

# Kinders Mill Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number** EY361997  
**Inspection date** 19/03/2012  
**Inspector** Lynne Talbot

**Setting address** 117 Grove Road, HITCHIN, Hertfordshire, SG4 0AA

**Telephone number** 01462 642666

**Email**

**Type of setting** Childcare - Non-Domestic

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

## 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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Kinders Mill Day Nursery is an independently run provision that was registered in September 2007. The provision operates from a converted mill building in Hitchin, Hertfordshire and serves the local and wider area. The main building has three floors, there are access ramps to the ground floor of the main building and the portable building for older children. Children have access to secure outdoor play areas, as well as, an indoor play barn for large physical play.

The provision is open each weekday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6.30pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 95 children may attend the provision at any one time. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register, there are currently 150 children on roll. The provision provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds.

Some children attend other settings, such as, the early years unit of the local primary school or childminders. The provision supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language. The provision employs 37 members of child care staff, as well as, six additional support staff. There are two qualified teachers who work in the preschool covering 9am to 3pm during school term time. Four members of staff are qualified to degree level, with one further staff member qualified to level 5 foundation degree, and two qualified to level four. The provision exceeds the required level of qualified staff.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Planning for children within this provision is rich, varied and imaginative. Responsive staff ensure that children receive teaching that highly motivates them and fosters rapid progress in their learning and development. The staff group create a superb and welcoming environment using significantly effective safeguarding procedures and thorough risk assessments. They ensure that they have cohesive knowledge of each child's needs to ensure that every child is totally included. Partnerships with parents and carers are key strengths, while those with other agencies are strong, showing dedication to meeting all children's needs. The management team communicate dynamic ambition and drive to secure purposeful continued development by using systematic self-evaluation.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continuing to extend the methods used that underpin the highly successful partnership with parents; with particular regard to transition to other

settings.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Comprehensive policies and procedures for safeguarding are implemented robustly to maintain a consistently high standard of safeguarding for children. Safeguarding children is compulsory as part of the core training programme for all staff. Staff vigilance and keypad security on all exterior doors support the overall security. Senior managers ensure that all persons required undertake the appropriate checks to safeguard children. Children are safeguarded by the extensive recruitment procedures, including, the comprehensive induction programme of new staff. The onsite management team and company management are exceptionally successful in inspiring the staff team to work towards sustaining ambitious targets. High expectations and superior standards are embedded across all areas of practice. Regular appraisals and reviews are carried out, staff are encouraged to set targets and management help staff to achieve them. Examples of recent training courses attended are 'Out of the Box', which looked at how best to achieve sustained shared thinking, and 'Every Child a Talker'. Comprehensive risk assessments for the premises and outings undertaken are scrutinised to ensure their efficiency. Daily, weekly, monthly and annual checks are completed by both the staff team and management. Self-evaluation at all levels reflects rigorous monitoring and analysis to bring about sustained improvement. Nursery Manager meetings are held at head office which involves training and the sharing of good practice throughout the group. Similar meetings are held for deputies, room leaders and the nursery cook demonstrating evidence of valuing all personnel whose care impacts on children. Senior meetings and management meetings are held which further support the twice yearly training days; these ensure a cohesive approach across all areas. Parents and carers contribute to self-evaluation through regular questionnaires and the highly successful forum of parent representatives. The provision strives continuously towards excellent care. This is monitored by the nursery development plan and action plan.

Children's individual learning styles are fully respected. The provision works across two main areas with younger children in the main building. Vertical grouping is highly successful, children remain with one key person from entry until transition to the pre-school building. This significantly enhances their sense of belonging and security. The environment is highly conducive to learning with a first class range of quality play provision used to achieve the planned goals. Children have free choice of movement between indoors and outside, initiating their own learning. Partnerships with parents and others are exemplary and key strengths. The provision continues to approach other settings that children move to, in order to achieve a higher level of communication and consistency for children, as yet these partnerships are not all as proactive as the provision would like. The inclusive systems of communication used to engage parents ensure that there are productive partnerships, resulting, in strong levels of engagement. For example, the parents' forum is used very successfully and all parents help to review the 'policy on the month'. Parents' evenings and reports each term provide a forum for involvement within children's learning and development, as do the 'parent voice'

sheets. The provision adopts a charity each year and families become involved in caring for others.

