



Early Birds Nursery & Kids Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250041
Inspection date	19 October 2006
Inspector	Janet Ann Keeling
Setting Address	Knowle Primary School, Kixley Lane, Knowle, Solihull, West Midlands, B93 0JE
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care, Out of School 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?

Early Birds Nursery and Kids Club opened in 1994. The group operates from a mobile classroom situated in the grounds of Knowle Church of England Primary School, which is located in the Knowle area of Solihull. The group have access to a fully enclosed outdoor area and to facilities within the main school building. The group serves the local community and surrounding areas.

The group are registered to provide care for 21 children in the nursery and for 50 children in the out of school groups. Currently there are 21 children on roll in the nursery which includes a number of three and four-year-old funded children. In the out of school groups there are 89 children on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group have strategies in place to support children with learning difficulties and for children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week during term time only. Sessions are from 9:00 until 12:00. The Kids club offers before and after school care for children attending the school from 8:00 until 9:00 and from 3:15 until 6:00. The holiday club operates during the school holidays for children from Knowle school and surrounding areas.

There are ten staff available to work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification Level two and three. The proprietor is a qualified teacher. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean and well-maintained environment. Children gain a good understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, children begin to understand why they must wash their hands before snacks, after using the toilet and when returning from outdoor play. When asked, older children in the group explained 'we wash our hands to make sure they are clean'.

Children have access to a wide range of activities which effectively contribute to their good health and well-being. They have excellent opportunities to develop their physical skills through regular access to both indoor and outdoor activities where they are encouraged and supported to develop new skills. For example, as they complete obstacle courses in the school hall and play on the large outdoor play equipment. Children enjoy the fresh air as they access the outdoor play facilities, take regular walks with staff around the school grounds and explore their local environment. The staff have a good knowledge of the "Birth to three matters" framework, which they use effectively when planning activities for younger children. Their extensive understanding of each child's stage of development means that the youngest children are confident to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within the safe environment.

Children have a growing awareness of healthy eating as they regularly engage in topic work and have meaningful discussions with the staff. They enjoy healthy snacks such as, a variety of fresh fruit and raisins and independently help themselves to drinking water in the base room. However, children do not have access to drinks whilst engaged in physical activities away from the base room. Children's health and dietary needs are competently supported at all times because staff are fully aware of children's individual needs. For example, children's individual requirements are discussed fully with parents on admission, recorded and shared with all staff. Children's accident and medication forms are in place, however, accident forms are not always fully completed, therefore, children's health may be compromised.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exceptionally well-organised, safe and very secure environment. For example, visitors to the group are required to formally identify themselves, sign the visitors

book and are accompanied at all times whilst in the setting. Children are able to move around safely and freely as identified hazards have been minimised through the completion of risk assessments. Children's safety is further supported through the excellent levels of supervision provided by the staff team.

Children have access to good quality equipment and resources that fully support their developmental needs and which are checked daily to ensure they are safe for the children to use. Children are encouraged to independently access the well-organised resources which are clearly labelled and stored in child height furniture. They learn about safe practices whilst using equipment as staff gently remind the children to sit down whilst using the scissors, and to tidy away their toys so other children and adults do not trip or fall over them. Children develop a strong sense of responsibility for their own safety from an early age. For example, a pre-school child explained to a younger child that they must hold hands whilst walking to the school hall, and that they must listen to what the teacher says.

Children are kept safe because staff take positive steps to promote safety within the setting and whilst outdoors. Children benefit from the very experienced and caring staff who are very well informed of the group's robust health and safety procedures. For example, children learn about stranger danger, follow the highway code and engage in regular fire drills. Children attending the out of school group are escorted safely to and from school each day. Staff are vigilant and ensure that the children's attendance register is fully completed on their arrival and departure from the setting.

Children's welfare is extremely well supported by a team of staff who have an excellent understanding of the issues surrounding child protection. Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and have successfully completed child protection training. Staff are proactive and very confident in following the group's child protection procedures. The setting has a designated child protection co-ordinator who would follow through any issues of concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy, confident and relish their time in this vibrant group. They have an excellent attitude to learning and are purposefully engaged throughout the sessions. For example, children show delight as they engage in music sessions, sand and water play, creative painting, story time, cooking, role-play, nature walks, gym sessions and outdoor play. Children are able to build on knowledge and skills already acquired because staff know the children very well and because staff provide a wealth of first hand learning experiences. For example, at the water play activity children talked about the feathers, leaves and sticks as they floated, but, when the children were asked what will happen if a stone is put into the water one child replied "The stone will float to the bottom!"

