



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 134018

DfES Number: 519968

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 14/05/2004

Inspector Name Jan Leo

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care

Setting Name Kidsunlimited Nurseries, Mansion House Nursery

Setting Address Apsley Road
Oxford
Oxfordshire
OX2 7QZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Kidsunlimited

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Kidsunlimited

Address Kids of Wilmslow Ltd, Westhead
10 West Street
Alderley Edge
Cheshire
SK9 7EG

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Mansion House Nursery first registered in September 1992. There are currently 42 children on the roll of whom 11 are funded 3 year olds and 5 are funded 4 year olds. At present none of the children have special needs and none speak English as an additional language.

The nursery provides full day care facilities for the children of students and staff of Oxford University. It is part of the Kidsunlimited chain but the waiting list is held and controlled by the University. Children are based in three self-contained units within the nursery premises with easy access to an adjoining outdoor play area. Children who attend the nursery are representative of a wide range of different cultures and nationalities.

Mansion House is open for 50 weeks in the year, from 08.00 to 18.00. Places are offered to children from the age of four months until they leave to go to school.

There are three staff employed to work directly with the funded children, one of which holds a teaching diploma, and two are about to undertake NVQ training. The nursery also receives support from the Early Years Daycare Development Partnership.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Mansion House Nursery provides good quality education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Very good progress is being made in several areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff build very good relationships with the children, join in with play and make learning fun. They work closely as a team and deploy themselves well to support all children and help them progress at a suitable rate. Most of the learning is through free play, which is relevant, interesting and varied. In the main, activities are well resourced, and detailed plans are in place to support staff and ensure learning is maximised in most areas. A little flexibility in the routine is needed to give children more time for some activities.

The leadership and management is generally good. Upper management have appropriate strategies in place to maintain standards, support staff and share information. The nursery manager continues to keep up to date with every aspect of the provision in order to provide any assistance that may be needed, and staff effectively develop children's learning and encourage participation in all the activities. Most aspects of the provision are monitored successfully to ensure children continue to progress, but under development of the role play corner has gone unrecognised.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents and carers find staff very approachable and are given adequate time for informal discussion about the nursery on a daily basis. They have access to comprehensive written information about the curriculum and the expected learning outcomes, but the nursery policies are not readily available, and some would like formal instruction on how to use the information they are given. Staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure children settle well, but parents and carers have few opportunities to contribute to their children's learning.

What is being done well?

- Children are well settled, sociable, confident and eager to learn. They participate fully in everything on offer and behave very well.
- Staff build very good relationships with the children and join in with play to help develop ideas, increase skills and improve understanding. They provide a wide range of enjoyable activities to make learning fun including yoga, drama, gardening, cookery and puppetry.
- Children have free access to resources and are able to choose what to do. Their numeracy and literacy skills are very well developed and children frequently add captions to their work without prompting. They have a healthy

curiosity in everything around them and competently organise rotas to share resources.

- The staff work well as a team and all contribute to planning to ensure they understand the expected outcomes and can deliver the curriculum effectively to suit different abilities and interests.
- The effective management structure provides appropriate strategies to support and appraise staff, share information and maintain standards.

What needs to be improved?

- the use of written information, to ensure observations are utilised fully to record children's progress and plan future activities, and parents have policies readily available to them, planning information that can be interpreted easily, and written information they can take home to digest at leisure
- flexibility in the routine and organisation, to allow adequate time for children to complete activities, provide appropriate space and resources to develop use of the role play area.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. There were no significant weaknesses drawn out at the last inspection but the points for consideration have been very well addressed.

Since the last inspection the nursery has introduced a good range of computer software and practical activities to help develop children's problem solving skills, and children use all the resources confidently. They think problems through for themselves with little adult assistance needed.

The time children spend waiting on the carpet while activities are changed has been minimised, and children freely select books to read to make full use of brief waiting periods. Whilst this practice addresses the issue raised at the last inspection, staff do not always give children sufficient time to finish their books before the daily programme is continued. This point has been raised as a minor weakness from this inspection.

The outdoor play area is made available to children at all times and the open door can cause the room to be cold. The staff monitor the room temperature daily and adjust the heating to suit. Children are also taught to put their outdoor clothes on before playing out, but some choose not to do so when they are not feeling cold.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children are sociable, confident and interested in everything around them. They eagerly watch what others are doing and willingly participate in all the activities. They are developing an understanding of what is fair and patiently wait their turn when sharing equipment. Children effectively voice their opinions and give advice to friends, and they behave very well. They competently take control of their own personal care and organise rotas for some activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children express themselves well, listen to others and respond appropriately to things around them. They are able to think for themselves and they question what they don't understand. Children have free access to writing materials and books and they are developing strong mark making skills, frequently adding recognisable captions to their work. Most children recognise and write their own name, and some can write other children's names for them when they are given letter sounds.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children are given opportunities to count in practical tasks and throughout play to make learning fun. They create their own patterns and re-create designs using a variety of media and are able to develop their mathematical skills in both free play and organised activities. Children's mathematical skills are reinforced by staffs careful use of language throughout the day and mathematics is carried through the curriculum using the computer and daily routine.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children investigate and learn about the natural world through interesting and varied activities. They enjoy making 3D object to their own designs and staff join in to challenge children's reasoning skills and extend their ideas. The children are developing a good understanding of time by using rotas and timers when sharing equipment, and the familiarity of the daily routine. The children are aware of other cultures and show interest in diversity.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children have free access to outdoor play and learning is taken outside. The children move well and have regular opportunities to challenge their physical skills using the large equipment on the adventure playground. Children use both large and small equipment confidently and competently, and they recognise the effect exercise has on their bodies. They enjoy having their temperature measured as a result of getting hot after their hard work.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children express their own ideas freely using a variety of media and staff values their work. They have the chance to participate in various artistic means of expression such as drama, yoga, dance and puppetry, and they sing songs enthusiastically with staff in group activities. The children enjoy interpreting songs with appropriate actions, but imagination play is underdeveloped and hampered by poor resources and organisation.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve the use of written information, to ensure observations are utilised fully to record children's progress and plan future activities, and parents have policies readily available to them, planning information that can be interpreted easily, and written information they can take home to digest at leisure
- add a little flexibility into the routine, to allow adequate time for children to complete activities, and provide appropriate space and resources to develop use of the role play area.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.