



KINGSTON KINDERGARTEN

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Amanda Jane Tyson

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Type of inspection Integrated
Type of care Sessional 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kingston Kindergarten is situated in a church hall in a residential area within walking distance of Kingston town centre, with its variety of community and public facilities and resources. The group have the use of a large hall, a kitchen area, toilets, entrance hall, cloakroom area and a small outside play area. They have sole use of the premises during their opening times.

The group operates Monday to Friday 09:00 - 12:55 term time only. They are

registered for 35 children aged 2 to 5 years. There are currently the full 35 children on roll. Of these, 31 children are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group support children with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language.

There are six staff in total, the two joint providers are qualified to level 3 in early years child care, and one is qualified to level 2. The remaining 3 staff are either working towards a recognised qualification, or in the early stages of considering the various options. Regardless, all staff attend regular relevant training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

High priority is given to ensuring that the children's health needs are met. The group have implemented rigorous procedures to minimise the risk of cross infection to children. Staff undertake additional cleaning responsibilities to ensure high standards of hygiene. The group operate a 24 hour exclusion period for contagious conditions, and a comprehensive list of the possible signs and symptoms of childhood illnesses is prominently displayed for parents. Thematic activity planning introduces, and teaches the children, the importance of good hygiene. For example, a health visitor, nurse and dental hygienist have visited to talk to the children. Pictorial reminders for hand washing prompt the children to use soap on both the front and the back of their hands and they rarely need reminding to visit the bathroom before eating or after playing outdoors. The staff are astutely aware of the risks to children who suffer from food intolerance and allergies and take excellent precautions to minimise the potential risks to them. For example, play dough is made from ingredients which do not contain wheat, and egg boxes are banned from the premises. Two staff hold valid first aid certificates, so that they are able to respond to minor accidents and some emergency situations. All required records and documentation relating to children's health are well maintained. For instance, accidents are recorded in detail with times and dates and they are signed by parents to acknowledge the entry. In addition, children are sent home with an accident report slip in their lunch box, which is particularly helpful for parents who may not have collected their child.

The children are making good progress towards the early learning goals for physical development. They keep healthy through daily physical exercise, both indoors and outdoors. Assault courses encourage and challenge the children's balance and coordination; they stretch, hop, and move their bodies in time to music, and work together in a large group when they play parachute games. The children are learning to use scooters and are becoming skilled at throwing and catching balls, for example, a 4 year-old threw a ball up and over his head straight into the basketball net. The children learn how their body works. They are being helped to understand the changes that occur after exercise through interesting discussions and activities, for instance they used a real stethoscope to listen to their heart beat. They help themselves to small tools and use them confidently. For example, play dough is flattened with a rolling pin and plastic mini-beasts are carefully pressed into the dough to create imprints. The children hold pencils using good pincer grip and

skilfully use scissors to cut a variety of materials.

The staff's gentle approach with the children ensures their contentment and confidence. They notice when children need support with runny noses, or when they might appreciate adult interaction. They are physically and verbally affectionate towards the children, who as a result, are extremely happy in this delightful setting.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises provides a warm, welcoming and mostly very safe environment for children. The staff transform the hall into an exciting play and learning environment each day. There is a wide variety of play and learning resources available, all of which are in good condition and suitable for the age and stage of the attending children. Staff regularly record their observations of required additional resources on a list which is displayed on the wall. Broken toys are regularly replenished, and supplies are frequently supplemented. Although the group have to clear them all away on most days, children are able to select many items independently from mobile trolleys.

Fire safety is particularly well ensured to protect the children and adults on the premises. When the group practise emergency evacuation, they respond to potential real situations which are planned by the two managers. There is a risk assessment procedure in place, although the checklist is not always completed by staff. Whilst the wall heaters are safely protected by fitted guards, the radiators in the main hall are not. They are very hot to touch and are accessible to the children, which presents a risk of scalding. There is a procedure in place, which staff are all familiar with, to respond in the event of a child becoming lost. However, whilst outings are well planned to ensure that adult to child ratios are high, there are no additional features to minimise this occurring in the first place. A log of all visitors to the premises is maintained and all staff working with the children have been suitably vetted. The risk to children of stranger access is minimal because of the high levels of adult vigilance, door security and use of child safety gates. The register of attendance is taken more than once during a session and all staff are clear about how many children are present, so there is no confusion.