Children benefit from the staff's well-established knowledge and understanding of the "Birth to three matters" framework and the Foundation Stage Curriculum. For example, a flexible and child-centred approach to planning and an excellent balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities allows children to learn at their own pace. Children's personal and social development is inspiring as they enjoy very positive and meaningful relationships with both

their peer group and staff. Their communication skills are excellent as they effectively engage in discussion with adults and their peers and are competent in making their needs known.

Children's behaviour is exemplary, children are actively and consistently praised by staff for their effort and achievements. For example, children were praised for holding hands and walking sensibly in two's on their way to the school hall and for undressing and dressing themselves after the gym session. Consequently, children's self-esteem is carefully fostered.

Children in the out of school group show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival at the setting. They speak confidently, share their personal experiences, take turns and show care and concern for others. For example, as the school age children played with the audio story time equipment they supported the younger children by helping them put on their head phones.

Nursery Education

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and at times excellent. Teaching effectively promotes children's learning towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. The staff are caring, patient and supportive of the children; they have high regard for the children and know them well. Staff demonstrate a very high level of commitment to their work and provide excellent role models for the children. The staff manage children's behaviour sensitively and consistently; they encourage children's good behaviour through regular praise and encouragement, consequently, the children's behaviour is excellent. Planning is thorough, activities are varied and learning outcomes are clearly identified. Interaction between the staff and children is inspiring; adults encourage children's thinking, questioning and exploration. Staff regularly observe and assess the children's progress. Information gained from children's assessments is used to inform planning and guide teaching.

All children have equal opportunities for learning; staff ensure that all children are able to access the full range of activities and special project work. Children make good progress as a result of the wide range of interesting and stimulating activities, and through the excellent first hand learning experiences provided by the staff. The children benefit from the staff's constructive questions which encourage them to express their feelings and develop their ideas and interests. Children learn through a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated play and have excellent opportunities to use their own initiative and develop their independence. Children who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language are effectively supported in the group.

Resources are of good quality, support all areas of learning and are used effectively. The indoor pre-school accommodation is used well to provide a secure and happy learning environment. However, at present the outdoor learning environment does not maximise children's learning and enjoyment.

Children are enthusiastic, confident and very interested in all the activities that are made available to them. They are eager to learn and settle quickly into the group, children's relationships with adults and their peers are excellent. Children learn about their own and other cultures as they celebrate festivals throughout the year; they express their feelings and manage

their self-care needs effectively. Children engage easily in conversation; during group discussion time children participate enthusiastically, they listen carefully to adults and to each other, and talk about past and present experiences. Children listen attentively at story time and many are able to recall the story line. For example, there was great excitement when the children acted out the story line of 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' the children 'splashed' 'squelched' 'stumbled' and 'tiptoed' before finding the bear!.

Children learn how print carries meaning; they recognise their name at self-registration time and some children are able to identify their labelled work on displays. Children are able to access a good range of writing materials and competently use stencils, write lists and label their own work.

Children have regular access to a wide range of books; many of them show a keen interest in books and use them independently, carefully turning the pages and discussing the illustrations with each other and staff.

Children are encouraged to use number as part of every day routine; for example, children counted how many plates were needed at snack-time, how many children were present at registration and how many children were in the line to walk across to the school hall. Children use mathematical language effectively whilst engaged in activities and are familiar with words to describe size, position, shape and quantity. For example, whilst engaged in water play children confidently talked about which objects would float and sink and which objects were heavy and light. Children can confidently name shapes such as square, triangle and circle and have opportunities to sort, match and compare objects in a variety of contexts.

Children have good access to a range of toys, resources and planned activities which promote their awareness of diversity, for example, as they enjoy celebrating different cultural festivals throughout the year such as Chinese new year, Christmas and Diwali. Children freely access a good selection of programmable toys and technical equipment which they use competently and with increasing skill. Children learn about their natural environment and develop an understanding of living things, as they talk about how the weather changes, look for mini-beasts on the nature trail and observe seeds as they grow. Children in both the nursery and the out of school group were actively involved in planting and growing their own tomatoes, lettuce and beans.

