



Allington Day Nursery (Kinder Groups Ltd)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126970
Inspection date	22 March 2006
Inspector	Virginia Cooper
Setting Address	Ash Grove, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 0AB
Telephone number	01622 756667
E-mail	
Registered person	Kinder Groups Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Allington Day Nursery is one of seven nurseries run by Kinder Group Ltd. It opened in 1997 and operates from four rooms in a purpose-built building. It is located in Allington on the outskirts of Maidstone. A maximum of 71 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 60 children aged from three months to under 8 years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 16 staff. Ten of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a higher qualification.

The group receives support from a teacher from the local authority. The group is currently working towards the Kent Kite Mark Quality Assurance Scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises and equipment are mostly clean. Staff take some positive steps to prevent the spread of infection; for example, they follow guidelines about which cloths to use for different cleaning tasks and children's bedding is never shared, and is laundered regularly. There are a few areas of cleanliness where children are still at risk of cross infection. The travel cots are not of a design that enables the material to be washed easily; some rugs are grubby and toilet brushes are easily accessible to children.

Children are encouraged to learn about personal hygiene. They routinely wash their hands after using the toilet to prevent the spread of infection. They brush their teeth regularly to help prevent tooth decay and staff remind them to cover their mouths when they cough.

All staff hold a first aid qualification; they are able to administer first aid to children in the event of an accident or emergency. The first aid kit in one room is covered in mud; this does not keep the equipment in sterile conditions. The staff record any accidents and any first aid that is administered whilst the children are in their care; this ensures parents are well informed about what has happened to their child.

Staff do not care for children who are contagious, protecting other children's health. Staff work very closely with parents of children with complex medical difficulties. This enables them to care competently for them and to cope in an emergency. All staff understand the necessary procedures and this allows children to take a full and active part in all the activities. Nearly all parents have signed a blanket permission slip to enable staff to administer medication to their children if required. Many parents leave a labelled bottle of medicine that relieves pain and reduces temperature. Staff are required to follow nursery procedures to ensure children are given the correct dose as directed by parents. Staff have occasionally forgotten to follow all the stages.

Children are provided with cooked meals delivered to the nursery by an outside agency, and fresh drinking water is available to children at all times to prevent them becoming dehydrated. The meals are nutritious and comply with all dietary and religious requirements. There are nursery procedures for safe food handling. The

food is probed to ensure it is a suitable temperature and staff wear protective aprons and gloves. Staff knowledge about food handling, however, is variable. They do not all routinely wash their hands before putting on the gloves and some test the temperature of the food using their wrist. This is unhygienic for the children.

A child's dinner became spoilt, was removed and not replaced. This may result in children being hungry.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are welcoming and friendly to children and parents. The walls are decorated with the children's art work, demonstrating to them that their efforts are valued. The children's toilets are housed in partitioned cubicles that do not have any doors fitted. This does not afford children any privacy although staff will take special measures for any child who feels particularly uncomfortable with this arrangement. This results in other children being unable to use the toilets at the same time. Using the toilet in private is socially accepted as normal; children are not being prepared to expect this.

Children enjoy a range of resources that staff check regularly for their safety and suitability. The equipment is mostly colourful plastic, manufactured toys that do not reflect the natural world and the environment in which the children live. Staff have recently started to collect natural objects to make treasure baskets and children enjoy what they have provided so far. There is a sufficient number of child-sized chairs and tables to allow children to manage tasks more easily and eat in groups. Staff sit in plastic garden chairs to feed the babies in the baby room. There is no other domestic furniture in the baby room to create a homely environment or to help them cruise around the room when they are learning to walk; however, there is some alternative walking equipment.

A thorough risk assessment of the premises and outdoor play area is carried out regularly and staff carry out a daily check to ensure these standards are maintained to keep the children safe. Any changes to the usual routine are risk assessed, for example, the forthcoming Mother's day tea, to ensure the activity is safe for children. The premises and outside play area are secure and children are not able to leave the premises unsupervised.

