

Kidsunlimited Nurseries-Oxford Waterways

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY347496
Inspection date	21/03/2011
Inspector	Jill Milton
Setting address	Kids Unlimited, 45 Clear Water Place, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 7NL
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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 Nurseries-Oxford Waterways is one of a large national chain of Kidsunlimited Nurseries. It opened in 2007 and is situated on the north side of Oxford city centre. The intake of children is from the local residential areas. The nursery operates from purpose-built premises over two floors of a large building with access for all children to outdoor play space. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 100 children in the early years age range may attend at any one time, with a maximum of 48 children under two years. There are currently 140 children on roll in the early years age range. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. Support is provided to children for whom English is an additional language. The nursery opens on weekdays from 7.30am to 6pm throughout the year, except public holidays. The nursery employs 25 staff, of whom over half hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This well organised nursery provides effective support to children's care and well-being. Children are making good progress with many aspects of their learning and development. Overall, the staff take into account the needs of each child and are introducing some successful ideas to promote an inclusive environment. The positive approach from the senior staff within the nursery provides a strong lead to the continual improvement in the quality of care. Some excellent work is taking place to develop partnerships with parents in order to boost children's learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation of group times for the older children to help them all have a positive and enjoyable experience
- improve staff's use of open-ended questions to extend children's thinking and ideas.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are competent in their understanding of what to do if they have concerns for a child's welfare. There is good underpinning support to training in the area of safeguarding and interactive methods such as questionnaires test staff knowledge.

A strong system is in place for confirming the suitability of adults working in the nursery, with the renewal of checks on a regular basis. During the day, staff carefully monitor the presence of children and adults in the building and close circuit television enables them to see an overview of different areas. Staff conduct a broad range of written risk assessments and some of the responsibility for this lies with individual room supervisors. They take into account the potential risks to children of new situations, such as introducing shells to the sand tray in the toddler room or when they leave the setting for short walks. Overall, this is working well to keep children safe with only an occasional lapse in the garden when a broken piece of equipment is not removed before children come out to play.

The managerial staff at the nursery provide an encouraging approach to improvement and they regularly use self-evaluation to reflect on their work. They respond positively to advice from other professionals and create action plans to drive forward the nursery. New ideas have a positive impact on the experiences of the children, such as the successful development of the garden area since the last inspection. Another promising area is in focus on providing an inclusive environment with the introduction of attractive laminated booklets and photographs of children's families. This demonstrates the positive attitude of the staff and respect they show to parents. The staff receive consistent support to their own professional development and a well-organised induction scheme aids new staff. The policies and procedures underpinning the daily work are thorough and fully meet all the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. With support from the parent company, the staff create a stimulating and pleasant nursery environment. As they have settled into this new site, they have made changes in the organisation of rooms to make more effective use of available space. Good quality resources and attractive wall displays create a welcoming setting. Staff are competent at most routines for keeping children healthy, with only minor lapses such as ripped shoe covers for the baby room or staff not following the stated procedure after wiping children's noses.

There is some excellent practice in place at the nursery to strengthen the partnership with parents and carers. Interactive displays provide ideas for parents to share in their children's learning at home and well-established routines, such as the book loaning scheme, encourage this too. Parents speak highly of the support from baby room staff when they first leave their children and they appreciate the feedback about the day. Staff value parental opinions and send out regular questionnaires whose replies demonstrate high levels of satisfaction. All parents have the opportunity to receive information about their child's development and staff are welcoming and respectful. Friendly introductions take place when visiting grandparents come to the nursery and parents are encouraged to share their home languages and customs. Staff are making good links with the main feeder school that the nursery children move on to and joint visits help to support transitions.

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

Children are receiving positive messages about maintaining a healthy lifestyle. A recent review of the nursery menus ensures a good balance of essential nutrients is on offer each day to the children. Staff are attentive to individual needs, for example offering vegetarian alternatives or supporting mothers and babies through the weaning stages. Meal times for younger children that are organised in small groups are working well and provide quiet, sociable times. All children have the opportunity to spend time in the garden area. This is an improving environment in which the staff are introducing more areas of learning through play. Children enjoy active play in the fresh air while also taking part in mark-making, sand play and gardening. During summer months, staff monitor the ultra-violet radiation levels to ensure children are protected with sun cream, hats and shady areas. Children play safely with good staff supervision and they are beginning to adopt some safe practices themselves. Older children behave sensibly, for example, when climbing the stairs and they take an active role in deciding where a pretend fire will be to trigger an emergency evacuation practice. Children settle well at sleep times and staff reassure them by warning them about changes in activity or offering visual timelines of the day. This is particularly helpful to children for whom English is an additional language and is one of a number of successful strategies in place to support them.

There is a good emphasis on sensory and creative play throughout the nursery. Children are able to express their own ideas and make decisions about what they would like to do. Displays reflect a wide range of activities that encourage children to explore textures and techniques. They learn about using recycled materials for model making and how to use simple tools like scissors. Sand and water play is available to all age groups and staff keep the activities fresh by introducing new objects such as magnifying lenses or shells. Children are able to progress with their understanding of technology with older ones spending time at a computer station. Pictures and displays within rooms encourage children's curiosity and they are motivated to learn. Staff engage in short, friendly conversations with the children, although they do not always use opportunities to extend learning through play with effective questions. Staff are attentive to children's needs with regard to their sleep and personal care. They collect information from parents to help them provide individual support that includes their family customs and language. Children play in an atmosphere that promotes diversity positively through effective use of resources and activities.

Most children are progressing well in key areas that contribute to developing skills for the future, such as literacy and numeracy. They have access to good quality resources and effective word and picture labels help them select items for themselves. Children cooperate when it is time to tidy up activities and overall their behaviour across all rooms in the nursery is good, with staff adopting consistent strategies to support them. During occasions when children come together in large groups in the preschool rooms, for lunch or story times, their behaviour can become boisterous and not all children engage in the activity or appear to enjoy the experience. Children are becoming independent learners from an early age and

they have opportunities to follow their interests. Toddlers, for example, contribute to the planning of the outdoor area by suggesting their favourite games. A group of older boys decides to make drawings on large rolls of paper and collaborate to ensure the paper roll stays flat while they draw.

Staff are consistently monitoring the children's development and the learning journeys for each child contain regular dated observations of their achievements. Staff are adapting to changes in the procedures and are making effective use of evaluations to plan how to support the children in their next steps in learning. The information is transferred directly by the child's key person to weekly planning sheets to provide individual learning plans for every child. From tracking records over time in the nursery, it is possible to see that children are making good progress within the expected range of development.

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	1

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