The children's welfare is highly safeguarded because the staff's knowledge and understanding of the local area child protection committee guidelines is comprehensively sound. They keep up to date with changes in regulation and guidance and clear written information is provided to parents, which ensures that they fully understand the regulatory responsibilities of the provider.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The children arrive eagerly and separate happily from parents whereby they then quickly become immersed in highly exciting play and learning. Virtually all the

children attending are in receipt of funding for nursery education and they are all aged over 3 years. The staff team have been extremely proactive in extending their knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework, and have taken great strides in finding effective ways to use the principles in conjunction with the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance, in relation to planning and the monitoring of their progress and development. Younger children are inspired by the older children, particularly in relation to using different writing and mark making tools, and to investigate, explore and experiment. The children are developing high levels of self esteem and confidence; they share their experiences with the whole group during circle times, are keen to perform in music and movement. They enthusiastically attempt new skills. The children make their own decisions about what they want to play with and whether or not to join in group activities. For example, they fluctuate between indoor and outdoor play in the latter part of the session, and routinely transfer resources from one play area to another.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good, and there are many outstanding features. For example, curriculum planning is extremely interesting and very exciting; the thematic approach inspires the children's interest and positively encourages their natural impulse to question, experiment and use their imagination.

The staff's understanding of the early learning goals is highly secure, which means that they recognise and exploit opportunities for all areas of learning within a wide range of activities. For example, mathematics in outdoor play, and writing in role play. The staff allow the children time to work out practical problems for themselves before stepping in to support learning. They maintain accurate written observations of children's developmental progress and they use these to inform assessment check lists, which are based on the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. The children separate into small key groups according to age for part of each session. However, the challenges set during this time, are often based on the mid-range ability of the group, which means that more able children are not always challenged enough. For example, a group of 4 year-olds were playing bingo with numbers 1-10, but for some children this was very easy and they would have been more challenged if 2 digit numbers were used. It is not clear what the next steps for children's individual learning are. Although the yearly developmental reports are particularly well written and give a clear picture of what the children can do, specific targets are not identified.

The children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals overall. The opportunities for them to explore the natural and living world and subsequent knowledge and understanding, are exceptionally good. The children squeal with delight and excitement as they search for small creatures outdoors. They are keen to record their findings by drawing and making purposeful marks on their clipboards, and show profound interest when they observe them closely through a magnifier and then use a digital camera to take pictures of their findings. A wealth of discussion evolves as the children are able to touch and look closely at the shed skins of real spiders and snakes. They grow sunflowers from seeds, learn how a butterfly evolves and enjoy the numerous trips to places of interest, such as the farm. The children have opportunities to use real equipment, for instance, the computer and manual

paper shredder.

The programme for mathematics, and communication, language and literacy is very well integrated within play. Children confidently and routinely use mathematical language, for example to describe size or their ages. More able children count well into double figures and recognise numerals. Some are beginning to calculate, and they weigh, measure and experiment with volume and capacity. For example, during water play. They use recycled resources to build two and three dimensional models, which is helping to familiarise them with the differences between a square and a cube, and a oblong and a cylinder. The children use a wide variety of very accessible writing tools to make meaningful marks. Most children can write some recognisable letters, all are able to find their name from the register board and many children write their names clearly. Their understanding of purposeful print is enhanced by the excellent presentation of resources. The children refer to the laminated recipe cards in the home corner, resources are labelled in other languages in addition to English, and the children are keen to caption and label their creative work. The children thoroughly enjoy the whole group story sessions, but they rarely visit the book area independently. Overall the children are becoming confident and articulate communicators because staff show profound interest in what they have to say.

