

# Inspection of Wise Owls Day Nursery At Abingdon

East Lodge, Milton Hill, Steventon, ABINGDON, Oxfordshire OX13 6BD

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Inspection date: 25 November 2021

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## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is inadequate**

Children's health and safety are not assured because there are breaches of the requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare. The provider fails to ensure that the manager and staff have sufficient knowledge to carry out effective risk assessments. For example, babies are exposed to risks such as trailing wires as they play under baby gyms. Staff fail to effectively identify and minimise risks posed by Christmas decorations, such as glass ornaments that are within easy reach of young children. Staff do not provide suitable spaces for babies and young children to sleep safely or undisturbed. Children become unsettled and overtired as they are placed to sleep on floor mats in a draughty room. Staff lack the skill and knowledge of how to meet the care and learning needs of the youngest children.

Overall, the curriculum to help children gain knowledge and develop new skills across all age groups is weak. Children's learning experiences vary across the nursery. Older children receive better support and are provided with purposeful activities that motivate them to listen and learn about the world around them. For example, they excitedly join in song time and ask to sing about different animals when they pretend to be 'sleeping bunnies'. However, babies are not given the teaching support they need to help develop their vocabulary or to become curious learners. They do not benefit from strong attachments with staff and remain unsettled. Older children are well behaved and show positive attitudes to learning.

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

- The provider fails to ensure they meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage. There have been a number of breaches identified. The provider's ineffective induction of staff, including the manager, and the weak monitoring of the setting does not ensure that staff meet their roles and responsibilities. This has a serious impact on the well-being of staff, who often feel unsupported, and has caused some staff to resign.
- The new manager is starting to make changes at the setting. For example, she has improved food safety and encourages outdoor play. She is committed to gaining continuity of staff for the children. However, the lack of coaching and support from the provider and a consistent staff team impacts on the manager's capacity to make improvements in the setting.
- All children sit together for social mealtimes and enjoy the healthy food offered. Staff in the older room encourage children to be independent at snack time, such as when they butter their fruit bread. They sit with the children and share conversations with one another. Older children demonstrate good behaviour.
- The provider fails to ensure that staff have received training, specifically in the care of babies. Currently, the room for children under two years of age does not have a person in charge who has the required knowledge and skills to work with

the youngest children. Often, babies and toddlers lack purposeful interactive support from the staff in play. This hinders their learning and development. During the inspection, staff needed guidance from the inspector on how to engage and distract crying babies.

- Overall, the educational programme for children is poor. Staff in the room for children aged under two lack skill and knowledge of how to support children's personal, social and emotional development and communication and language. This often means that children wander around unstimulated, and planned activities, such as playing with 'gloop', lack clear learning intentions from the staff. Babies next learning steps are not being implemented by staff.
- The key-person system and the many staff changes do not effectively support children's well-being. Younger children, specifically, do not benefit from good-quality, nurturing support from a regular care giver. The staff have an inconsistent understanding of the children's individual needs. For example, they do not make sure that unsettled babies have their home comforter. This impacts on babies' personal development and building strong relationships.
- Staff are not well trained in carrying out effective risk assessments. Consequently, hazards remain in the baby room, which compromise children's safety.
- Parents' feedback is positive. They talk about a daily communicative handover from the staff. The manager encourages them to get involved in community events, such as the harvest festival and giving to the food bank.
- The provider has failed to identify a member of staff to act as special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). The arrangements in place to identify and support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not good enough. Staff lack training in identifying and supporting children who are not developing in line with expectations.
- The premises and equipment, particularly cots and bedding, are not used and organised in a way that meets the needs of the children. On the day of the inspection, babies were cared for outdoors or in the toddler dining area. Sleeping arrangements do not consistently meet babies' needs.
- Although ratios are maintained, staffing arrangements and staff deployment to ensure children's needs are met is not adequate enough. On many occasions, staff are left to care for babies who need a lot of attention, care and support. The system to ensure the most-capable, well-trained staff are deployed effectively is currently not working. On occasions, when babies lack stimulation and nurturing support, they show unwanted behaviours.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider cannot assure children's welfare. They have not ensured that the new manager and staff have a consistent knowledge of safeguarding across the nursery team. However, the staff do know where to go to look up information and to make a referral. The designated lead for safeguarding lacks experience and knowledge of what to do if an allegation was made against a member of staff. Appropriate

recruitment and vetting procedures of new staff are in place, such as Disclosure and Barring Service checks. This helps the provider to gain an understanding of staff's suitability when making employment decisions. The manager has started to review accidents and existing injuries to help to identify any patterns or concerns that could indicate a child may be at risk of harm.

### **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

**The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.**

**We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:**

	<b>Due date</b>
improve the arrangements in place for the coaching and supervision of staff to improve their personal effectiveness and develop a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues	17/12/2021
improve the key-person system and make sure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs to help the child become familiar with the setting, and offer a settled relationship for the child	17/12/2021
take immediate action to effectively identify and minimise risks to children, with particular regard to hazards in the baby room	17/12/2021
ensure there is a trained SENCo in place to help identify and effectively support children with SEND	17/12/2021
ensure staff meet the individual needs of children at sleep times, with particular regard to the good use of the premises and equipment	17/12/2021
ensure staffing arrangements and the deployment of staff meet the needs of all children to ensure their safety and learning	17/12/2021

ensure staff who hold designated lead roles for safeguarding hold a secure knowledge of safeguarding matters, including the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff	17/12/2021
ensure the member of staff in charge of the children under two years of age has suitable experience of working with this age group and at least half of all other staff have received training that specifically addresses the care of babies	17/12/2021
ensure the manager and all staff receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities.	17/12/2021

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:**

	<b>Due date</b>
improve staff's teaching skills and knowledge of how to effectively support children's personal, social and emotional development and communication and language skills.	17/12/2021

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2546899
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10214815
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	1 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	37
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	26
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Wise Owls Club Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP905594
<b>Telephone number</b>	01628620013
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Wise Owls Day Nursery At Abingdon registered in 2019. It is based in Steventon, Abingdon, Oxfordshire. The nursery is run by a limited company, who also run 10 other early years and childcare settings. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 7am to 6pm for most weeks of the year. There are currently six staff, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives education funding for children aged three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Lorraine Wardlaw

### Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- Parents gave feedback to the inspector about the nursery.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together.

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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