The child protection policy includes all the required information to enable staff to protect children. The policy is available to all parents making them aware of the nursery's responsibilities. Some staff have recently attended child protection training to update their knowledge and others have voluntarily undertaken training offered by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. This contributes to a safe outcome for children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies receive lots of attention and play happily together. They undertake activities that use all their senses, for example, exploring mashed potato with their hands and mouths. Children play happily and relate well to one another and the staff. There is a range of age-appropriate toys and activities to amuse children. They converse readily; they are inquisitive and ask many questions enabling them to expand their knowledge using their natural curiosity. The staff are beginning to deliver activities inspired by the document Birth to three matters. The system they use to record the youngest children's progress reflects these changes, and parents are encouraged to add written notes to their child's development records.

Children play outside most days except in the most inclement weather, giving them many opportunities to undertake physical exercise in the fresh air.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff's understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage is variable. They plan activities that cover all six learning areas; however, they do not often record what children learn whilst undertaking free play activities. Some of the peripheral free play activities support the main topic but much is totally unrelated, missing opportunities to compound the children's learning.

Children are confident; they introduce themselves and are keen to find out about anyone new in the nursery. They talk openly about their families with animation and excitement. The staff have made it simple for children to be independent; for example, they are well rehearsed at tucking their trousers into their socks to enable them to put Wellingtons on easily to go outside. They can find their own hats and coats and get dressed quickly. Children take responsibility and help to set the tables at lunch time. Their behaviour is good; staff praise them when they are kind encouraging desirable behaviour.

Equipment and furniture have labels attached throughout the environment familiarising children with the written words for various objects. Children chat with one another and staff as they play; their vocabulary increases through regular story telling. Stories are brought to life using props. Some children lose interest when the story is interrupted by toilet time. Most children recognise their own names and have the opportunity to do this every day when they self-register. A helper and a librarian are appointed each day and children who can write their own names are encouraged to write on the boards themselves. This gives children a good example of how writing can communicate messages successfully. Some books in the book corner are tatty; most are fiction and therefore children have less experience of how to use books to locate information as well as for pleasure. The writing station in the room is well used and popular with the children encouraging them to write regularly.

Children learn about number in very practical ways. For example, there are visual clues about the room with the corresponding numbers to indicate how many children, are to play in certain areas to ensure they are comfortable. They count the number of cups they need and calculate how many sets of cutlery they require to lay the table at lunch and snack time. A number line is in place; children are encouraged to find the number that relates to their age. Unfortunately, the numbers three and four are

behind the curtains, which is reducing the children's chance of success. Children explore shape and pattern through a variety of games. Most children know their colours. This skill is well practised because staff naturally refer to colours as children play.

Children are interested in people visiting the nursery and ask questions to piece together a profile. They learn about themselves and the world about them through various topics. They enjoy using play dough in conjunction with ferns and twigs, combining and comparing living material with man-made dough. They get great pleasure from making instruments from a variety of materials they have chosen themselves for their suitability. Children show an interest in technology and ask questions about how things work. They celebrate a variety of festivals and are beginning to learn about their own and other people's cultures and beliefs.

Children move confidently and safely about the room with control and co-ordination. They enjoy the outdoor play equipment, especially the jumping sacks. Children are proud of their physical development and pleased to show what they can do, for example, jumping as high as they can with both feet. They recognise how their breathing changes when they are active and run outside. They use a range of hand-held tools competently when they shape dough, write, and cut with scissors. They talk about which foods are healthy and which are not so good for them, learning about healthy lifestyle choices.

