

Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Countess of Chester Hospital

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Sue Birkenhead

Setting address	Countess of Chester Hospital N H S Trust, The Countess of Chester Health Park, Chester, Cheshire, CH2 1UL
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Kidsunlimited, Countess of Chester is one of 52 nurseries run by Kidsunlimited across the country. It opened in 1994 and operates from three rooms, all at ground floor level in a purpose-built building in the grounds of the Countess of Chester hospital on the outskirts of Chester City. Children have access to two secured, enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.00am to 6.00pm throughout the year, with the exception of bank holidays and predominantly cares for children whose parents work at the hospital.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, for a maximum of 60 children, under the age of eight years at any one time. There are currently 85 children aged from 12 weeks to five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery is happy to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

There are 21 members of staff, of these 15 hold early years qualifications from level two to level six. The setting provides funded nursery education for three and four-year-olds and receives support from the local authority early years development officer.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery provides a very welcoming and inclusive environment where children are happy, secure and settle well. Staff work effectively as a team to ensure the welfare, learning and development requirements of the individual children are successfully met. Consequently, they make positive progress towards the early learning goals. Effective procedures ensure good relationships between parents, carers and outside agencies are maintained, which significantly contribute to the children's care and learning. However, procedures for maintaining links with other settings children attend are not fully implemented. Through the enthusiastic leadership and effective systems for self-evaluation a strong commitment to the continuous improvement of the setting is clearly demonstrated.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- obtain information regarding children's developmental starting points on entry to the setting
- develop further links with other settings children attend
- improve children's privacy within the toilet areas, for example, by fitting doors to the toilet cubicles

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are positively safeguarded because the staff have a clear understanding of the indicators of abuse and the procedures for reporting concerns. All staff complete in-house safeguarding training and others attend external courses. The comprehensive safeguarding policy outlines effective procedures should allegations be made against staff and the regular quiz management complete, tests the staff's knowledge. Robust recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of all staff employed. Good systems to ensure children's safety include comprehensive risk assessments, the use of necessary safety equipment and effective monitoring of children as they sleep which staff document. Written policies underpin the good nursery practice. A high percentage of staff employed hold early years qualifications and show a positive commitment to extending their knowledge and skills through additional training to promote better outcomes for children.

The management team and staff work together well to develop effective systems for monitoring and evaluating nursery practices. For example, they all contribute to the process of self-evaluation, obtain parents' views through questionnaires and make the self-evaluation form accessible to them. As a result, opening times have been extended and the changes to the way the group rooms are used have proved successful. Action plans in place which reflect associated timescales highlight future plans for the development of the nursery practices and management value the advice and guidance they receive from the early year's consultant. The previous recommendations and action raised have since been addressed. Consequently improvements have been made to outdoor play for children, systems for documenting children's progress towards the early learning goals and the planning of activities, from which children positively benefit. The enthusiasm of the management team and staff supports the positive commitment to the continuous development of the setting. All required documentation that contributes to the safe and efficient operation of the nursery is consistently completed, well organised and respects a confidential approach. Individual 'care plans' and 'all about me' records document children's individual needs to ensure a consistent approach to their care.

Good relationships develop with parents and many opportunities encourage their involvement in the setting and the children's learning, following the recommendation previously raised. They receive regular newsletters which update them on events and nursery practices. The planned parent's appointments throughout the year enable them to discuss the children's progress and become involved in their learning. A wealth of information is on display and information for babies and toddlers regarding their day and wellbeing is recorded on the day sheets parents receive. Other parents receive verbal feedback on collection from staff. Parents say they are very happy with the service and support they receive and describe the management and staff as 'fantastic'. The management team recognise the importance of promoting links with other providers and positive links develop with local schools to aid the children's smooth transition. In addition a letter goes out to other settings children attend. However, the nursery receives little response to enable them to provide a complementary approach to the

delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Management recognise this as an area for future development.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are happy, confident and secure within the nursery where they develop positive friendships and develop good social skills. The good displays throughout the nursery contribute to the welcoming and inclusive environment where children's sense of belonging is effectively promoted. Staff effectively organise the learning environment and deploy resources well. As a result, children from a young age are able to make decisions about their play, follow their interests and instigate their own learning, as well as take part in adult-led activities. Staff positively interact with children to capture their attention, extend and challenge in their learning as well as have fun and enjoyment. They positively learn about the natural world as they grow plants in the garden and recognise they need water and sunlight to make them grow. Consequently, children become inquisitive and are active in their learning. Activity planning is consistent throughout the nursery and approached with greater flexibility for babies. Staff take account of the children's individual interests and the documented continuous provision on display links them to the areas of learning. The children's individual 'learning journeys' incorporate photographic evidence and regular observations, which are both spontaneous and focused, linked to the areas of learning and clearly reflect their next steps. A summative assessment of their development progress is updated every six weeks and because they are linked to the areas of learning it is clear all areas are covered in sufficient depth. However, children's developmental starting points are not obtained on entry to the setting to act as a baseline from which to monitor their progress.

The recent development of the outdoor play areas provides an excellent environment that is equipped with superb resources and initiatives. As a result, children have regular access to outdoors and toddlers can flow freely between indoors and outside. For example, children experience the 'physical trail' to develop coordination and enhance their physical skills. They use the 'potting table' to learn about the natural world, where they pot plants they grow, such as, beans, courgettes and sunflowers, learning they need water and sunlight to make them grow. Opportunities to explore the natural areas of the garden allow children to dig and look for bugs, using magnifying glasses and collect worms for the wormery they create. Consequently, children become inquisitive and active in their learning. Opportunities both indoors and outside allow children to develop their imagination well. For example, led by staff children enthusiastically recreate the 'pirate ship'. They look for treasure, recall associated items they may need, such as, the telescope and ride in the ship pretending to duck the waves in their movements. They explore the igloo outdoors and experiment with ice to continue this theme. They learn about spatial awareness as they manoeuvre the wheeled toys or take part in group activities, which are planned weekly for all children to promote their physical skills. Children's understanding of number and problem solving is incorporated into all activities and discussion and number templates are a common feature throughout the nursery. For example, staff encourage children to count the

number of finger imprints they make in the sand to five. Older children recognise that number three comes after number two as they point to the number shapes, associate them with their own age and some children can count backwards. By exploring play materials, younger children are learning to operate simple interactive resources and older children develop the necessary skills for operating the tape recorder in the listening area. Children have access to a wide range of interactive play materials to promote their understanding of technology and babies explore the 'sensory cube' where the flashing ducks that hang from the roof promote their sensory awareness. They enjoy exploring various textures, such as, the shaving foam and paint and use a range of different media for collage from a young age. Older children learn about letters and sounds associated with their own names. Some skilfully produce words to label pictures around the nursery and begin to give meaning to the marks they make as they take their clip boards and paper outdoors, copying the actions of the inspector. The provision of the wide range of writing materials allows children to explore and develop their hand writing skills. Older children are attentive at group story times and all children can access books independently. This effectively contributes to the children's literacy skills and enjoyment of books. Outcomes for children are positive, therefore, contributing to the development of their future skills.

Young children indicate they feel safe by holding out their arms to familiar staff for comfort when they are tired or upset. They are happy to leave the side of the staff to explore their surroundings. They develop a positive understanding of personal hygiene from a young age through the routines staff follow. Older children know to wash their hands before snacks and meals to get rid of the germs and one child is seen taking her fork to the sink to wash after she drops it on the floor, without being told. However, children's privacy is at times compromised because doors are not fitted to the toilet cubicles. The rotating menus reflect the healthy, balanced diet children receive, which includes fresh fruit and vegetables daily, overseen by a nutritionalist. The experienced cook freshly prepares all meals. The coloured plates and dishes ensure dietary requirements are catered for efficiently. Children competently select items of their choice during the rolling snack programme. Older children assist by setting and cleaning the tables before lunch and confidently serve their own meals. Therefore, contributing to the development of their self-help skills and positively promotes their independence. Children have access to a wide range of resources and activities to positively promote diversity and acknowledge cultural differences and where necessary activities are adapted to promote inclusion. Positive techniques for the effective management of children's behaviour foster the development of their self-esteem and confidence. As a result, children develop the good use of manners and behave well.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met