



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 200548

DfES Number: 585206

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/09/2004
Inspector Name Teresa Marie Taylor

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name CARING KINDERGARTENS
Setting Address 369 Birmingham Road
Stratford-upon-Avon
Warwickshire
CV37 0RF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Caring Kindergartens Ltd. 2928135

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Caring Kindergartens Ltd.
Address The Poplars
High Street, Pitsford
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN6 9AD

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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

Caring Kindergarten is one of a chain of five private day nurseries. This setting was registered in 1997. The nursery is based in a large detached house on the outskirts of Stratford upon Avon. Children attend from the town and surrounding rural area.

There are currently 65 children from 6 months to 4 years on roll. This includes 19 funded three year olds. The setting has no children with special needs attending at the present time.

The nursery is open from 08.00 am to 18.00 pm, providing full and sessional day care. The nursery is open for 51 weeks of the year.

Twelve full time and two part time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The nursery receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) advisory teacher. The nursery is working towards the Investors in People Award.

How good is the Day Care?

Caring Kindergarten provides good care for children. Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment for both children and parents. Children are happy and settled.

There is a good range of toys and equipment for children and staff interaction is good. The babies have their own room, which is bright and stimulating. Staff encourage exploration, crawling and walking. They are gentle and affectionate with the children. Older children have well equipped rooms with a separate art room. Outdoor play is a regular feature of each day and there is a good variety of outdoor play equipment. The routine would benefit from more flexibility to allow for extended activities but this does not detract from the good staff interaction. Staff are actively involved with children's play and are aware of each child's ability and personality. All children are praised and encouraged throughout the day.

Staff have a good awareness of health and safety issues and good hygiene practices were observed. The risk assessment is comprehensive and covers all areas of the nursery and activities. Drinks are freely available at all times. Meal times are a little hectic and would benefit from re-organisation. Staff need to ensure that harnesses in the high chairs are adjusted to fit individual children.

There are very good relationships with parents and they are provided with a full set of policies which are available in reception at all times. Also in the reception is a parent's notice board. Parents receive quarterly newsletters and individual reports on their children. Staff undertake observations and record information including; on admission, at 6, 9, 12, 18 and 24 months. Thereafter annual reports are compiled for parents. The nursery has several students and it would be helpful if they were easy for parents to identify. Staff regularly undertake both in-house and external training, knowledge of child protection procedures needs to be raised.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable as no actions were made at the last inspection.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment for both children and staff. Children are happy and settled and there is good interaction between staff and children. Staff work well as a team.
- There is a good range and variety of toys and equipment including those for outdoor play. Staff are actively involved with children's activities.
- Staff are knowledgeable about the children and recognise their abilities and individual personalities. They are gentle and consistent with the children and children's behaviour is good.
- There are good relationships with parents and they are encouraged to be involved. Good information is provided for them including a copy of all nursery policies. There is a parent's notice board displaying information including menus. There is also a parent's charter.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of meal times
- the routine for under threes and access to the garden
- identification of students
- staff knowledge of child protection issues.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
3	Ensure the routine and timetable for younger children is flexible to allow for extended activities and more free play.
8	Ensure meal times are organised to enable greater interaction between children and staff and harnesses on the high chairs are individually adjusted.
13	Ensure staff are up to date with child protection procedures.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision is acceptable and of good quality and children are making generally good progress towards the Early Learning Goals, with strengths in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and physical development.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a mixed knowledge of the curriculum, with senior staff supervising planning and providing support at present. Medium term planning contains most necessary elements, but weekly plans have insufficient detail to enable inexperienced staff to know what to do next and activities are not always evaluated. A variety of activities are offered to the children using all areas daily, with very good interaction from the experienced staff in circle time and small groups. Staff act as positive role models, resulting in generally good behaviour from the children, although at times over long routines cause restlessness. There are a wide variety of resources available to the group, but the frequent changes and routines do not always maximise the use of these. Comprehensive assessment records are kept, with individual plans drawn up for each child, which lead into overall planning of what needs to be done next for the group.

