



Kids Inc Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY304905
Inspection date	05 January 2006
Inspector	Mandy Mooney
Setting Address	West Village, Bluewater, Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9SE
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Registered person	Select Enterprises (South East) LTD
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kids Inc Day nursery has been registered since July 2005. It is a privately run and managed provision and runs from a single level, purpose built building, situated within the grounds of Bluewater Shopping Centre in the Greenhithe area of Kent. The nursery is open from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round (with a pre arranged additional time from 07.30 to 08.00 and 18.00 to 18.30). Children are in base rooms according

to their age and stage of development. There are four base rooms and two additional activity rooms. There is also a fully enclosed outdoor play space available.

There are currently 67 children on roll, of these 20 receive nursery education funding. The nursery provides a service for children from the local/wider area. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 24 staff, on a full and part time basis. Approximately 75% of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is sufficiently safeguarded by staff who have put in place some suitable hygiene routines, for example, cleaning tables for snack time and after activities and by following effective nappy changing routines. Children are aware of the need to wash their hands after using the toilet, before snacks and after messy play. However, hygiene standards in the bathroom areas are not consistently maintained. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to exclude children with infectious illnesses and to care for children who become unwell during the session. Several staff are appropriately qualified to administer first aid and well stocked first aid boxes are stored around the nursery, for easy access.

Having jugs of water and cups readily available means that children can access drinks throughout the session. Children are provided with healthy drinks and food for snacks and at mealtimes. They thoroughly enjoy eating fresh fruit on a daily basis. Staff are aware of children's dietary needs and parents are kept informed as menus are displayed. Opportunities for children to learn about the benefits of keeping healthy are few, as staff do not systematically reinforce this.

Children have some opportunities to take part in physical play activities, either indoors or in the outside play area. However, this is not well planned and consequently opportunities are not necessarily based on building upon children's existing skills. Children are able to use and manipulate a range of small toys, tools and equipment with growing skill and confidence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a suitably organised and well maintained premises. Effective monitoring of the main entrance and the buzzer system prevents unwanted visitors gaining access to the building and ensures children cannot leave the building unsupervised.

Children have easy access to a sufficient range of clean, appropriately maintained, furniture, toys and equipment. Children use the toys safely and they are learning to take responsibility for clearing away after they have finished playing.

The nursery has a comprehensive health and safety policy which ensures the building and those in it are kept safe. Staff practice some effective systems for ensuring children are kept safe, for example, implementing appropriate health and safety policies and procedures and by completing a daily safety checklist. The fire evacuation plan is clearly displayed on the wall for all to see and the fire drill is carried out at regular intervals.

The staff's sound knowledge of child protection issues promotes children's welfare within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing relationships with staff who build their confidence and encourage them to talk about their home lives and provide opportunities for the development of their personal care skills. Children are happy and enjoy playing with their friends, particularly during the imaginative role play and for younger children, as they enjoy carpet play. All children participate well during meal times and have varied and interesting conversations about their experiences and families.

There are some inconsistencies in the opportunities offered to all the children which results in children experiencing some stimulating and varied activities presented in an appealing manner and some routines which are too rigid and inflexible and result in children becoming bored with what is provided. This is particularly relevant to the pre-school children.

Babies and younger children enjoy the closeness and security they have and staff respond well to their needs. Staff use a variety of strategies to stimulate the children's sensory needs, for example, through the daily use of the sensory room. Children's communication skills are developing well as staff spend time at the children's level, encouraging interaction. Children enjoy a sufficient range of play experiences as staff use the Birth to three matters framework as a guide.

There is a sufficient range of resources and equipment to support children's play, however, the range lacks variety and challenge for some areas of play, for example, role play, creative play and construction play. Resources to reflect diversity are also quite limited. This impacts on children's understanding and appreciation of other people.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children do not experience consistent opportunities to make good progress and to extend their learning. Staff have a very limited knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and they do not provide activities or opportunities based on children's individual needs. The activities

provided are not well thought out or presented in a way to encourage children to participate or to complete the activity. On occasions, as children are disinterested in what is available, this impacts on their behaviour, where some children disrupt the experiences of others. Learning experiences provided for children are mainly devised by management, who do not work directly with the children and this means that the staff who know them best, contribute little to the process. This also restricts staffs' knowledge of how children learn and progress and how to devise learning intentions for activities. Activities and play experiences are not evaluated and children's progress is not assessed so therefore, there is little evidence to show how activities are improved, changed or adapted to meet the individual needs of the children.

