the beginning and end of the day for feedback. Daily routine sheets tell parents about their child's day, and displays outside the room tell them what the children have enjoyed doing today. The learning journey files are well used with parents' contributions both to starting points and to subsequent assessments. This means that parents know how their child is progressing and are included in their child's learning, with good regard to room or key worker changes. Strategies like 'show and tell' times, parents' evenings and annual questionnaires also keep parents involved. Activity plans, key worker lists and some creative work are displayed. There are resources, pictorial images and activities adequately reflect diversity and a new form for parents aims to find out how they want the individual languages and customs of their family to be included. This information, and any individual plans from specialist therapists, are incorporated into the learning journey to promote a coordinated approach to the child's individual needs. However, links with other providers where children attend are planned, but have not been implemented.

The manager and early years advisors for the nursery chain are usually present and provide examples of good practice in all the home rooms at various times. Significant changes to the deployment of staff, space usage and quality and accessibility of resources have been planned, with timescales. However, on the day of inspection, there was reliance on level two and agency staff to run the pre-school: usage of the outdoors and community room for active play did not take place as scheduled; and the pre-school and toddler rooms still lacked sufficient quality resources set out in an inviting and clearly labelled, accessible way. Nevertheless, improvements in the baby room and more staff consistency there have improved the health and development of the babies. The Ofsted self-evaluation form and numerous other planning documents, rotas, checklists and meeting minutes indicate managers' drive to prioritise and secure appropriate improvements, but these are too numerous and overpowering for some existing staff to implement. As a result, improvements are not consistent across the nursery.

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

Most children are happy and settled in the setting and enjoy their play and activities sufficiently. They achieve adequately and enjoy some significant input and quality learning experiences. For example, babies are well stimulated to become self-aware, use their senses and develop their physical and vocal skills. Treasure baskets, musical toys and a variety of activities stimulate them. Children in some rooms do not have enough opportunities to play actively on the day of inspection, and pre-school children are not encouraged to pursue active role play which builds upon their favourite popular heroes. Some domestic role play facilities are old, untidy and unclean in places and staff do not involve themselves sufficiently to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world, social and communication skills. Nevertheless, a group of children in pre-school delightedly participate in an impromptu session to deal with the broken table and computer in the setting, discussing what should be done and making a sign to tell others that the computer is not working. They go on in the afternoon to role play various mending and fixing, using role play tools and pretending to be builders. Activities such as these promote children's enjoyment and achievement in numerous areas.

Toddlers and pre-school children enjoy some constructive, creative and problem solving activities on the day of inspection, such as using jigsaws, making and decorating hats, problem solving with the play dough and sorting and counting with the farm animals. Staff ask children individual number questions appropriate to their abilities, and individually help pre-school children to write their name and decide what feeling mood card they want as they come in to nursery. They mostly cater for children's individual needs, including managing children's particular health needs and physical impairments professionally and sensitively. They work closely with parents to make sure that individual needs are known. However, some staff are using strategies without fully understanding them. For example, a sheet with words from a child's home language have been put to one side because the child does not like them being used at circle time because they make her feel different. The words have not been used with skill and enthusiasm to help everyone celebrate the child's special culture and help the child feel at home. Similarly, the mood cards are not used fully to help pre-school children understand, identify and manage their feelings through the day. Spontaneous observations of what children are doing are not often noted, and some of children's learning and knowledge is missed when staff are not alert and alongside them to challenge and extend their play.

Labelling, with pictures and words, of accessible toys and the continuous provision of diverse resources covering the six areas of learning is available to many children, although the organisation of some areas remains uninviting and photographs of children doing the activities are too few to best foster children's sense of belonging and understanding of their home and nursery relationships. Nevertheless, children love to see the photos in their learning journey files and photographs and pictures displayed in the pre-school dining room show how children have learnt about healthy fruits and vegetables. Walking trips to the local

shop, DIY store, ponds and visiting library also provide opportunities for children to develop social skills and more understanding of their local community and the natural and man-made world around them.

Children have suitable opportunities to take care of their own health and safety. For example, they use the toilets and wash basins sensibly and equipment is being provided for them to take a greater part in sweeping, wiping, mopping and clearing up. They serve their own meals in pre-school and can access fresh drinking water in their rooms at all times. They choose and take part in preparing their snack in small groups. However, toddlers are not involved in clearing up the leaves which pose a slipping hazard and staff are not vigilant enough to wipe noses or encourage timely nose blowing. As a result, some children are putting toys in their mouths which have been soiled by runny noses.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	4
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
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	4
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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