Leadership and management is generally good. The manager has close contact with the head office and staff are sent to the nursery for support and to supply training. She is aware of most of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting and is working to address some of the weaknesses. A detailed appraisal and training system is in place for staff and the advisory teacher visits regularly. Alongside the frequent children's assessments, these allow the setting to monitor and evaluate their nursery provision. They have a strong commitment to improvement.

Partnership with parents is very good. They have access to a variety of written information, with current detail added as notices. There are opportunities to talk to staff daily and formal evenings to view records and share their views.

What is being done well?

- Children are happy, confident and eager to learn.
- Children have access to a well-resourced environment, especially role-play, the creative area and large outdoor play space.
- There are strong support and training systems in place for staff development when they move into the nursery education field.
- Strong relationships with parents, many of whom have used the nursery for several years and who have confidence in the provision for their children.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for extended play for children
- opportunities to increase children's independence
- use of time and resources in the room
- new staff's knowledge of the stepping stones and foundation stage, planning and assessment
- planning, to include detail for inexperienced staff and more evaluations.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The improvement since the last inspection has been very good, with the setting achieving all it was asked to do. They were asked to ensure that children had more opportunities to develop their writing skills. This has been addressed by adding lots of pre-writing activities, frequent access to paper and books and the early stages of the reading scheme. They were also to link their assessment format to the early learning goals and use the information to help planning. To do this a link assessment sheet was devised which details all the children and the main focused activities and assesses the level at which the children participate, this sheet is then used when doing the next planning. Finally the setting was to develop plans, which provide coverage of all the early learning goals over time. This is achieved in the current long and medium term planning. In the action plan it was stated that this would be achieved via staff training to increase their knowledge, which would then evidence itself in the future planning. These trained staff have since left the nursery therefore the process needs to be repeated with the new staff.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children learn self-esteem by being helpers and discuss their emotions in circle time activities. Most children are confident, able to share and co-operate with each other in water play. They are aware of the group rules, such as putting aprons on, but do not always abide by them. They have some opportunities for self-care and independence, such as pouring their drinks and hand washing in the art room, but often they do not have time to develop their ideas in free play situations.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children have many group discussions and are beginning to question, think about what might be in the surprise box and to talk freely about their homes and families. They are introduced to sounds and letters gradually and have good access to a wide range of fact and fiction books. Name recognition is reinforced when they find their own cups or name cards. They practise pre-writing skills frequently when tracing, painting or mark making whilst taking on roles in the doctor's surgery.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count daily and concentrate on a particular number and shape each week. They confidently count the children in the group and some are able to recognise the numerals on the clock. They sing number rhymes to reinforce lower numbers and also ideas of addition and subtraction, when seeing how many are left during 'five current buns'. They play with funnels in the water, or cook, to learn about measuring and sort bears into differing groups by size or colour, using words such as smaller.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Thinking about what might be in a box and pretending there is a spider allows children to investigate. They learn about living things when taking turns to look after the pets and have daily opportunities to explore with sand and water play. They have some access to technology and a wide variety of construction materials, but not always sufficient time to develop these skills. Some circle times are well used to discuss the weather or for activities such as the memory game to improve recall.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are able to develop movement, both indoors and outside where they pedal bicycles well and negotiate around each other. They are introduced to health issues via role-play, pretending to use a stethoscope as doctors and they know why they need to wash their hands. They have good access to large and small equipment, which they use with increasing control when threading beads, skilfully using funnels or a pipette in water, using glue sticks in craft work or kicking a football accurately.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have access to a wide range of creative activities in two and three dimensions. They use the art room daily to explore shape colour and texture with paint, foam and textiles. Music is involved in each session in some form and they particularly enjoy Goldilocks using Makaton signs. They are able to use their imaginations in well-resourced role-play activities and with the 'special visitor' and respond to their ideas with art, music and discussions, but often this is restricted by time.

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 inexperienced staff's knowledge of the foundation stage, particularly the stepping stones
- increase details in weekly planning and evaluation of the main activities
- make improved use of the time and resources available to increase opportunities for children's independence and periods of extended play.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.