

Kidsunlimited Nurseries - Oxford Business Park

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Gillian Little
Setting address	Plot 9850, Garsington Road, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2JZ
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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 Business Park) opened in 2000 and is one of a national chain of privately owned settings. The nursery is located in a business park development in Cowley, Oxford. Children attend from a wide catchment area. The nursery operates from purpose-built premises over three floors with enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery has wheelchair access and a lift. It operates on weekdays from 7.30am until 6pm, all year except for bank holidays.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 166 children under eight at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age range. It currently cares for 136 children on the Early Years Register. It is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for children over five years, although currently has no children in this age group on roll. It supports children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four.

The nursery employs 32 staff, of whom 23 hold relevant qualifications, including Qualified Teacher Status; 11 staff are working towards further qualifications. The nursery receives support from a local authority early years adviser.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to make satisfactory progress in this safe and welcoming setting. The youngest children receive good quality care and effective opportunities to enhance their development. Staff working with this age group have recently improved practice with support from the new manager. However, there are some weaknesses in the provision for the toddler and preschool age groups. The nursery works well with parents and this supports key persons in gaining good information about individual children. However, the number of transitions between rooms and key persons has an unsettling effect on some children. The nursery's procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of its provision are accurate and identify most key areas for further improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- explore the existing key person system further by considering a reduction in the number of room transitions a child makes during their time in the nursery and, therefore, the number of key persons a child has to bond with
- improve opportunities for children in the toddler groups to access outdoor play freely ensuring that resources reflect all areas of learning and that equipment designed to support physical development is suitable for their age
- ensure that preschool children have routine opportunities to develop

increasing independence skills, such as helping out at snack time.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery has robust procedures in place to safeguard children. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of possible symptoms of abuse and know how to refer concerns. Rigorous recruitment and induction procedures, together with careful monitoring of background checks, ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Regular training programmes and support from within the company ensure that staff have routine opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge in areas, such as observation, assessment and compiling learning journeys.

Rigorous risk assessments, daily safety checks and an improved cleaning programme ensure that the nursery is safe and clean. Staff now supervise children well, having improved procedures following recent accidents, and incidents regarding lack of supervision.

The premises have not been decorated for some time and while some rooms have a good range of resources others are lacking in some equipment. However, the management are fully aware of this; they have a large order in place for additional resources and are pursuing a refurbishment of the premises.

The nursery adequately promotes equality and diversity to support children's individual needs. Key persons monitor progress effectively and provide extra support for children with additional needs. For example, they learn key words in home languages to support children who speak English as an additional language. However, children have to bond with up to five key persons as they can transfer through five different rooms during their time in the nursery. Sensitive procedures are in place to help children settle, but this system does not suit all children and limits the time for any child to develop a secure, long-term relationship with their key person.

Staff form good partnerships with parents and keep them well informed about their children's progress through daily discussions, learning journeys and invitations to attend parent evenings on a frequent basis. Newsletters and special events, such as a Mother's Day breakfast, ensure that parents feel involved, and recent questionnaires show that the majority of parents are happy with the nursery. Staff have appropriate partnerships in place with external agencies, such as social services and the local authority, and are beginning to pursue partnerships with other settings which children attend to help develop continuity in learning and care.

Self-evaluation procedures accurately reflect practice within the nursery and staff are generally meeting previous actions and recommendations. Staff are aware of most areas for further development, such as improving the decoration and resources, developing a calmer atmosphere in the preschool and continuing to focus on interactions with children. Staff are making steady progress, although the full impact of some developments is yet to be realised. The nursery manager is

effective in embedding ambition within the team; she is proactive in seeking improvements and is setting realistic and challenging targets.

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

Key persons throughout the nursery regularly complete useful observations of children's progress which form the main part of each child's learning journey, providing an informative overview of development. Key persons use this information to identify children's next steps. They plan daily and weekly activities ensuring that experiences are relevant to individual children and generally support learning appropriately.

Children in the baby unit enjoy a wide range of resources and experiences to support their development. They enjoy exploring rattles, a sandbox, mirrors and soft toys, and become engrossed in tabletop activities, such as painting, play dough and exploring water. Staff support them effectively with good quality interactions and ensure that rooms are well resourced. They have daily opportunities to freely access the outdoor play areas which provide additional resources and good opportunities for them to mix with other children in their age group. Key persons know them well, are quick to comfort them when they become fractious and are familiar with their individual routines and needs. As a result, most children in this unit are relaxed and settled for most of the time and have positive relationships with their key person.

Children in the toddler groups engage in a range of appropriate activities, including making collages, building train tracks and exploring construction toys. They receive varied support from staff, some of whom are skilled in supporting their play and offer lots of praise, while others are reactive rather than proactive in their approach. Some focused activities help children to develop specific skills, such as a group game to match different coloured objects within the room. However, not all staff plan outdoor play sufficiently well which limits opportunities for some children to access this freely. Children sometimes only have access to equipment to develop physical skills, with no other resources outdoors to support different areas of learning, and they use pedal bikes designed for older children which are too big for them to manage.

Children in the toddler groups sit sociably at snack time and are beginning to develop an understanding of good hygiene practices as staff encourage them to wash their hands after using the potty. Children are mostly settled although some are finding the recent room transition from the baby unit, and the separation from their previous key person, particularly difficult despite a gradual settling-in process. Some children, therefore, do not yet feel safe and secure within the nursery environment.

Children in the preschool settle well to activities in their key groups. For example, they explore different ways of painting as their teacher talks to them about a particular artist's approach and encourages them to try this. Children are also attentive during large group times when they listen to stories or talk about the

weather. However, during free play sessions and lunchtimes the atmosphere within the preschool can become rather rowdy and chaotic, although it remains good spirited. Children are confident and happy, and staff are on hand to support them but the atmosphere is not always conducive to learning and children find it more difficult to settle to a purposeful activity. Staff are aware of this problem. They are helping children to develop behavioural boundaries and have plans to improve the quantity and quality of resources available for free play.

Preschool children are learning about safety procedures, such as walking sensibly when going downstairs and how to evacuate the building in the event of an emergency. They learn to wash their hands before eating and have free access to water within their rooms when they are thirsty. However, they are not always able to contribute helpfully at lunchtime as staff do everything for them, serving food, pouring drinks and tidying away, which limits opportunities to develop independence skills.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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