Children undertake some interesting art that is displayed throughout the nursery. It is evident they have been allowed to express themselves in their own way as the pictures are all quite individual. They body paint, mould dough mixed with glitter, or scented with mint, and combine it with natural materials like leaves and twigs. They familiarise themselves with various situations through role-play, for example, shopping and attending a restaurant. They love to get dressed up and manage changing costumes with dexterity. They have made their own instruments to explore rhythm and pitch. They enjoy singing rhymes and songs together.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff they know well nurture babies, and children in all rooms are happy and relate confidently to adults and each other. Staff listen carefully to children and they are made to feel special and valued. Babies have a secure relationship with their carer. When they look to staff for comfort they are always rewarded instantly with a kind word, a smile or a cuddle.

The member of staff responsible for children with special educational needs is waiting to attend appropriate training; however, in the meantime she is supported by head office to ensure children's needs are met promptly. Children who require any additional attention are accommodated with care and thoughtfulness. Staff work very closely with parents to enable their children to take a full and active part in nursery life.

Children are well behaved; they understand what is expected of them and why basic

rules are in place. For example, although they ran freely outside, they all knew where to stop and re-group and no children overstepped this rule. They are learning, therefore, how to take responsibility, to co-operate with others and behave in a community setting by adhering to sensible and well explained rules. Children are very confident and like to talk about themselves and ask questions to find out about other people. They are not only proud of their own achievements, but also display a sense of pride in their friends' work. They are keen to point out to visitors what they have achieved alone, and together, promoting a sense of belonging and community spirit. There is innovative equipment available to help children recognise and understand their emotions.

The partnership with parents is good. There is lots of information available for them about the provision and a parents' notice board. They have contact with the staff each day and communicate easily with them. They often wait whilst children finish an activity and obviously feel comfortable enough to stay as long as they want to settle their child, or when they collect them. The staff encourage parents to take an active role in their children's learning and some rooms have photos displayed of the children's families. This gives children lots of opportunity to speak about other family members and their home life. Parents are given opportunities to add to their children's development records. Social occasions are arranged for parents to attend the nursery, for example, a mother's day tea is planned and the children are looking forward to helping arrange this.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager is new in post; she receives support from staff at head office and the previous manager. She requires some training to undertake her role fully independently. Staff use a handbook that makes it clear what their roles and responsibilities are.

The operational plan includes staff deployment. The baby room is not operating at full capacity presently. Most of the time, there is only one member of staff with them. This places her in a vulnerable position. The nursery has procedures in place, however, to enable her to summon another member of staff quickly if she needs assistance.

The nursery has comprehensive policies and procedures that are always available for parents to read. On rare occasions, staff do not always follow nursery procedure for the administration of medication or keep the records in the prescribed way. This might result in misunderstandings that could put children at risk of receiving an incorrect dose. All other mandatory documentation is in place. Staff appreciate and understand the importance of confidentiality. The recruitment procedure is robust and all staff hold a current criminal records check and first aid certificate. Most hold a childcare qualification but their knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage is variable. This results in one member of staff taking almost sole responsibility for the three and four year olds' curriculum.

The setting meets the needs of the range children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation was made that relates to Standard 14. They were requested to continue to update the policies for the nursery, paying attention to the Equal Opportunities and Child Protection policies. The nursery chain update their policies regularly to reflect current practice.

They were also asked at the last education inspection to review the quality of large group teaching. Large group teaching is now always delivered in an age-appropriate manner.

The nursery has addressed both areas and as a consequence this has had a positive impact upon the children.

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.

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 satisfactory.

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 nursery hygiene procedures to ensure the cleanliness of furniture and equipment and improve staff knowledge about food handling
- ensure there is adequate food available to offer children another portion if a child's dinner is spoilt in any way
- consider children's privacy in the toilet area to enable all children to feel

comfortable and at ease and to prepare them for the socially accepted normality of using the toilet in private

- consider staff vulnerability in the baby room
- ensure staff adhere to the procedures for obtaining written permission from parents to administer medication and how the records are kept.

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):

- consider how the peripheral activities can support the main topic and compound the children's learning
- consider how to record what children are learning whilst undertaking free play activities
- improve staff knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

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