

Inspection of Hunsdon House Garden School

12 - 14 Osler Road, Headington, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX3 9BJ

Inspection date: 16 July 2025

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Staff have an inconsistent knowledge of safeguarding and procedures to safeguard children. Furthermore, leaders have not ensured that at least one member of staff has a current paediatric first-aid certificate and is available at all times. Therefore, the nursery operates with staff that are not adequately trained to administer emergency treatment, if needed. These significant weaknesses compromise the children's welfare and means their safety cannot be assured. However, children enjoy their activities and interactions with staff. Children form strong bonds with the kind and caring staff, who warmly greet them as they arrive.

Staff provide children with a range of stimulating activities that focus on what children need to learn next. For example, children practise using their small-muscle skills as they enjoy making and manipulating dough with a range of tools. Children show great concentration as they frequently choose from a wide range of puzzles and books. Staff provide good teaching and support. They use these opportunities to help children to develop their speech and language skills and to express themselves. For example, children learn and recall seasonal changes, insects and new words, such as 'horizontal' and 'vertical' lines.

Staff have a secure understanding of children's individual learning needs. They ensure all children are included in the setting and provide ways and reasonable adjustments for them to communicate and explore effectively. Staff act as positive role models. Children consistently use good manners and say 'thank you' to their friends for collecting their instrument during circle time. Staff praise children and they show care and concern for each other. As a result, children have positive attitudes to learning and their emotional development is supported well.

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

- Leaders do not implement safeguarding policies and procedures adequately. For example, some staff have gaps in their knowledge of safeguarding issues. Although they have some awareness of indicators that would raise concerns, they do not recognise the significance of some child protection signs and symptoms. Furthermore, not all staff have a secure and confident understanding of reporting concerns to relevant agencies. This means that they may not recognise when a child is at risk of harm. This does not ensure that the correct course of action would be promptly taken to manage a concern and protect children's welfare.
- Leaders have not ensured that mandatory training has been maintained and that a suitable staff member is on duty with up-to-date paediatric first-aid training, as required. This is breach of requirements and impacts on the safety and well-being of children.

- Children's learning and progress are promoted well. Staff use exciting storytelling to engage children. Children eagerly anticipate what happens next in the story. Staff use books to lead detailed conversations and extend children's knowledge and skills, such as introducing some letter sounds and number recognition activities. Staff support children's communication and language well. Repetition and introduction to new words mean children's vocabulary development is strong and continuously progressing.
- Staff ensure that children receive daily opportunities to be outside, where they build on many skills. Children take a keen interest in nature and the world around them. They develop good coordination and physical skills as they have fun kicking a football around the garden to one another. Staff support children's understanding of quantity as they pour sand into various containers and pretend to make cups of tea in the sand pit. Staff initiate discussions on various foods, to support children's understanding of healthy lifestyles, where food comes from and good oral hygiene.
- Staff provide good levels of support for children, developing their independence, resilience and curiosity. Children enjoy having responsibilities and helping adults. They gain a good understanding of what makes them unique. For example, staff welcome families from a wide range of cultures and languages. Children learn about these as they say 'hello' in a range of languages, listen to dual language books and sing songs from different countries.
- Staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to manage children's behaviour appropriately. Staff provide children with clear and consistent guidance about what is acceptable through their 'golden suggestions', as well as praise to support their self-esteem. Children feel comfortable and at ease with the staff. They show a strong interest in their play and learning. They make choices from activities and resources available, such as role play with construction bricks and imaginative play, in the pretend kitchen area.
- Leaders have formed strong relationships with parents. They encourage families to be actively involved in their children's development and share information about specific events and learning that takes place at home. Parents speak positively about their children's care and learning and the effective communications they receive.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in staff. Leaders have begun a programme of induction for new staff and there are plans for supervision sessions and feedback to continually improve their practice. However, over time, leaders have not reflected on how to identify bespoke and focused professional development to support staff's ongoing knowledge and skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is not an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
ensure all staff have up-to-date knowledge of child protection matters to enable them to confidently identify all safeguarding issues and the correct procedures for notifying external agencies	29/08/2025
take action to ensure that a staff member who holds a paediatric first-aid certificate is on site at all times so that they are available to respond to emergencies quickly and paediatric first aid can be administered whenever needed.	29/08/2025

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

- improve the programme of professional development for staff and focus more precisely on their training needs to raise their knowledge and skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY316340
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10394886
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 3
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	5
Name of registered person	Angeleri, Helle Helga
Registered person unique reference number	RP513273
Telephone number	01865 762704
Date of previous inspection	30 September 2019

Information about this early years setting

Hunsdon House Garden School first established as a privately owned nursery school in 1923. It registered under the current ownership in 2005. It is open from 8.30am to 3pm on Monday to Friday, during term time only. There are four members of staff. All staff hold relevant qualifications between level 2 and level 6. The provider is in receipt of funding to provide free early education to children aged three years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anneliese Fox-Jones

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main base rooms and garden. She talked to staff about the progress individual children are making and what they want the children to learn.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk across all areas of the nursery to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- A joint observation was carried out by the inspector and the manager. The inspector observed interactions between staff and the children and the impact these have on children's learning.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector reviewed relevant documentation, including the arrangements for paediatric first-aid training. The inspector had a discussion with leaders about the evaluation of the setting and plans for improvement.
- The inspector spoke to parents and children during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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