

Kids & Co Dragons Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 142898 |
| Inspection date | 19 September 2007 |
| Inspector | Elaine Douglas |
| Setting Address | St. Georges Hall, Kendale Road, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 3QE |
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| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Kids & Co Dragons Playgroup |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Sessional care |

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kids & Co Dragons Playgroup is run by a parents' committee. It opened in 1992 and operates from a Council owned single storey building on a housing estate in Newtown, Bridgwater in Somerset. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 09.00 -12.00 and 12.15 - 14.45, and on Tuesday and Friday 09.00 - 13.00. It shares accommodation with other users in the community.

There are currently 46 children aged from two and a half to under five years on role. Of these, 28 children receive funding for early education. The playgroup currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs five members of staff, all of whom hold a level 3 early years qualification. The group receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is protected by the staff holding current first-aid qualifications. There is a good supply of first-aid equipment and an effective system for checking that the contents are well maintained. Parental consent is sought for staff to obtain emergency advice of treatment. Children play in clean premises and staff follow good procedures to protect children from infection. For example, tables are cleaned with antibacterial spray, staff wear gloves to change nappies and the changing mat is thoroughly cleaned after each use. All necessary documentation with regard to accidents, medication and illness, are in place.

Children learn good hygiene practices through their daily routines. They independently wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating, and before cooking activities. Children who sneeze or touch their mouth or nose are sent back to wash their hands again. They are provided with liquid soap and warm air dryers. However, children who do not like using the dryers are provided with a towel which they share, this does not protect those children from cross contamination. Children take part in activities which promote their awareness of healthy eating. They are provided with a range of fresh fruit and healthy snacks. The staff encourage the children to eat savoury foods first when they have their packed lunch, which is provided by their parents.

Children have daily opportunities to take part in physical activities within the hall. Staff use the Foundation Stage curriculum and the Birth to three matters framework to plan a range of activities, which promote physical skills. For example, children bounce with confidence on the trampoline, roll hoops and negotiate space as they run around.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe through good, constant supervision. Staff effectively manage the arrival and departure of the children to ensure that they only leave the premises with an appropriate adult. Children are able to independently access the toilets and appropriate equipment such as steps are used to enable children to reach the sinks. Children have good space to play, which is well organised, to enable children to choose from resources from the labelled low-level storage. Toys and equipment are mostly well maintained, and appropriate to the children's ages and stages of development. However, some of the floor mats curl up at the edges, which are a tripping hazard for the children. Very good risk assessments are carried out on the activities. However, daily checks of the premises are not formally recorded, with the actions required to ensure minimum risks to children. Children only access the kitchen under supervision by staff.

Children develop a generally good awareness of keeping themselves safe. They know to remain at the table when using tools, such as scissors. They take part in practising the emergency evacuation procedures, each term, however, records have not been maintained for all practises. Staff have a sound knowledge of child protection issues; written procedures and relevant documentation provide further guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children under three years, benefit from the staff having attended the Birth to three matters framework, training. The children take part in all the activities planned for the older children and are effectively supported to ensure they are fully included. Staff use the framework to identify how the planning meets their individual needs. For example, one child is helped to use the tape recorder and headphones to listen to different sounds, and link them to the pictures.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because staff plan to ensure they provide good opportunities and activities to promote children's development. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and use it well to provide a balanced curriculum to promote children's all round development. Staff make initial and ongoing observations of the children and record their achievements to enable them to plan the next stages of their development. There are good opportunities for children to initiate activities and choose resources which supports them in becoming independent learners.

Children work together well, they build good relationships and most children willingly share resources. Staff engage the children in conversations and ask them questions, which promotes children's communication skills. Children enjoy the whole group stories; staff encourage the children to get involved so they listen when appropriate. Children attempt to write their names on their pictures. However, the limited access to writing resources in other areas, such as the 'home area' does not encourage emergent writing or children's awareness of the purpose of writing.

Children access good resources to develop skills in using ICT. For example, they use a digital camera to take photographs, a tape recorder to listen to sounds and confidently operate a simple programme on the computer. Children develop good imagination in their role play and staff skilfully promote learning as they join in. For example, some children decide to 'visit' the seaside. Staff remind them to wear seatbelts and suggest they sing songs, such as the alphabet song, to pass the time on the journey. More children join in and have to negotiate space until the majority of children are involved.

