

Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Milton Park

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Milton Park is one of a chain of nurseries owned by the Kidsunlimited nursery group. The nursery registered in 2000. It is registered on the Early Years Register to cater for a maximum of 148 children in the early years age group, at any one time. It operates from purpose built premises. Children are accommodated in a range of rooms according to age, with immediate access to secure, outdoor play areas. The nursery is situated on the Milton Park business complex, at Milton near Abingdon in Oxfordshire. The nursery opens on weekdays from 7.30am to 6pm all year, with the exception of bank holidays. The nursery serves Milton itself, the nearby towns of Abingdon and Didcot, and surrounding villages. Children come from a wider area too, as parents travel to work at the business park.

Currently, 152 children aged from six months to under five years are on roll. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery takes children aged two, three and four years who receive funding for early education.

The nursery employs 44 members of staff, of whom 28 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery manager is working towards a relevant level 4 qualification whilst the deputy is working towards Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

This nursery has improved immensely since its previous inspection. A new, enthusiastic senior management team has instigated significant positive changes. All children, including those with additional needs, flourish making quick progress in their learning and development. Children thrive in stimulating environments that nurture their natural curiosity and develop them as independent learners. Effective key person systems and close working partnerships with outside professionals result in all children's individual needs being met outstandingly well. The senior management team constantly reflects on practice, accurately identifying most areas for development. They act on advice from other professionals, including those within the parent company, so are extremely well placed to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- extend the engagement with parents and carers to further advise how they might support their children's learning and development at home
- develop further the partnerships with others delivering the Early Years

Foundation Stage, in particular with the schools to which children will transfer.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery successfully implements its policies and procedures to safeguard children effectively. Robust appointment procedures permit only persons checked as being suitable to work with the children. Induction and probationary periods, together with ongoing refresher courses for all employees, contribute to staff knowing procedures to follow should they have concerns for children's welfare. Staff meetings are used to re-visit policies and procedures, with quizzes to test staff knowledge. Meeting dates are set well in advance to encourage high attendance rates. Risk assessments are effective in identifying potential hazards to children's safety. Daily safety checks, for which named staff take ownership, and careful monitoring by senior staff, contribute to children playing in safe environments. Staff carefully teach children how to keep themselves safe. The kitchen has a 'four star' rating from environmental health personnel and the chefs act on advice given. Staff, including a designated housekeeper, maintain the cleanliness of the nursery extremely well during the day; outside contractors clean all rooms thoroughly after the children leave. This all helps maintain children's good health extremely well.

Since the last inspection, the parent company has appointed a new manager and deputy. They share a clear vision for the nursery's future based on their evaluation of what can be achieved. They convey their plans with great enthusiasm, lifting staff moral through using varied incentives, so staff feel valued and do their best for the children. Strong emphasis is placed on further training and gaining of qualifications, which helps improve quality generally. Everyone in the nursery, including the children, is encouraged to contribute their views for improvement; for example, the pre-school children make drawings of what they would like in their outside area. Areas for development are identified accurately overall and acted on. Consequently, outcomes for children have improved significantly.

The nursery promotes equality and diversity extremely well through a suitable equal opportunities policy. Children with additional needs receive necessary support owing to effective systems that identify their emerging requirements quickly. This includes prompt advice and action sought from local authority staff. Children from bilingual families have their differing cultural backgrounds acknowledged well; boys and girls participate equally in activities and have joint access to resources. Extremely effective use is made of outdoor environments, which supports all children who learn better when outside. Within this modern building each room and its corresponding outdoor area is extremely well equipped with high quality resources. These suit different stages of development; for example, climbing equipment becomes more challenging as children grow and the pre-school children's area includes sloping ground for additional physical challenge. Staff throughout the nursery make full use of all equipment and facilities to promote children's learning and development effectively.

Other wider partnerships, for example, with schools to which children will transfer, are not fully exploited. Staff understand their responsibilities to aid transitions, and do so well as children move through the nursery itself, but they have not been able to establish useful links with all the schools involved. Engagement with parents provides for excellent daily communications that support children's welfare needs; however, staff do not do all they might to make sure parents and carers understand how best to support children's learning and development at home. Parents speak glowingly of the nursery and of the lengths to which staff go in supporting both them and their children.

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

Children and babies across the nursery delight in exploring stimulating, high quality environments through exploratory and investigative play. They explore confidently, supported by staff who they trust to meet their individual needs and provide support when needed. Excellent relationships lie at the heart of the nursery's work. These develop quickly because staff spend much time sitting, talking and playing with children from the time they enter the nursery. Children behave exceptionally well, so that all can play safely, knowing their efforts will be acknowledged and valued. In the pre-school room, for example, children paint extremely carefully and watch with open-eyed delight as staff help them make 'mirror image' prints of their work. They follow the excellent examples set by staff and ask their friends 'Shall I help you?' as they too attempt the same process.

Children's play is open-ended and sustained. They thoroughly enjoy deciding what activities to do from the wealth on offer. They learn excellent independence skills as they become older, putting on aprons, fetching paper, naming their work and mixing paints to declare that 'white and dark blue make light blue'. Such skills will be extremely useful when they move on to school. The nursery adopts a consistent approach to letter formation but they have not been entirely successful in learning what styles are used in children's future schools, to further aid transitions.

All children, even very young babies, become engrossed in what they choose to do, which is largely what leads to such good behaviour. Additionally, staff establish basic routines, consistently enforce suitable 'Golden Rules' and give clear explanations of what is and what is not, acceptable. Children learn that standing on a low shelf is unsafe, as they may hurt themselves or others; they are encouraged to remember to say 'thank you' and 'excuse me' when appropriate. This all contributes to the nursery's busy but calm atmosphere.

Key persons make useful observational assessments of children's play and development. They use these records to identify children's individual interests and needs accurately, and this information is carefully incorporated into weekly plans, so that activities and experiences are tailored to the individual needs of all children, both indoors and out. Planning covers the six areas of learning for all children daily. Careful monitoring of records tracks children's progress towards the early learning goals, as they acquire new skills such as speech, mobility and early writing.

Staff provide excellent support for children throughout the nursery, frequently on a one-to-one basis. Staff are purposefully engaged with children, providing cheery, positive role models. Babies and younger children use more cosy, contained rooms, with adjacent quiet sleeping areas. They explore paint as curiously as the older children but use their hands instead of brushes and are unconcerned about how far it spreads.

Children make rapid strides in learning about healthy lifestyles. They develop excellent personal hygiene skills, being encouraged to wipe their hands before eating from a young age. They spend considerable periods outside, benefiting from fresh air, with shady resting areas with books on hot days. Older children know they need sunhats and sun cream. Children eat freshly prepared, nutritious meals cooked on site, from locally sourced fresh meat and vegetables. Older children know that calcium makes their bones strong. They learn not to waste water. They understand that people differ in their eating habits, some using their hands and others, chopsticks. Staff sit with children at meal times, discussing healthy eating, encouraging appropriate eating habits and supporting children in handling knives and forks. Children learn that they should not eat and run at the same time, as they may choke. Children grow some vegetables and fruit for themselves at a nearby allotment. They eagerly participate in baking activities with a male chef, who provides a good role model. Such activities encourage children to try new foods. Individual dietary needs are accommodated well and children learn to respect their friends' special requirements, such as not drinking cows' milk and eating soya yoghurt. Children, staff and parents are proud of their nursery.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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