

Abingdon Kindergarten (Long Furlong)

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

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Inspector

Jan Leo

Setting address

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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

Abingdon Kindergarten (Long Furlong) transferred ownership in 2005 and is one of four nurseries run by Abingdon Nurseries Ltd. It operates from four main rooms, in a purpose built two-storey, air conditioned building, situated on the Long Furlong estate in north Abingdon. A maximum of 47 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The kindergarten offers full day care with sessions running from 08:15 until 17:30 for full days or 08:15 until 12:30 for morning and 13:15 until 17:30 for afternoon sessions. It is open five days a week, all year round and extended hours are available on request. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 78 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The kindergarten supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 16 members of staff employed to work at the nursery. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification. The kindergarten receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The staff are a highly qualified and experienced group of adults who work very well together as a team and thoroughly enjoy being with the children. They deploy themselves effectively to support children's learning and make sure each child feels safe and secure within the setting. The staff provide a varied and stimulating programme but play restrictions are sometimes inappropriate and curb children's enthusiasm for learning. Robust procedures are in place to preserve children's well-being and documentation is generally effective in supporting the service. However, the back up key person system is not yet consistent and children's progress records are not used to full advantage. All staff take responsibility for maintaining high standards, being involved in planning, risk assessments and general routine tasks to become fully conversant with all aspects of the day. They willingly continue training to increase their skills and stay up to date, gaining confidence in themselves and an eagerness to help drive improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- avoid setting unnecessary restrictions on children's play to prevent them losing interest and their enthusiasm for learning
- develop the key person system further to ensure all children have consistent

- support when their key person is absent from the room
- develop children's progress records by updating them frequently and linking observations to the areas of learning to help monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum, plan for children's next steps, and provide a clear record of their rate of progress

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff deploy themselves very effectively in order to supervise all areas and support children's ongoing development consistently. They build extremely close bonds with the children and plan individual learning programmes in order to meet children's needs fully and ensure they feel safe. Robust risk assessments and ongoing safety checks maintain the environment in a safe condition and staff help children to understand safety precautions in order to prepare them for later life. For example, the older children stay within a limited area in the garden when young children join them outside in order to avoid knocking the toddlers over and overwhelming them by the speed of more advanced play. Sometimes, however, staff apply the limit early with no apparent reason and children dislike having to look at inviting resources that they are not allowed to touch. The children generally have a firm understanding of good practice and they play together sensibly and safely throughout the day. The staff receive instruction in child protection procedures as part of their induction and complete training regularly to stay abreast of current safeguarding procedures. All fully understand their responsibility to protect children from harm and know what to do if concerns arise.

The staff group is diverse and includes adults of different ages with years of experience and up to date qualifications between them. They work extremely well as a team, following clear aims and providing consistent messages to build children's feeling of security and promote a high level of achievement. The atmosphere is calm and relaxed, providing children with time to try everything on offer and helping them feel valued. As a result, behaviour is good and sometimes children copy staff by stroking the arm of an adult as they chat, to indicate a feeling of closeness within their friendly community.

Parents value the service highly, and are grateful for the open communication and regular parents meetings to keep them involved in their children's development. All information is freely available regarding the registration conditions and daily operations, and staff encourage parents to contribute ideas and drive improvement. All paperwork is easy to follow but some, the complaints procedure for example, still includes outdated references despite a recent review, causing confusion. Staff have well thought through procedures for recording children's progress and these are continually evolving to increase their value. At present, observation records contain few links to the curriculum and they are only updated every few weeks. As a result, there is limited information about children's rate of progress to help identify gaps in their learning and assist in planning for their next steps.

The kindergarten has strong links with local schools to help create a more effective

partnership of care and ease transition. The staff promptly seek contact with other childcare settings, used by new children, to help ensure a balanced programme for those who receive some of their care and education elsewhere.

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

The children arrive happily and play together harmoniously throughout the day. Only the occasional tears from hungry babies disturbs the peace, and the staff act quickly to limit their distress. Babies and young children follow their own routine from home to ensure they settle quickly and feel secure. All children see smiling and chatty faces throughout the day and staff interact effectively to ensure children know what to expect and how to behave. A key person system operates in all rooms to ensure each child has one adult who is special to them. Some benefit from a back up 'buddy' system to replace the key person with a familiar adult when their main carer is absent from the setting, however, this does not currently happen in the baby room and some of the very young children feel insecure as soon as their key person leaves the room.

Group activities are often small in order for children to work at their own rate and enable staff to set appropriate individual challenges. The staff freely join in play to develop ideas and introduce related topics to help ensure learning is meaningful. Younger groups often have the same activities and learning opportunities but occasionally the teaching method is inappropriate for the age group and causes confusion. For example, toddlers had the opportunity to feel pasta in a water tray and find out what happens as it soaks up the liquid. They sit at the table for the 'learning experience' unsure why they are there and not knowing whether to eat the resulting 'goo'. When playing freely the children play well. They draw recognisable pictures and make a very good attempt at writing their names on the paper to show off their creative and writing skills. Some discuss who has the biggest hands and feet, continuing the conversations confidently when the adults move away. Some count correctly to decide how many children need a musical instrument, remaining completely uninhibited when realising they are the only one continuing the count.

The children take control of their personal needs from a very early age, using a potty and washing hands effectively to remove germs without the need for adult help. They eagerly find the step to climb on to reach the washbasin, repeatedly using the automatic taps as if they are magic. The staff all have a secure understanding of how children learn and have high expectations. As a result, the children achieve well, rapidly developing in confidence and acquiring new skills to prepare them for later life. Some balance well when walking around the edge of the sandpit, others control their movements to fill a cup with sand before pouring it through a funnel to make a wheel go round. The children concentrate very well. Some play alone, oblivious to everything around them, while others show interest in their peers and join in their games sociably. Two collaborate during sand play, helping each other fill the cup and taking turns fairly to pour it through the funnel. They instinctively play well without reminders, enjoy each others company, and benefit greatly from their time at the setting.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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