



Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Didsbury

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	500116
Inspection date	03 May 2006
Inspector	Christine Myerscough
Setting Address	139 Barlow Moor Road, Didsbury, Manchester, Lancashire, M20 2DY
Telephone number	0161 445 6400
E-mail	didsbury@kidsunlimite.co.uk
Registered person	Kidsunlimited Nurseries
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kidsunlimited Nursery, Didsbury opened in 2001. It operates from three clearly defined childcare areas within a two storey purpose-built building in the Didsbury area of Manchester. A maximum of 158 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 until 18.00 and closes on bank holidays. There are two fully enclosed outdoor areas for outside play.

There are currently 233 children aged from 4 months to under 5 years old on-roll. Of

these, 35 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 50 members of staff who work with the children. Over half hold appropriate qualifications in early years. The manager and 3 unit coordinators are supernumerary.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

In the main, children are kept safe from the spread of infection and the risk of cross-contamination. Staff implement consistent hygiene practices as outlined in the nursery's clear and effective health and hygiene guidelines. For example, they wear protective clothing, such as disposable aprons when changing nappies and serving food. Visitors are asked to remove shoes before entering the baby room or wear a protective foot covering. There is a separate milk kitchen with appropriate equipment for the safe preparation and storage of babies' bottles. Children learn about healthy practices and show a real desire to be independent in their personal care. They confidently follow well established daily routines as they wash their hands before meals and after toileting. However, some of the areas and furniture around the nursery are not maintained to a good standard of cleanliness which poses a potential risk to children's health. Several staff hold food hygiene and first aid certificates. This keeps them up-to-date with food handling practices and enables them to administer first aid treatment in the event of an accident or emergency. Clear procedures are in place regarding the exclusion of children who become ill or infectious. Staff take appropriate measures to comfort children and monitor their welfare.

Children benefit from nutritious meals with fresh produce on offer daily. This promotes their healthy growth and development. There are a good variety of foods for children to try and taste. The menu is endorsed by a nutritionist to ensure that meals are well balanced to meet children's dietary requirements. Parents are kept fully informed about meal choices as the menu is on display. Good emphasis is given to children drinking water, which is accessible to them throughout the day in their labelled cups and beakers. This allows them to quench their thirst when needed and keep well refreshed. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that all staff are aware of children's individual requirements, such as food allergies. Older children enjoy sitting together in small groups at the table. They spend time chatting and take delight in pouring drinks for their friends. However, mealtimes are not sufficiently well organised for babies as they wait too long for their food to be served and, as a consequence, they become fractious.

Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise and take part in a good range of activities. This contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They love the fun and freedom of being outdoors in the outside play area. Organised games produce plenty of excitement as children make good attempts to knock down skittles, jump into hoops and score goals in between the cones. Toddlers enjoy pushing large soft balls

and chasing after them. Activities, such as yoga, soccer tots and stretch and go sessions, are also effective in developing children's physical skills, self-confidence and fitness levels. Older children have an awareness of how activity affects their bodies and independently take time to rest after physical activity to ensure their well-being. Babies crawl freely as they explore their surroundings and reach out for toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment, which helps them to feel safe and secure. The nursery has recently been redecorated and is maintained in a good state of repair. There is plenty of natural light in the playrooms to provide inviting surroundings for children. Rooms are spacious so they can explore and play freely.

Children are protected from harm as good security arrangements are in place to prevent unwanted entry into the nursery. For example, there is a key-coded system in order to gain access and close circuit television in operation at the entrance area. Effective procedures for the safe collection of children provide extra protection. There is an agreed password system to ensure that children are only collected by people authorised by parents. Risk assessments are carried out to minimise and prevent accidents to children. Staff offer gentle reminders, such as no running indoors, so children learn about safe practices. However, low level piping on heaters is hot to touch and poses a potential hazard to children.

Good fire precautions are in place. Children take part in evacuation procedures on a regular basis so they become aware and familiar with safe practices. There are specially designed cots to transport babies out of the nursery quickly. Staff have pre-prepared evacuation bags with essential items, such as nappies and contact details of parents, in case they are needed.

Children play with a sufficient amount of toys, which are suitable to meet their needs. These are well maintained to ensure that they do not pose any hazards. Comfortable furnishings, such as cushions and rugs provide for children's rest and relaxation. However, some babies become restless at sleep times as there is a lack of suitable furniture and equipment to enable them to sleep peacefully and undisturbed.

Children's welfare is assured as staff are aware of their roles regarding child protection matters. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and are kept up-to-date of the procedures to follow through training and staff meetings.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy in the nursery and form positive relationships with staff. Most children separate from their parents with ease. A clear routine is established to the day to help them to settle in quickly. Staff use the Birth to three matters

framework to guide their planning to support the learning of the younger children. In the main, they organise daily activities well to meet their developing needs.