Children show good control and co-ordination as they move confidently and safely around both the indoor and outdoor areas. They take part in regular gym sessions where they develop skills such as, running, balancing, throwing and catching. There was great enthusiasm and fun as the children engaged in an obstacle course where they competently negotiated cones, crawled through a tunnel and skilfully walked across balancing beams. The children have daily opportunities to use a wide range of small equipment, including scissors, paintbrushes, glue sticks, cutters and pencils which they handle with increasing control.

Children develop an awareness of healthy eating through topic work and regular discussion with adults and their peers; for example, whilst engaged in snack time children talked about their likes and dislikes of various foods, and staff explained why certain foods were healthier than others. Children use their imagination in activities such as painting, music and movement

and various role-play situations. They explore sound effectively through playing a range of musical instruments and listening to a variety of musical sounds. They enjoy singing and maintain a good sense of rhythm when joining in rhymes. There was great excitement as the children played a range of musical instruments and sang 'twinkle twinkle little star' accompanied by a member of staff playing the guitar.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are valued as individuals, they are encouraged and supported to play an active role in the group. Children's individual needs are competently supported by staff who know the children very well, and who respond sensitively to their needs. Children's behaviour is excellent. Children are fully aware of the groups boundaries and expectations for good behaviour, they learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Their understanding of right and wrong is further developed as they respond to gentle reminders from staff, to care for their environment, resources and each other.

Children are fully included in all activities and their differences are acknowledged and valued. Children are able to access a wealth of exciting activities, toys and resources which actively raise their awareness of diversity and promote their understanding of others. For example, through access to role play equipment, books, posters and by welcoming visitors from the local community. Children's understanding is further promoted as they complete topic work on Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas, and through positive discussions with the staff. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively fostered during these activities, with the staff acting as positive role models for the children.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The effective partnership with parents and carers contributes significantly to the children's well-being within the group. Relationships between parents are warm and relaxed. Children's individual care and educational needs are fully discussed with the parents before the child starts at the setting, enabling staff to be fully aware of children's needs. The staff welcome informal contact with parents at the beginning and end of each session; they verbally share information about children's progress on a regular basis, and parents are able to view their child's development file at any time. Parents and carers have access to a range of good quality information regarding the group, including a prospectus, policies and procedures, the educational programme and daily planning. Regular newsletters help to keep parents fully informed about special events, current topic work and any changes within the group.

Parents feel very welcome in the group and say that staff are approachable, friendly and supportive of their children's individual needs. Parents value the effective communication between staff and themselves.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation and the very focused leadership and management of the group. Staff are very knowledgeable, they fully understand the settings policies and procedures and ensure children are protected, kept safe and that children's individual needs are supported effectively.

The premises are welcoming with a vibrant and bustling atmosphere, the accommodation is well-organised and effectively maximises children's learning and development. Children's work is attractively displayed around the room with an area designated for children to display their own work each day. Children benefit from qualified and skilled staff, who follow an effective induction programme and who are committed to on-going training and development. Staff have regular opportunities to reflect on their own practice, through regular staff meetings and yearly appraisals. All legally required documentation is in place and well maintained, however, the current policies and procedures have not been fully updated in line with the revised National Standards Guidance of October 2005.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Managers are fully committed and effective in promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters. Managers are inspiring; they motivate and influence the work of all staff and provide excellent role models. Managers and staff are very focused and work well as a team, they are deployed effectively and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Daily feedback meetings and regular staff meetings throughout the year are held to discuss the planning and assessment of children's learning. Staff are encouraged to attend relevant training courses and to cascade their knowledge and skills with the rest of the team. Staff have established positive links with the nursery class teacher at Knowle school where many of the children attend for either the morning or afternoon sessions. All staff have worked successfully with the local authority early years team to monitor and evaluate their practice.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting were asked to; ensure that the time of arrival and departure of all children is recorded and to make sure that the required levels of qualified staff are maintained in the Kids Club.

Since the last inspection the setting has improved their documentation relating to the children's daily attendance records, they now contain the time of arrival and departure of all children. The required levels of qualified staff are now maintained in both the nursery group and the out of school groups. Consequently, as a result of the improvements made the children's safety and well-being are now further supported.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require the provider or Ofsted to take any 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.

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 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):

- make sure that children have access to drinking water at all times and ensure that accident forms are fully completed
- update all policies and procedures to ensure they are written in line with the revised National Standards Guidance of October 2005.

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):

- develop the outdoor learning environment in order to maximise children's learning.

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