Inspection of Highfield House Nursery

100 Galley Lane, Milton Keynes MK17 9AA

Inspection date:	9 November 2021

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The nursery is calm and welcoming. Children form close relationships with their key person and settle quickly. Babies snuggle in for a cuddle with staff, showing their obvious affection for them. Staff consistently support children's good communication and language skills throughout the nursery. In the baby room, staff recognise babbling and making sounds as children's early attempts at talking, and they respond positively. When children eventually progress to the pre-school room, they are confident talkers who are eager to express everything they know. For example, they explain where treasure comes from and where you can find sea dragons.

Children become confident in solving mathematical problems, for example working out how many one more is. When they make dough, they successfully name shapes that they create using flour. They apply their knowledge as they count each spoonful when mixing ingredients together. Children are capable and independent individuals who demonstrate their eagerness to learn.

Children's behaviour is good. Staff take decisive action to address any concerns, for example when young children go through a period of biting. Staff help children to learn about their behaviour and work in partnership with parents to provide children with consistency.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The managers work together effectively and have a clear focus for the curriculum. Staff know the intentions of the curriculum well and put it into action successfully. They support children to learn through new experiences and teach them to embrace the natural outdoor environment.
- The nursery garden is a large area where children have freedom to explore. Young children delight in playing with wood chip and leaves. They dig, climb and learn about growing. Children plant fruit and vegetables and are eager to try the new foods they grow.
- Staff are vigilant in supervising children as they play. They understand the risk and benefit of activities that encourage children to explore the natural world. Staff encourage the children to be resilient and to follow a set of golden rules to help them to assess activities and take some measures to keep themselves safe.
- Staff observe children's learning and assess the good progress that they make. They are aware if children's learning does not meet expectations, and take appropriate action to support them. Staff understand how to build on what children already know.
- On occasion, the daily routine does not meet the needs of all children. Some young children become extremely tired when eating their lunch and start to fall

asleep. Staff respond quickly to keep them safe. However, this means that children do not enjoy the social experience of mealtimes as they are too tired to enjoy it.

- Overall, staff know their key children well and talk to parents to find out about their needs. However, staff are less confident in gathering information from parents about children's home backgrounds, cultures and heritage. As a result, they do not have information to celebrate what makes children individual and unique. Furthermore, because staff do not know this information, they cannot include it in their teaching. Therefore, children do not learn specifically about the similarities and differences between themselves and others.
- The managers have been in role for just one month. Despite being new in their positions, they share a dynamism and enthusiasm to take the nursery in a new direction. Managers have ambitious ideas for the nursery to become more sustainable and environmentally friendly. They plan to enhance children's learning about recycling and the world that they live in.
- Leaders are supportive and encourage and coach managers. In turn, the managers support staff well. They recognise areas for improvement and are acting to systematically review and improve. Apprentice staff receive excellent support and are fully equipped to fulfil their role.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The managers display a comprehensive understanding about child protection issues in the local areas. They explain that the nursery borders three local authorities and they are aware of reporting procedures for each. This ensures that they know how to raise any concerns about children's welfare and work cooperatively with the local safeguarding children partnerships. Leaders operate safe recruitment measures to check that those who work with children are suitable to do so. There is a thorough induction for all new staff. Staff are aware of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting any concerns about children's welfare. Staff carry out risk assessments to check all the areas where children play are safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- adapt the daily routine to better meet the individual needs of children so they sleep and rest when they need it most
- increase staff awareness of children's heritage and individual backgrounds so they can celebrate what makes children unique and promote children's understanding of differences and similarities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY545595
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10209981
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	56
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	Aktiva Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP545594
Telephone number	020 3198 6114
Date of previous inspection	31 July 2019

Information about this early years setting

Highfield House Nursery registered in 2017. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above, including one of the managers who is qualified at level 5. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Hayley Marshall-Gowen

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- A joint observation was completed and discussed with the manager.
- During the inspection, the inspector held a meeting with the managers and the operational manager. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at suitable times throughout the inspection.
- Parents were invited to share their views with the inspector. Several parents discussed their views during the inspection, and the inspector took account of all feedback received.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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