



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 103719

DfES Number: 585123

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 10/09/2004
Inspector Name Jane Wakelen

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Meredale Day Nursery
Setting Address Solomon Road
Rainham
Gillingham
Kent
ME8 8EB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Kinder Groups Ltd. 2468063

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Kinder Groups Ltd.
Address Kinder House
Solomon Road, Rainham
Gillingham
Kent
ME8 8EB

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

Meredale Day Nursery was registered in 1997. It forms one of a group of nurseries privately run by Kinder Groups Ltd.

It operates from a building which was originally Meredale Infant School. The nursery has recently moved rooms within the building, and operates from six rooms, with access to toilets, office, staffroom and outside play area. The Kinder group also operates an out-of-school club from an additional room and in January, 2005 will be opening an Independent Primary School.

There are currently 58 children from 3 months to 5 years on roll. This includes 13 funded three year-olds and 4 funded four year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports one child with special needs and one child who speaks English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week, for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 07:30 to 18:00. The Out-of-School Club operates before and after school and during school holidays.

There are 14 staff working with the children, 12 of these hold an early years qualification to NVQ II or III. There are two staff working towards a recognized qualification.

How good is the Day Care?

Meredale Day Nursery offers good standard of care for children.

Meredale Day Nursery has recently moved rooms within its original building and has had these adapted for the nursery. All children have use of the outside play area, with two small areas being covered to allow all-weather play. Equipment is stored in each room and in a central cupboard, with all rooms sharing and rotating the equipment. Documentation is organized by the head office and delivered to the offices at each of the nurseries.

Safety is given high priority and all staff are aware of the procedures for collecting and arrival of the children. CCTV is in operation and parents are given clear guidelines regarding the collection of their children. Hygiene procedures are carried out, throughout the nursery routine, to prevent the spread of infection and protect children with various allergies. Cooked meals are provided at mid-day through the school meals service. Menus are displayed on the noticeboard with different menus organized for children with special dietary requirements. At present one child with special needs attends the nursery with outside agencies working in partnership to meet the child's needs.

Children are grouped according to their age and then follow a curriculum for their age group. Staff offer various activities, but allow limited choice for children to self-select toys or equipment. The majority of toys are stored in cupboards, many are not accessible, or on view for children to see. All children are encouraged to join in the activities and children are introduced to diversity of society through equipment, posters and topic work. Behaviour is good and staff reward positive behaviour through a sticker reward scheme.

Partnership with parents is good, with parents being asked to contribute to their child's learning through their weekly diaries and attending social mornings to spend time in the nursery. They receive the policies and room details for each age group.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

What is being done well?

- Premises are bright, clean and adapted for nursery use, with rooms designed for different aged children, including a large outdoor playground and covered areas.
- Safety is given high priority with the benefits of a CCTV system and effective procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children.
- Partnership with parents is good, with parents being kept fully informed about their child's progress and routine through use of the weekly diaries.
- The nursery offers a varied menu of cooked meals for the children, catering for a variety of dietary requirements.

What needs to be improved?

- the policies; to ensure they contain all the necessary information and inform the parents of the named member of staff with responsibility for the different areas
- the activities offered to the children; to ensure all children have opportunities to choose equipment within a balanced programme of activities to promote all round development.

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 children of all ages are offered a balanced range of activities to promote all areas of development.
14	Update all policies in line with the National Standards, including named members of staff responsible for the different standards.

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. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals, with very good progress in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff interact well with the children, building strong relationships, which in turn, promotes children's confidence and self esteem. Staff use effective questioning to develop children's understanding and language skills together with helping children to solve problems through practical activities. Staff provide a variety of activities that cover all areas of the curriculum and use outdoor space well, as an extension of indoor. The use of equipment and resources is well thought out, using a variety of natural and man-made materials.

Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals and plan activities within the six areas of learning. However, staff do not record the stepping stone within the planning, which impacts on the aims and extensions of the activity. Staff make observations of the children's progress which is used to inform the planning and share this information with parents on a yearly basis, although some progress is recorded in weekly diaries.

Leadership and management of the setting is very good. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the setting and are encouraged to attend training to gain a recognized qualification in early years. They also receive regular appraisals and are encouraged to update their skills and knowledge to gain promotion through the company.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive information regarding the nursery and the foundation stage through leaflets and the prospectus. They are kept informed of their child's progress and contribute to assessments by completing 'I can do' books for their children.