Playing with gloop, sand, paint and glue provides children with a good range of sensory experiences and sustains their interest and curiosity. Toddlers show fascination as they watch balls travel through tubes and eagerly repeat the activity. They concentrate well as they build towers with bricks and name different colours with encouragement from staff. Songs and story times are a regular feature of the day. Children listen intently and take part in the action rhymes. Babies fully participate in playing games with staff, such as clapping their hands and waving bye-bye. This encourages their communication skills and they learn to develop good eye contact. They spend time exploring different textures of natural materials and the contents of their treasure bags. During yoga sessions, they enjoy the individual attention. They laugh and smile and show great enthusiasm for such activities as they move their arms and legs. Children enjoy cuddles and kisses and, when staff become excited by their achievements, they beam with delight.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, which enables them to support and promote children's learning effectively. Their confident and enthusiastic manner contributes towards children being active and successful learners. Plans reflect a broad range of interesting activities across the six areas of learning and clearly link to the stepping stones. Children also devise their own plans with their individual ideas and illustrations about the sorts of activities that they would like to be included in the nursery topic. Staff work well as a team and make good use of their time. They deploy themselves very effectively to encourage, question and challenge children's thinking. This helps children to become focused. As a consequence, they make good progress towards the early learning goals. Most of the resources are set out attractively to appeal to children and stimulate their interests.

Children are confident, lively and very much at ease in their surroundings. They are eager to learn and relate well to staff. Good concentration is shown as they build their models and persevere to complete jigsaws. Children take care of their personal needs, such as putting on their coats and shoes. They seek out their friends as they organise and play games and enjoy having fun together. As they relax on the cushions, they initiate conversations and recall their experiences from parties and visits to one another's houses. Children listen intently to their favourite stories and rhymes. The Oxford Reading Tree scheme is popular and older children recognise a few familiar words. Books are handled appropriately. However, children do not often freely select books for pleasure. Children recognise their names on their cups and place mats. They are beginning to recognise letter sounds through letter of the week and as they play the 'I spy game'. During adult-led activities, children proudly show off their achievements as they learn to copy and write their names using good pencil control. They use print as a means of communication as they convey their messages on cards for their friends and produce captions for displays. There are fewer opportunities for them to spontaneously practise their writing skills during child-initiated play.

Fun activities promote children's mathematical thinking. Children successfully count using their fingers and decide how many shiny stars they would like to glue on their picture. They use language, such as 'more' or 'less', as they compare groups of bobbins and recognise whether they have the same or a different number. As they sing number rhymes, they are also beginning to solve simple number problems. They recognise some numerals and attempt to write them in their maths books. Children develop an understanding of volume and capacity as they play in the sand and water. They use mathematical language to describe shape, size and position as they make patterns on their shape boards and talk about the big and little triangles. Children are developing a lively interest in the world around them. They observe similarities and differences as they carefully plant seeds and watch them grow. Great excitement is shown as they set out on their adventure to the nursery garden. They take their role seriously as they gather their watering cans and put on their gardening gloves and hats. They know their plants need care and water to survive. A visit from Zoo Lab provides good opportunities for children to examine and investigate a selection of mini-beasts. Children discuss what will happen to the nursery tadpoles when they turn into frogs and show amazement about how quickly they are growing. During daily discussions at circle time, children show a very good awareness of change and what is happening around them. They make accurate assessments about the weather, talk about what happens on different days of the week and confidently discuss past and present events. They show interest in other countries and eagerly try to find where Spain is on the map. Planned visits from fire-fighters and the police help children to learn about the world in which they live. They confidently build with a purpose in mind as they use stickle bricks and make birthday cakes for their friends. Children show an interest in technology. They use the computer independently and show each other how to use the mouse.

Children demonstrate good control over their bodies. They negotiate space successfully as they run around in the outdoor area, pedal bikes and push themselves along on scooters. Yoga sessions encourage children to try new positions and move their bodies in a variety of ways as they pretend to be different animals. During play dough, painting and collage activities, children are becoming skilled in using cutters, rollers, brushes and glue spreaders. They use their knives safely to spread cheese on their bread rolls and competently sweep up the blossom outside with their brushes. Children represent their ideas and feelings through a range of arts and craft materials. They apply paint in different ways as they create their pictures at the easel. Role play experiences help to develop their imagination as they play with the puppets and pretend to buy ice cream from the shop keeper. However, dressing up materials are not well presented to encourage children to extend their imagination further. Children listen to different types of music. Beating out rhythms on a large drum produces great excitement and they enjoy exploring different sounds. They reflect their own ideas as they draw detailed drawings of their family members and animals. When things amuse them, such as placing their hand in the feely box, they laugh and giggle spontaneously together.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery. They feel valued because staff create an environment where they are treated fairly, equally and with respect. Children's birthdays are celebrated so that they feel special. A sense of belonging is developed as children place their coats on their named pegs and are eagerly greeted by their friends. They confidently chat about their home life, state their wishes and express their feelings. There is access to a varied range of resources, play opportunities and activities, which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. Older children enjoy learning some basic words in Spanish and French. Their awareness of the wider world is further promoted through the celebration of different festivals. The nursery has a positive attitude towards providing an inclusive service and procedures are in place to meet the needs of all children.