Staff sit with children and respond well to children's requests. Generally, staff communicate well with children, although some are more able to extend children's thinking than others. Children are well settled and confident in the environment. They use the toilet independently and move around freely in their base rooms. Children's concentration skills are developing and they enjoy small group and pair work, such as, carpet time where they talk about themselves and their families. Children are generally well behaved, they follow instructions and are familiar with the rules and boundaries in place, although strategies used by staff to correct unwanted behaviour are not always effective. Children take turns and continue to develop their sharing skills.

Many children are able to recognise their names from name cards at lunch time. However, there are too few opportunities for children to reinforce their learning through practice or visual prompts. Children's language for thinking is developing well. They chat to each other about their friends and family and some children are confident enough to 'read' a story from a magazine to the inspector. This included turning the pages correctly and also creating an interesting story involving her younger brother. Opportunities for children to use and enjoy books are too few. although there are many books available for them to look, the book case is frequently closed, as staff use this as a way to manage behaviour and consequently children miss out. Children access the literacy table freely, some sit together and write, however, as they are not supported in this, they often leave the area and opportunities for children to practice writing for a variety of purposes are too few.

Fours year olds confidently count to ten and beyond. Resources to support children's learning of different mathematical concepts are quite limited and children's knowledge and understanding of maths is rarely extended. Children learn about taking care of living creatures as they have created a 'snail house'. They are able to enjoy the view from the nursery windows across the lake where they watch the swans and other life. Children's appreciation of community is somewhat limited as they are not taken out as part of the regular routine and visitors to the nursery are few. Children have daily opportunities to take part in physical play. They make good use of the outdoor space and show good spatial awareness and are able to negotiate furniture and others. They confidently climb the small frame, however, generally, the equipment provided lacks challenge for the older or more able children. Children's fine motor skills are developing satisfactorily as they practice using scissors and holding glue sticks and paint brushes. Children have some opportunities to use their creative skills, for example, in painting and sticking activities, however, these are poorly prepared and presented. On occasions staff over direct children and this

inhibits their free creativity. Children can recognise many colours. They sing a long to familiar songs and are able to copy the actions to some. They use their imagination well whilst creating their own role play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to some activities to help them learn about themselves and each other, for example, through celebrating different cultural festivals, however, resources to reflect a positive image of diversity are quite limited. The nursery welcomes children with additional needs and the system in place for supporting children is effective in both identifying needs and also providing appropriate support to children and promoting inclusion. There is a named special needs coordinator, who is familiar with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and the procedures for accessing external support as necessary.

Overall, children's behaviour is generally appropriate. They are familiar with the rules and boundaries. Most staff are competent in dealing with different behaviour in an appropriate way. However, when individual children behave in a way that is considered unacceptable, the strategies used by some staff are sometimes inconsistent and ineffective, consequently, the behaviour continues and children receive mixed messages. Staff provide gentle reminders to children for saying 'please' and 'thank you' and offer children praise for their achievements. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. This is because sufficient provision is made to help children explore their own and other people's culture and children's natural curiosity about nature and for caring of for other beings is actively encouraged. Also, children generally behave well, considering the age and different stage of development and they are developing their social skills. They have a respect for each other and themselves and consequently their self esteem is developing appropriately.

Partnership with parents is inadequate. Parents are welcome in the group and staff continue to develop friendly relationships with them. A newsletter is produced on a regular basis to inform parents of the activities going on within the group and parent evenings encourage parents to talk to staff about their child's care needs. The nursery takes positive steps to ensure parents are kept well informed about relevant policies and procedures. Some parents are aware of the early learning goals, as some information is contained in the parent information and some know that they can discuss their child's progress with staff informally. However, not all parents are confident enough to approach their child's key worker to ask how their child is doing. Because plans are not routinely shared with parents; staff do not actively seek parent's views about their children's needs and interests and consequently parents are not actively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. There is no method in place to ensure that all parents are aware of the progress their child is making and the partnership is not good enough to ensure that it contributes to children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a well-qualified group of staff. The majority of the staff, particularly those working with the younger children, are skilled at meeting the needs of the children, however, this standard is not consistently practiced amongst the whole staff group. Sufficient systems for recruiting and induction ensure staff and students are aware of what is expected of them within the group. Effective contingency arrangements and staff's use of policies, procedures and documentation ensure children are kept safe and healthy and ensure ratios are maintained. On occasions, communication both within activity rooms and between staff and management is weak, for example, during the transition of children from one base room to another and during times of change in the nursery. Staff roles within the rooms are not always clear and as a result staff are not completely clear of individual responsibilities. All documentation is maintained to a satisfactory standard.

Leadership and management is inadequate. The nursery has recently gone through a period of many changes, including new ownership and several temporary cover managers. This has impacted on the quality of nursery education quite significantly because as much of the focus has been on improving the quality of care offered to the children, the system for monitoring the quality of nursery education is ineffective. Both the management and staff demonstrate a very positive approach to making improvements. The manager is working with the advisory teacher to make changes, however many issues relating to the nursery education remain and have a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning for children. There is no planning for the funded children and staff who work directly with the children have minimal responsibility or input into what is provided. This means that they are not developing their understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and consequently are not confident in their understanding of how children learn and how to provide for children to ensure they progress. There are no systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision and this has an adverse effect on children's development and progress. Staff do not assess the impact of the activities on the children and how these can be improved. The lack of systematic planning and monitoring results in inconsistencies in children's learning. The setting does not meet the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Information was passed to Ofsted on the 7th September 2005 relating to staff's alleged lack of knowledge in meeting babies' nutritional needs and the impact on children's welfare and inappropriate/ insufficient food being given to babies. These concerns relate overall to National Standards 7; 8 and 12. Ofsted childcare inspectors made an unannounced visit on the 13th September 2005 during which all

areas of concern and related issues were addressed in detail with the provider. As a result of the visit, the following actions and recommendations were agreed to improve all areas discussed. As a result the followings actions were raised:

St 1 - ensure staff are suitably qualified and skilled to provide for individual needs of all children

St 7: obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children and keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children.

St 7: review the sick child policy to ensure it is reflective of practice and understood by staff.

St 8: provide suitable meals for children to meet each child's individual nutritional needs.

St 12: review the written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint to ensure it is reflective of practice and maintain a complaints log.

Recommendations: Further develop the key worker system to improve partnership with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. In addition to the original concerns, other issues were addressed with the provider relating to National Standard 2, 7, 12 and 14.

To address the actions and recommendations raised, the staff group are appropriately qualified and this has resulted in standards being maintained overall. Records and documentation have improved as the policy for sick children and the procedure for administering medication has been reviewed and improved and are understood by staff. A written complaints procedure is in place and is displayed for parents and a written record of complaints is in place. The meals and snacks offered to children have greatly improved, as a new cook has been employed and the food is very much focussed on healthy eating and meeting the individual dietary needs of the children attending. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Concerns were raised on the 24th October 2005. The concerns related to National Standard 2, specifically staff: child ratios in the baby room. The registered provider was asked to respond to the issues raised through an internal investigation by 27th October 2005. The provider responded with a comprehensive report explaining how the company is in the process of carrying out job appraisals and training in key areas, to ensure that staff are deployed effectively throughout the nursery. In addition, an internal investigation has been carried out regarding the concerns raised and an NVQ training programme has been introduced to enable staff to develop their skills in child care and a key worker scheme has been initiated. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Both complaints are recorded in the complaints log. 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 hygiene routines are maintained throughout the nursery, paying particular attention to the bathroom areas
- review and extend the range of toys and resources, including those to promote a positive image of diversity, to ensure these provide sufficient challenge and to meet the developmental needs of all children
- ensure the strategies for managing children's behaviour and are consistent and age appropriate
- ensure all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities within the activity rooms and further develop the methods of communication within the nursery

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop staff understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and how children learn to ensure that effective planning systems and teaching methods are in place which take account of children's needs and provide sufficient challenge to help them progress
- review the daily routine to ensure it allows for flexibility and spontaneity and encourages the children to make choices in their play and learning
- ensure that a system for monitoring children's progress, identifying what they already know and helping them move on to the next stage of learning is shared with parents to enable them to make an effective contribution to their child's learning
- implement effective systems to monitor the nursery education provision

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk