



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 131731

DfES Number: 519982

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/02/2004
Inspector Name Laura Henry

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Royal Mail Childsplay Nursery
Setting Address Mount Pleasant Mail Centre, Farringdon Road
London
EC1A 1BB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Kiddycare Limited 02196556

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Kiddycare Limited
Address 71 Melton Road
Leicester
Leicestershire
LE4 6PN

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

Child's Play Nursery Royal Mail opened in 1995. It operates from a designated area within Mount Pleasant Sorting Office. The nursery was set up to provide care for children of staff who work for Royal Mail. It opens from 6:00 to 22:00 hours, 5 days a week, all year round (with the exception of public holidays).

The nursery is registered to provide care for 27 children aged under 5 years. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 33 children on roll. This includes eight funded 3-year-olds. There are no funded 4-year-olds on roll at present. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language. There are systems in place for supporting children with special educational needs.

Ten staff work with the children. They have a variety of early years qualifications. Seven staff are currently on early years training programmes.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Child's Play Nursery Royal Mail offers good quality provision overall, which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Staff work well with children to build on what they know. They use a variety of teaching methods to promote children's curiosity and learning. There are opportunities for children to initiate their own play and to be taught individually or in small groups. However, children have too few opportunities to select books for enjoyment and write independently for a purpose, within a range of activities.

The assessing of children's progress is generally good. Staff make regular observations on how children progress through the stepping stones. However, staff do not always clearly identify the next stage of children's learning or use the information to plan for their needs.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff are very committed to the development of the nursery. They are encouraged to go on courses, in order to assist children with their learning. There are systems in place for reviewing and evaluating the learning that takes place. However, staff do not receive sufficient guidance in how to record the next stage of children's learning.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Staff actively encourage parents to share what they know about their children. Parents receive good quality information about the foundation stage and the six areas of learning. However, parents do not receive ongoing information about how their child is progressing through the stepping stones.

What is being done well?

- Staff promote children's spiritual development very well. They provide very good opportunities to encourage children's self esteem and worth. Children have the opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt within activities.
- Staff use their time effectively. They engage very well with children and ask them thoughtful, open-ended questions to extend their learning.
- There is a good balance of adult and child-led activities within the nursery.
- The nursery provides a welcoming and stimulating environment in which children can socialise. Children participate in a range of worthwhile activities, which supports their development.

What needs to be improved?

- the frequency of opportunities for children to write independently for a purpose, using different forms
- the opportunities for children to select books and read for enjoyment
- the recording of the next stage of children's development, in line with the six areas of learning, and how the information is used to guide planning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made generally good progress since the last inspection. Children have very good opportunities to recognise and use numbers up to 10 within activities. Children are becoming more aware of sounds within words. They make very good use of the technology equipment and have become very skilled in using the computer.

There is now a wide range of dressing up clothes that reflect other cultures and traditions. The notice board for parents has very clear information about the six areas of learning. Parents positively share their observations about their children with the staff. There are still opportunities being missed within the programme for language and literacy. Staff do not encourage the children to write for a purpose and children do not actively select books to enjoy. The assessing of children's progress does not always reflect the progress that children have made within the six areas of learning. The plans do not always state how the activities meet individual children needs.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children work very well together. They will take turns fairly when playing games. Children have very good opportunities to take part in a range of cultural celebrations. They make good links with the interest tables that relate to celebrations. Children will often concentrate for long periods at a time. For example, when using the construction equipment, children will keenly build a detailed train set. There are too few opportunities for children to select resources independently.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have very good opportunities to use language for thinking and will suggest ideas to solve problems. There are regular group discussions and music sessions where children are encouraged to listen and to respond appropriately. Many children are able to link sounds to letters. They have less time to write for a purpose using different forms and to select books to read for enjoyment.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have very good opportunities to develop mathematical ideas. They are able to confidently calculate within practical activities and are able to add and subtract. They know a range of counting songs and will often sing these throughout the free play periods. Many children are very good at recognising patterns, especially within art and craft activities. Most children are able to confidently count to ten and beyond.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have a very good understanding of the sense of time. They often talk about their own families and places they have visited within their community and further afield. Children have frequent opportunities to use technology resources. Many children have an understanding of how programmable toys work. They have many opportunities to investigate a wide range of objects and materials.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have many opportunities to use a range of equipment to develop their large and small muscles. They make good use of the equipment to develop their hand and eye co-ordination. Children have an understanding of the changes that occur in their bodies, when they are active. They learn that running makes them tired. Children move with increasing confidence around each other and objects.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children have excellent imaginations. They make up a variety of role play situations. Children frequently use the role play area to support their creative development. They make up and direct a variety of stories. Children have very good opportunities to use musical instruments and explore the sounds that they make. Children have many opportunities to explore colour and texture, especially during the weekly cooking activities.	
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

- Create opportunities for children to practice writing independently for a purpose, within a range of activities.
- Develop the range of books that are available for children, ensuring that children read for enjoyment.
- Enhance the planning of the curriculum, by ensuring that the next stage of children's learning is used to guide planning.

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.