The children use their imagination to act out delightful real and imaginary experiences. They express themselves extremely well in art and design and produce outstanding still life pictures. The development of musical skills is very well established. The children perform with remarkable confidence, for instance a group volunteer to sing a pop song using microphones, guitars, drums and tambourines. Singing is tuneful and they move skilfully in time to the beat. There are numerous opportunities each day for the children to use malleable and natural resources and substances. The children recently experimented with red and blue ice cubes and watched the process of melting which caused colours to mix and change.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Equality of opportunity is well promoted to children. They are surrounded by positive images of diversity. For example, the posters and photographs around the setting show children and adults with disabilities at play and work. Dressing up costumes, dolls, books, puzzles and small world figures depict people from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds and generations. The children learn about the beliefs and customs of others throughout the year. For example, the children celebrated the Muslim festival of Diwali, and had the opportunity to taste Indian cookery. They took part in a delightful role play of a traditional English wedding which was brought to life by staff, parents and the children themselves as they acted it all out in a local church. The staff's comprehensive knowledge and understanding of their key children's individual needs is documented in the yearly reports provided for parents. Children with identified special educational needs are well supported by staff who have completed specific training. They work closely with external professionals and parents to ensure that agreed action plans are effectively implemented. The children's behaviour is exemplary, primarily because the staff use consistent positive

reinforcement techniques and frequently praise the children for their efforts and achievements. This raises their self esteem and confidence in their own abilities. As a result, the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well fostered.

Parents are kept fully informed about the day to day running of the pre-school through the regular and highly informative news letters, the notice board and high levels of daily communication. Parents are extremely happy with the provision and highlight the depth of staffs knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs as a key strength.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding is good. Parents are very secure in their understanding of the purpose of funding, and the way in which children are helped to make progress towards the early learning goals through play experiences. They are given clear information about curriculum topics for each term, group learning objectives are highlighted and they are provided with ideas for activities to support and extend children's learning at home. Consequently, parents are keen contributors; they offer their services to share their knowledge and skills, and they encourage their children to bring items in to support topics. However, whilst their knowledge of what children know and can do in relation to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals is absolutely clear, they are not so well informed about what the children need to be helped with next, individually.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are cared for by five staff each day, which means that they benefit from adult to child ratios above the minimum requirement. The staff all attend regular relevant training and have been suitably vetted to ensure that children are safeguarded. Roles and responsibilities between staff are clearly defined and the team work exceptionally well together to meet the children's needs. Good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor space, children benefit from the regular trips out into the community and from the various visitors to the group. All of which are organised to support children's learning.

The setting has compiled a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which cover the pre-schools provision for care and learning very well. These are exceptionally well organised and accessible to parents, both in their entirety and in a summary version, which is detailed in the prospectus. With the exception of staff job descriptions and contracts, which have been drafted but are awaiting the approval of the local authority childcare partnership, all records and documentation required for the safe and efficient operation of the pre-school are well maintained.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. It is strong and proactive, and particularly well demonstrated by the commitment towards, and participation in, the Quality In Learning and Teaching accreditation scheme. Leadership act upon the astute advice of the local authority early years teaching advisor and they make sure that a representative attends local area meetings with Infant schools and other early years providers. There is an exceptionally well implemented appraisal system which provides staff with a high level of professional

developmental support. Team meetings are regular and staff attend a wide range of training in relation to the Foundation Stage curriculum, and in-fact, the Birth to three matters framework. Leadership acknowledge the gaps in relation to the setting of next steps for learning, and the use of books for children's independent and small group use. Their commitment towards improvement is very impressive. Overall therefore, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection for care the provision agreed to: increase the regularity of drinks for the children; to update the child protection policy to address the possibility of allegations made against staff; and to ensure that there is evidence of staff suitability to work with children. Drinks are accessible for the duration of the session; children bring their own in a spill proof bottle. The child protection policy has been effectively updated, and evidence of staff's police checks are kept on file.

One key issue for improvement was recommended at the last inspection for nursery education; to encourage mathematical skills during snack time. Staff have developed their knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals significantly since the last inspection. Opportunities to encourage the children's mathematical skills are fully exploited by all staff in both practical routines and play.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- make sure that radiators are either made safe or inaccessible to children

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):

- improve the systems for supporting children's progress towards the early learning goals, by identifying and setting next steps for learning; find ways to share these with parents

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