The staff team place equality of opportunity at the heart of its work. They actively promote equality and diversity and tackle unfair discrimination. The staff group have a committed and forward-thinking attitude towards the overall care for every child and give the utmost priority to working cohesively. They work closely with other agencies where support for children is required. Detailed individual plans ensure that every child has their specific needs fully met. Additional equipment is supplied, where needed, to ensure that every child is able to access all areas freely. Some signing is incorporated to help all children to enhance communication. The managers and staff make the most of events and festivals to broaden children's awareness of each other's home culture. For instance, key words in several other languages are learned and shared, and they explore celebrations and festivals to stimulate children's interest. Amongst those languages and cultures are Norwegian, Spanish and French. This helps children to appreciate the local and wider society around them. Consequently, the outcome in children's achievement and the well-being for all children are exceptionally high.

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

The expert practice of staff means that the planning programme adapts to meet all children's needs. Assessment with intricate recorded observation is rigorous and fully identifies next steps. Progression is closely monitored, and the impact of planned activities is measured by systematic evaluation. Consequently, children make significant gains in their learning. All children are physically active, Kinders Mill Day Nursery has fully embraced outdoor learning. Free-flow play takes place in outdoor areas, which are equipped with an excellent array of facilities.

Furthermore, the play barn offers a large indoor soft play environment that enables children to assess personal dangers and manage their own risks in tackling new physical challenges. Staff provide the optimal challenge for children as they explore their natural surroundings. For example, bird watching areas where children identify and make charts of the birds seen enhance understanding of wildlife and extend their confidence in mark making. Older children attend swimming lessons, which enhances physical development and fosters confidence in their abilities. All children enthusiastically take part in music sessions exploring music and singing, action rhymes and dance. They use language and rhyme with great skill, developing an extremely broad vocabulary. A French teacher adds to the broad range of experiences offered to children.

All children, including the youngest babies, explore natural materials including low-level sand trays, oats and foam. Tactile materials are set at a low height to encourage younger children's free exploration. Children explore nature, collecting leaves and soil, making rubbings on hard surfaces and experimenting with builders' materials. Children learn to care for living things and are given stimulating activities to foster an interest in the world around them. For instance, they care for fish in a tank and develop a wormery. Children are enthralled by the process of chicks hatching in an incubator. All children take part in naming the fish and chicks

with each child having a vote. Children across the nursery plant a huge array of vegetables including beans, tomatoes, courgettes and bulbs. Staff are skilled at incorporating all areas of learning within activities. For instance, children review the growth of beans since the previous week, name the parts of the plant, discuss what plants need for them to grow, and go on to complete close observational drawings. Very young children skilfully sort and match by size, telling staff which are the smallest or biggest plants. Activities, such as, these encompass all areas of learning and promote children's interest in new learning.

All children and babies take part in frequent cooking activities. Children request cooking spontaneously and ingredients are always available to them. They learn about quantity and weight, as well as, safety when using knives to chop and cut. Children are very well nourished. There is a strong ethos of healthy eating in the nursery and all meals are prepared on the premises using organic ingredients by the skilled chef. They serve themselves with the help of staff and learn about portion control and choice. The menu demonstrates the diverse society in which children live and adapts to every individual need. They help themselves to drinks at the water station in each room when thirsty. Children develop excellent social awareness. All children, including babies, show an extremely strong sense of security and safety. Strengths are recognised and applauded. A range of methods help children to appreciate the needs and unique qualities of others. For example, 'positive contribution' boards are used in each room and these reflect questions asked of children showing their views. 'Every child has a voice' and all about me books further support their sense of belonging. All children have ample opportunities to begin mark-making in a variety of forms. For instance, group collages showing red and black paints, white paint in squeeze bottles, and water marker pens and boards aid younger children's exploration. Sensory activities, such as, surveys of 'smells we like' or graphs of 'fruits we like' are carried out across all age groups. Children are extremely competent in using modern technology. Tape recorders, ICT microphones, digital cameras and an iPad are all used successfully. Children show outstanding levels of independence, imagination and concentration in this dynamic setting. They actively contribute to challenges with great enthusiasm, showing the attitudes necessary to support them through future learning situations.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