Children enjoy taking care of the Giant African Snails, and show excitement and fascination at how they move, eat and see. Children make good progress because staff incorporate learning into every day routines and have a secure awareness of how children learn through their play. Children have very good opportunities to explore media and materials, they have free access to paint, and create in two and three dimensions. Children manipulate playdough with their hands and use a range of tools to form it into a desired shape. Regular cooking activities promote children's awareness of changes. Children make good progress considering their starting points and abilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident, happy and settled within the environment. This is because staff build warm relationships with the children and have settling-in procedures which are individual to them. Each child is allocated a keyworker but if a child shows a preference for a different

member of staff they will change keyworker, in consultation with their parents. Good behaviour management strategies are consistently used by the staff so that children are aware of the expectations the staff have of them, consequently children are well behaved, and develop an awareness of having to share and take turns. Children's individual needs are well met. For example, one child shows a preference for using their left hand, so they are provided with left-handed scissors, which enables them to cut more easily.

Children who speak English as an additional language are very effectively supported. Staff find out key words in their own language and provide books to share at home. Resources have picture labels so that the children can also make choices. There are currently no children attending who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, however, there are good systems in place to ensure appropriate support from the group and outside agencies. Children gain an awareness of people's differences through celebrating different festivals and playing with resources, which provide positive images. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are recognised by the group as the children's first educators and are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. They are provided with good information on the keyworker system, the Foundation Stage curriculum, how their children benefit from using different resources and how to access their children's records. Topics are displayed and the planning file made available. All children take books home to share with their parents. The older and more able children also take number, shape, colour and word recognition cards home. Parents receive copies of several of the policies and procedures, and are informed of how they can access the full range.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care and welfare is promoted through the good deployment of staff. They work directly with the children at all times, ensuring all the children benefit from their time at the setting. The staff have worked together for many years and consequently work well as a team. Good systems ensure staff remain fit to work with the children. Children's attendance is appropriately recorded. Good policies and procedures underpin the effective running of the group. However, the complaints policy does not provide parents with information on the timescales for investigations and receiving a written response; there is currently no system in place for keeping such records. Well-organised documentation is confidentially stored and effectively used to provide appropriate care for the children. Children's welfare is protected by the group keeping Ofsted informed of any significant changes, for example, to the committee. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Regular team meetings and good communication ensures staff work together well and have a shared commitment to providing good quality education. Weekly evaluations of the activities enables staff to look at how they can be improved and how the children benefit from them. The new appraisal system is used to identify staff development and any training needs. The supervisor and deputy work directly with the children and staff, and steer the work of the setting.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group were asked to write procedures to follow in the event of a child being lost and to keep a fire log book.

Since that inspection the group have written a clear 'lost child' policy, this ensures parents are informed of the procedures and staff have consistent guidance to ensure appropriate action would be taken. The group now have a fire log book which records the checking of equipment and when the fire procedures are practised. This provides evidence that children are being kept safe and are gaining an awareness of helping with their own safety.

At the last nursery education inspection the group were asked to develop planning to ensure there are sufficient mathematical opportunities to support using numbers as labels, counting and calculation, and to provide a balance of activities to extend the more able children.

Since that inspection the group ensure they use mathematical problems as part of their daily routines and activities, to encourage counting and calculation. For example, children are asked how many peppers they would have left if they ate one. Staff adapt and extend the activities depending on the children's abilities so this ensures that the more able children are challenged appropriately.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure all children are provided with appropriate hand drying equipment to prevent cross contamination
- ensure the daily risk assessments of the premises are recorded, with timescales and the person responsible for any actions required to minimise risks, and maintain records of the fire drills
- ensure the floor mats do not pose a tripping hazard to children
- devise a system for keeping appropriate records in the event of a complaint and improve the complaint policy to provide parents with the details of timescales involved in investigating concerns

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide a wider variety of resources and opportunities to encourage children's emergent writing, and their awareness of the purpose of writing

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk