

# Kinders Mill Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY361997
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 June 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Lynne Kathleen Talbot
<b>Setting Address</b>	117 Grove Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 0AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01462 642 666
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Magic Nurseries A Ltd.
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](http://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?

Kinders Mill Day Nursery is owned by Magic Nurseries A Ltd. The provision was registered in September 2007 and operates from a converted mill building in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 95 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open Monday to Friday all year round, closing for three days in between Christmas and New Year and for two days during the year for in-service training. Opening hours are from 07:30 to 18:30. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area as well as an indoor large physical play area. There are currently 174 children aged under five years on roll. The provision serves the local and wider community. The provision supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. The provision employs 34 staff and exceeds the required qualified staff to child ratio.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a stimulating environment where there is plenty of space and separate areas to offer a wide range of activities. Children's immediate safety, health and welfare is well promoted because staff understand and promote children's good health by being good role models and ensuring that their own knowledge on issues is up-to-date. For example, all staff have attended training in the use of Epipens to ensure that where there is medical need it may be appropriately managed within the nursery. Children have opportunities to understand personal health and take responsibility for their physical needs. This is because they have access to washing materials at all times and may help themselves to tissues. However, they do not readily demonstrate that they are able to predict outcomes linked to germs and the reasons why they need to wash their hands. Children do not yet have a full part to play in preparing areas for food or clearing away afterwards, which restricts their developing knowledge of the links between clean surfaces, germs and illness and may potentially compromise their well-being.

Children enjoy particularly healthy and nutritious foods which is all freshly prepared in the nursery using only organic food and ingredients. Children discuss their snacks, such as a range of types of melon, and eagerly anticipate what may be for lunch. They enjoy social mealtimes where they pass around cutlery and cups to each other. Older children, from two years upwards, enjoy serving themselves at the tables making choices over both what they eat and the quantity chosen. A very effective method of monitoring mealtimes, and offering alternatives, for children with specific needs is set in place and ensures that all children have their needs met. They help themselves to water throughout the session, either in labelled cups for younger children or from jugs for older children, and begin to understand thirst and the need for fluids throughout the day. Children note the effect that exercise has on their body as they listen to their heartbeat and note how they have become hot during exercise. This is shown as they remove their coats and hang them onto the fence when playing and becoming hot. Children take part in planting and growing some seeds and follow the growth with interest exploring the links between food, water and healthy development.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. They develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills and co-ordination as they participate in structured activities. These include movement sessions and activities planned around themed topics. Children enjoy swimming at the local swimming pool each term where they may extend their physical confidence. All children have access to the enclosed outdoor area which is currently being refurbished and activities broadened. They have the added advantage of use of the play hall which is equipped both with high-quality 'SPiplay' equipment for gross motor play, and with space for indoor physical play. The large equipment offers large climbing, sliding and balancing opportunities within a soft play area whilst the open space is used for a variety of physical play. This includes ring games, music with props, singing with instruments, beans bags, 10-pin bowling, ball games, foam hopscotch, obstacle courses or dance and yoga. Children use small equipment such as pencils, glue spreaders and small construction pieces which aid their development of fine manipulative skills. Younger children are developing their independence physically and emotionally. They are active and becoming increasingly independent, acquiring control over their bodies and new physical skills. They are learning to express their needs and are beginning to meet those needs independently for example, by being able to access the toilets and washbasins themselves.

Children's general health and safety is fully supported by all relevant paperwork and records. Children's medical needs, both ongoing or of an emergency nature, are dealt with through clearly outlined procedures carried out by qualified staff. For example, policies include a specific procedure for times when children may bump their head with the record including a telephone call to the parent everytime, this extra precaution ensures that children are fully protected. Clear methods of recording and procedures underpin all aspects of physical care. Younger children have their daily routine, as written and updated by their parents and carers, followed with their individual times for sleeping or feeding met and entered into welfare books to ensure that verbal information sharing is supported by written records. These stringent, well-executed measures ensure that children's health can be promoted at all times.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given a very high priority and risks of accidental injury are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Policies, procedures and paperwork in this area are exemplary. Staff carry out daily safety checks, repeating these throughout the sessions to ensure continuing safety. They meet all required risk assessments for extra activities, such as when taking part in outings off the premises. Children are able to begin to understand road safety when they are travelling around the community in the 'Kinder-van', a six-seater wheeled vehicle in which children sit. Children have a good understanding about taking responsibility and keeping themselves and others safe. They listen carefully as they are given explanations by staff and understand the importance of listening to instructions in order to prevent accidents. Children take part in very regular emergency evacuation routines which help them to learn about being safe in large buildings with several floors and rooms, which may be very different to their own home.

Continuous monitoring of the environment and staff's constant attention to all details ensure that children are cared for in a welcoming setting where their work is creatively displayed and resources are well organised and easily accessible. Children independently select toys and activities from an inviting range of high quality resources. Staff check these regularly to ensure that they are clean and safe, accessing additional guidance in the comprehensive policies and procedures. Children's welfare is promoted to a high standard as staff have an excellent understanding of child protection procedures and are able to identify, report and follow up any concerns. Children are protected at all times as there are robust procedures ensuring the recruitment and employment of suitable staff and their ongoing suitability whilst employed by the group. They are protected, when inside the setting, because all exits are opened only by coded-numbered door pads which are changed regularly. This is further enhanced because the setting ensure that parents and carers are fully aware that they must not open the door for any other person from outside. These measures ensure that children remain safe and protected when in the care of the nursery and it's staff.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy, secure and settled. They are eager to attend and participate in the activities and play opportunities provided. They settle eagerly to play areas, anticipating what they may be about to do each day. Children are very confident in their relationships with each other and with staff, participating in discussions and initiating conversations. For example, very young children are seen to share enthusiastically what they are doing, for instance asking, 'what's

that?'. When told it is a watch they link that to their family, commenting that their mummy and daddy have a watch before asking what the time is, showing an understanding of using information to ask further questions. Children engage in discussions and are able to recall events and facts from home because they are encouraged by staff who ask open questions. For example, children sorting toy frogs by colour discussed and named their colour, talked about how they moved and where they lived. When talking about ponds children shared with the group that they had a pond at home, going on to talk about their own pets at home and in the family. Children show that they can sequence events and use language to explain things to others. Children's personal development and self-esteem are consistently promoted through sensitive support and interaction from experienced, caring staff.

Children show a high level of independence as they choose resources and activities and control their own activities and independent learning. This is because management and staff have equipped all areas for all ages with open low-level shelving with clearly labelled boxes as well as offering choices at all times over what they want to do. Children are also recognised as individuals with different rates of development and interest. Evaluation of planned activities is carried out by sticker observations at the time of the activity where staff watch and note what children are doing as well as completing narrative observations periodically. Assessment of children's progress is developing and is used to inform the individual achievement books for all ages. Activities are evaluated, however, they do not always show how the intended learning should have been addressed nor whether it has been achieved. The assessments are not yet consistently fed into planning to show how more or less able children are to be supported or challenged meaning that their potential may not be realised. Staff do make good use of open questions and take opportunities to extend children's learning.

Children settle quickly due to the staff's care, understanding and planning. They ensure that they have all necessary information about children, including their likes and dislikes. Baseline profiles for physical care, drawn from parental experience of children, assists both the separation process and the initial developmental support for children in their play. These are in hand to be extended further to include development in the very near future. Younger children's learning and development is promoted because staff have a very good understanding of child development and the 'Birth to three matters' framework and have implemented it throughout all areas of the nursery. Multiple displays throughout the setting show creative work completed by children together with photographs of all children completing the activities. Displays show clear explanations about what areas of development the activities have covered and show the benefit to children.

#### Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress and their overall development is promoted because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, enabling them to plan and adapt activities appropriately. Children's progress in all areas is well-balanced as staff use comprehensive methods for assessing them, making use of information gained from this to highlight areas to be covered. Planning of all activities is clear and is linked to the Foundation Stage, ensuring that all areas of learning are covered. However, it does not yet show any differentiation for children nor the staff role or resources which are to be used to meet the learning outcome. This means that children may not always be sufficiently challenged or supported by staff or use appropriate resources to fully meet their potential in that activity. This applies to the planning for younger children also.

Children demonstrate their enjoyment as they choose their play and activities from the wide range offered. These include regular opportunities to engage in sand and water play, including inventive play such as with gloop, hair gels, shaving foam or flour, a broad variety of free crafts and construction, and reading and creative opportunities for role play. Children's knowledge is further extended as they participate in a range of themed topics which change on a regular basis. This enables them to look more closely at subjects such as 'Families' or 'Homes' where they develop role play, use non-fiction books to explore, review roles of people in the family looking at 'who helps you?', and exploring number and letter when looking at the makeup of the family.

The well-organised environment and daily planning means that children have good opportunities to develop the attitudes and dispositions that enable them to achieve in their learning. They are given sufficient time and appropriate resources to enable them to complete tasks, and their behaviour is very good throughout the sessions, enabling them to listen and concentrate. They are motivated to learn through the provision of exciting and interesting activities.

Children are confident in using language to organise and explain their thoughts and play, for example, children engage in extensive conversations. For example, they talked about going to Africa where there may be lions, having to be careful but then explaining that they would be safe because they would be staying at their grandparent's house. Children are clearly using language to explore what they know and see around them and making predications about what may happen in the future. Children understand that print carries meaning and are beginning to use this as a means of communicating, writing their names on their art work as well as writing labels for laminating and displaying around the room. For example, children have written 'this is the way to our new writing area' in the nursery. This practice enables children to begin writing for a purpose and to feel a clear sense of ownership of their surroundings. Children show a keen interest in books, concentrating on stories and joining in to ask and answer questions. They enjoy French lessons each week where they further extend their own developing language understanding that communication may be done in both written form as well as different languages.

Children recognise that numbers carry meaning, confidently and correctly counting the number of objects and using numbers in a meaningful context. For example, children are keen to learn and are seen to use measurements freely. They talk about making farm yards big enough for the animals, discuss who had more and most when serving lunch and predict whether there will be enough food left for other children at lunch. Children do ask questions such as 'when is it my turn?' and will wait for that time to come. Children compare and name shapes during activities as was seen when they made pictures of houses using balsa wood and telling staff that they needed three or four lines to make the shapes. However, children have few opportunities when they may calculate or count in everyday situations and this prohibits their full understanding of the daily use of mathematics.

Children have opportunities to observe, explore and question in a wide range of activities that form the foundation of their later learning in subjects such as mathematics, science and technology. For example, they have the use of a listening centre which they may learn to operate using head phones and compact discs. They plant and grow some seeds and watch with interest the effect of water and sun on them. Children show a keen interest in the months of the year and of the topics related to each month. For example, when exploring the topic 'homes' they volunteer information on the types of homes there may be with one suggestion being a log cabin. Children are encouraged to understand that information sources are available and staff

support children's interest by using both non-fiction books and the internet to extend their knowledge.

Children's physical development is very well-promoted and they enjoy a wide range of activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. This area is further supported by clear daily planning for physical play which demonstrates that children have opportunities to use the outdoor area, the play hall and participate in music and movement sessions. Children understand the routines of the day and respond to the 'trigger' for tidying up passing resources to each other and chatting as they bring activities to a close. They show a keen sense of social awareness as they listen when others are talking and respect others as they take their turn. They are making firm friendships and talk happily throughout the day, this is shown particularly during lunch times when children talk happily and tell each other jokes laughing and giggling together as they find something funny.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and are offered a wealth of opportunities and learning experiences, underpinned by highly appropriate support from staff to ensure that all are able to participate and develop to their maximum. Children are respected at all times and play a full and active part in the nursery because staff value their individuality and the family context for each child. This is further strengthened by staff's knowledge and the setting's excellent policies and procedures which give practical, comprehensive guidance on an extensive range of issues.

Children are offered a multitude of creative play opportunities and activities which promote their understanding of society and their local community and increase their awareness of other cultures and ways of life. These include visits out and about in the local community using the 'Kinder-van' (a six-seater vehicle for children) as well as having the opportunity to attend swimming lessons in the local facility. They benefit from visits from parents and families learning about both work and leisure. For instance, children have enjoyed hearing about the role of a midwife as well as sharing in a parents experience in Egypt and viewing many objects brought back from that visit. All children participate in realistic role play enabling them to gain a clear, meaningful knowledge of these issues. For example, younger children were seen to enjoy exploring the role of fire fighters as they tried dressing-up, discussed driving to and fighting fires, as well as talking about other tasks such as rescuing cats from trees.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They show a keen interest in new topics introduced throughout the nursery setting, they listen eagerly and offer their suggestions for work within the topics. Children show pride in their works and will show things they have completed to staff and adults before placing them safely to one side. They share readily with their friends and enjoy a particularly social time during meals where children above two years old are self-serving their lunch and helping their friends to serve themselves as well. Children's behaviour is good throughout the sessions as they confidently choose their activities and competently organise turn-taking and sharing. Staff are skilled in managing children's behaviour, setting consistent boundaries and always offering clear explanations so that children are able to take responsibility for their own actions. Staff act as excellent role models, always remaining calm, polite and attentive to all.

Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their requirements clearly identified and consistently met as there is a detailed, practical policy relating to this and staff

ensure that this is consistently implemented. They have attended training and have experience of working with children who have varying needs. This is shown through the comprehensive risk assessments completed where any child is noted as having any specific need and the detailed actions plans that are then produced to ensure that the need is met. Where children and families have English as a second language the setting works with parents to ensure that key words are learnt and routines are followed to enable children to feel secure. Themed works have included 'around the world' with subsequent displays and full parental involvement. Children learn to appreciate other languages and take part in French lessons each week broadening their enjoyment of learning about the culture and heritage of others.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are offered comprehensive information about the setting, ensuring that they are fully aware of policies, procedures and daily practice. They are therefore able to feel confident in the setting's ability to provide appropriate care for their child. Parents notice boards, periodical questionnaires, parent evenings and informative newsletters provide a wealth of information on a wide range of topics, including detailed information about the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework, clearly showing how this links with children's play and development. There is a comprehensive parent's induction process which ensures that they are fully aware of all policies and procedures, enabling them to feel confident in the staff, and in turn, passing this confidence on to their children. This time includes settling-in sessions (up to six) as well as a mid-way meeting with the child's key-worker to establish how the period of settling-in is going and if there are any further steps required. This positive attitude ensures that parents' views are valued, standards are maintained and high quality care can be provided for each child.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. They benefit from the care provided by well-supported, dedicated staff. Their daily experiences of the setting are enhanced by the quality of organisation and the attention paid to all details relating to their development and well-being. Children's ongoing welfare and safety are promoted through the setting's comprehensive policies and procedures, which fully support and enhance their childcare practice. A comprehensive staff induction programme ensures that all staff are aware of the setting's procedures and are able to work appropriately with children at all times.

The very good organisation of space within the setting helps to ensure that children are offered an extensive range of activities and their varying needs can be consistently met. The organisation of the play areas, indoor, outdoor and the play hall, and resources means that children are able to move safely from one area to another, confidently initiating their own play and learning. For example, children understand that there are limited numbers in the play hall for safety reasons and eagerly anticipate when it may be their groups turn. They mix and integrate with children from other base rooms, as well as playing within their own family grouped rooms, this enables them to feel part of the wider community of the overall nursery.

Leadership and management is good. The extended management, nursery management and officer-in-charge demonstrate a great commitment to ensuring that all children are consistently offered the highest levels of care and education. The setting's capacity to improve is very strong and all staff strive to improve their practice. They have an excellent attitude to self-evaluation, producing a practical action plan that is used as a working document in achieving change. This attitude leads to changes that positively effect outcomes for children. For example, reviews of



all physical areas and provision has led to substantial renovation and renewal of equipment. The review of timetabling throughout the setting has led to an increase in children's security and sense of being settled in the premises. The new incentives for staff, as well as introducing new room meetings and seniors management meetings, have all helped to ensure that the care for children remains the focus of such meetings and is continually under review for development.

The setting's commitment to ongoing staff training ensures that staff feel valued, are up-to-date with current practice and are therefore able to provide appropriate care for all children. All managers, both on-site and those working across the nurseries settings, act as excellent role models, showing their genuine enjoyment of their work and passing on their enthusiasm for their work with children. This creates a positive environment in which children can feel confident and are motivated to play and learn.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required 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):

- develop opportunities for children to understand personal health and take responsibility for their physical needs.

#### **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 and extend the planning to clearly show how children will achieve the intended learning. Show the staff role and resources. Use the information gained in the assessments to show how less and more able children will be challenged- also applies to care

- provide more opportunities for children to count and calculate in everyday situations.

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