

Design and Access Statement

Park Lodge, Hooks Lane, Bedhampton, PO9 3DT

Proposal: Change of Use from Residential (C3) to Nursery (Class E(f) Childcare)

Applicant: Kiddie Kingdom Pre-School

Prepared for: Havant Borough Council

1. Introduction

This statement supports a planning application for the change of use of Park Lodge, Hooks Lane, Bedhampton, from residential (Class C3) to a nursery setting (Class E – childcare provision). The proposal is to expand the provision offered by Kiddie Kingdom Pre-school, which currently operates from the Havant Rugby Club building on Hooks Lane.

The expansion is necessary to accommodate the rising demand for early years childcare in the local area, particularly in response to the government's planned extension of free childcare hours to 30 hours per week for working parents from September 2025.

2. Background and Need

Kiddie Kingdom Pre-school currently operates a 52-place nursery from its existing premises within the Havant Rugby Club (PO9 3EJ). Due to limited space, it is not possible to expand within the current building to meet the increased demand for places prompted by the upcoming changes in childcare funding.

Park Lodge, located adjacent to the rugby club, offers a viable and immediate solution. Its proximity, internal layout, and external garden area make it well-suited for early years use, especially for younger age groups.

3. Proposal

The proposed change of use will convert Park Lodge into a dedicated early years nursery facility for children under the age of 3. The building will include:

Ground Floor:

- Baby Room (0–2 years): Capacity for 18 children
- Adjacent Sleep Room

First Floor:

- Toddler Room (2–3 years): Capacity for 18 children
- Additional Sleep Room
- Office space
- Staff room

This expansion will allow the nursery to accommodate a further 36 children daily, improving access to early years education locally?

4. Hours of Operation

The proposed hours of operation are:

Monday to Friday: 7³⁰am – 6⁰⁰pm

These are in line with the current operational hours of Kiddie Kingdom Pre-school and reflect demand from working families?

5. Staffing

A maximum of 10 staff will operate from the Park Lodge site at any one time, ensuring proper staff-to-child ratios and compliance with Ofsted regulations?

6. Parking and Access

The site includes 3 on-site parking spaces on the driveway, with 2 additional spaces in front of the gates?

Staff and parents will also continue to make use of the existing Havant Rugby Club car park, which has ample capacity and is already used by the current nursery?

Drop-offs and pick-ups are staggered throughout the day due to varied session times, thus avoiding traffic congestion or peak hour pressure?

7. Outdoor Play Provision

The Park Lodge site benefits from a large private outdoor garden, which is a significant improvement over the current premises, which lacks dedicated outdoor space?The garden will allow for:

- Secure, on-site play
- Better support for children's physical development
- Reduced reliance on off-site walking trips

The rear garden backs onto the rugby pitches, ensuring minimal noise impact on surrounding residential properties?

8. Ofsted and Regulatory Compliance

The Park Lodge site will be registered with Ofsted as an additional premises under the existing registration for Kiddie Kingdom Pre-school. Ofsted has already been consulted and is supportive of the proposed expansion, subject to planning approval.

9. Design Considerations

The internal layout changes involve minimal structural alterations and are primarily cosmetic and functional to meet early years standards. All rooms have been labelled clearly in the submitted floor plan.

The external appearance of the building will remain unchanged, maintaining the residential character of the site and its visual harmony with the surrounding area.

10. Access for All

The premises will comply with Equalities Act 2010 requirements. Access is provided at ground level, and all internal works will consider the needs of children, staff, and visitors with mobility issues. Fire safety and evacuation procedures will be updated accordingly.

11. Conclusion

This proposal offers a sustainable and essential expansion of a valued local childcare provider, responding directly to national policy changes and local need. Park Lodge provides an ideal adjacent site with minimal impact on the surrounding area, no change to the external structure, and better facilities for young children.

The application aligns with local and national planning policies regarding early years education provision, sustainable development, and community support infrastructure.

We respectfully request that Havant Borough Council approve this change of use application.