Children behave well and benefit from staff's calm and consistent approach. They are encouraged to play together harmoniously. Minor conflicts between them are quickly resolved with an apology and a hug. Regular use of praise boosts children's self-esteem and their achievements are celebrated with enthusiasm. They enjoy having their photograph taken and posing with their friends. Their creative work is taken home to share with their parents so that they can feel pleased and proud of themselves. Children are learning to act responsibly as they tidy away toys after use. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents is good. Open and friendly relationships contribute to meeting children's needs successfully. Parents are happy with the care on offer to their children and the progress they are making in their development. They speak positively about staff and find them approachable. Children's care is enhanced by the sharing of relevant information between parents and staff. For example, staff complete a written record on a daily basis to keep parents up-to-date with their children's eating habits, sleeping patterns and achievements. Parents include their comments about their children's welfare in communication books, which helps to provide consistency of care. There are good opportunities available for parents to become involved in their children's learning. Their views are taken into account and some ideas have been incorporated in the newly designed outdoor area. They are invited to Christmas and Easter craft fairs and a trip has been arranged to Tatton Park. A shared reading scheme is in place, which allows children to take a book to read with their parents. Items are brought in from home, such as toys for the 'letter of the week', lentils to make the musical instruments and tadpoles, for the topic. Children take turns in caring for 'Winky' the teddy and families write and illustrate a story book together. Their lovely experiences and adventures are shared with others in the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's needs are met through generally effective organisation. Space and resources are organised well. As a consequence, children are confident to initiate their own play and show good levels of independence.

Children's welfare is fully safeguarded as recruitment and vetting procedures for staff are robust. There are clear and effective systems so that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities, such as induction procedures, staff meetings and appraisals. Documentation is well organised to maintain an efficient service to ensure children's well-being. However, there are some minor omissions in record keeping. A range of comprehensive policies and procedures support and guide the work of staff to promote positive outcomes for children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are good. Clear aims are in place for future development so that children benefit from a quality service. The manager works closely with the pre-school coordinator to ensure that the nursery runs smoothly. Advice is sought from a Foundation Stage consultant from Sure Start. Kidsunlimited also employ their own care and curriculum team who visit the nursery to offer guidance and training to staff. This supports staff in ensuring that there are good systems in place to monitor and evaluate the nursery education.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last Children Act inspection recommended that the nursery implement a policy regarding the storage of non-prescribed medication. All such medication is now labelled with the child's specific details, stored appropriately and checked for the date of expiry. This ensures children's welfare.

The previous nursery education inspection recommended that: children have more opportunities to learn through their chosen activities and have sufficient resources; ensure that children's attainment is recorded and planning takes account of the next steps for their learning; and develop monitoring systems. Children have plenty of opportunities to choose activities as a range of toys and equipment are accessible to them. This supports their overall learning and they enjoy making up their own games. Staff have structured systems in place to plan for the next steps in children's learning. They carry out regular observations and use assessment systems to record attainment. The monitoring of the nursery education identifies areas for improvement and action plans are in place. This ensures that children are progressing through the stepping stones to reach their potential.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted has received concerns in relation to National Standard 1: (Suitable Person); National Standard 2: (Organisation); National Standard 8 (Food and Drink) and Annex A.3: (Babies and Children under 2). An unannounced visit took place in June 2005 to investigate these concerns. The evidence examined demonstrated that National Standards 1, 8 and Annex A.3 continue to be met. The evidence examined demonstrated that National Standard 2 was not being met and therefore one action was raised. The provider provided a satisfactory response to the action and remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint 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):

- review the organisation of mealtimes for babies to ensure they provide a more relaxed and social occasion
- ensure all areas of the premises and furniture are maintained to a good level of cleanliness
- ensure there is sufficient and suitable furniture and equipment for babies whilst they are sleeping
- ensure the low level heating pipes do not pose a burn hazard 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):

- provide more opportunities for children to practise their writing skills during child-initiated activities
- improve the book display and role play area to make them more appealing to children.

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