What is being done well?

- Personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength. Children are learning to be confident individuals, gaining independence through practical activities such as snack time. Staff promote positive behaviour through delivering clear boundaries and guidelines and giving praise and encouragement, throughout the session.
- Children learn about the world they live in using a variety of resources and materials, building, constructing and creating. They learn to observe differences and changes in their surroundings, observe the weather and learn about the diverse society they live in through practical activities and topic work.

- Physical skills are promoted through effective outdoor and indoor activities, using small and large equipment. Children learn control of their bodies and develop hand/eye co-ordination, manoeuvring round objects, climbing on stepping stones and using tools to cut and build.
- Leadership and management is a particular strength, with staff being encouraged to attend training to gain recognized qualifications in early years and to update and gain new skills.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for four year olds to link sounds with letters in practical activities
- opportunities for three and four year olds to regularly use and see numbers in everyday activities, to gain skills in number recognition and counting
- the planning, to reflect the stepping stones and early learning goals, to provide an aim for the activity and to link with assessment records
- the Individual Education Plans for children with special educational needs to make them effective and a working document.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made generally good progress since the last inspection when two key issues were raised.

The nursery was asked to make more use of everyday practical activities and routines to develop children's counting and calculating skills. They were also asked to enhance children's learning in communication, language and literacy by i) providing better opportunities for 3year olds to recognize their names and ii) 4 year olds with more occasions to extend their writing skills.

Mathematics remains part of a key issue from this inspection, although children were observed counting for a purpose when lining up and some simple addition during snack time.

Communication, language and literacy has improved for the three year olds. They now find their name card every morning to hang on the board and find their tray with their name on. Four year olds have regular opportunities to extend their writing with the implementation of a work trolley, which contains a variety of equipment and mediums for the children to use. However, this area has a key issue from this inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and becoming independent. They build good relationships with each other and staff, which promotes their self esteem and helps them feel part of a group. They learn to take turns, follow routines and show good concentration skills during story time. Children have limited opportunities to self-select activities, but adults ensure a wide range of activities are set up. Behaviour is good, with adults using praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children listen with interest to stories and enjoy joining in with the familiar repetitive parts of the story, although they rarely choose books to look at independently. Children enjoy mark-making and use a range of mediums and tools to support this, gaining an understanding that print carries meaning. Children find their names to put on the board, but are not encouraged to link words and sounds in everyday words. Children's language is extended through effective questioning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use games and dominoes to reinforce number concept. Children learn to sort and compare objects by colour and size. They count how many children are present and use simple addition and subtraction in practical activities, such as snack time, ensuring there are enough chairs for each child. Children are beginning to use mathematical language in their play, such as bigger than when playing with the dough and using the scales. They rarely look at 2D and 3D shapes, learning their names.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children choose from different recycled materials to design and build their own models. They use a variety of natural and man-made resources to learn about the natural world. Children gain an understanding that tools can be used for a purpose and use practical activities to solve problems. Children learn about the diverse society they live in through topic work and practical activities, gaining an understanding of different cultures. They have limited use of computers.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy regular opportunities to develop their physical skills both indoors and outdoors. They gain control of their bodies and develop good hand/eye co-ordination through steering sit and ride toys, rolling and throwing hoops and balls and using large climbing apparatus. Children can manoeuvre toys around objects and each other, and enjoy giving each a ride on the tricycle. Children use scissors and pencils with increasing control and use their fingers to mould and shape the dough.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show enthusiasm playing with musical instruments and enjoy singing familiar rhymes from memory. They have regular opportunities for role play, such as a home corner and post office and use the dressing-up clothes to act out various roles. They explore paint, textures and enjoy using their senses in practical adult-led activities to smell, touch, feel and hear with a variety of resources and materials.

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

- extend the system of planning to i) use the stepping stones and early learning goals to provide the aim for the activity, to link with assessment records, to record children's progress and ii) ensure Individual Education Plans for children with special educational needs are monitored and regularly updated, to ensure progress is being made
- further develop opportunities for i) four year olds to link sounds and letters to words and objects in practical activities and ii) to regularly use and see numerals in everyday routine activities to aid confidence in number recognition and counting.

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.