



# Alphabet House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 309211  
**Inspection date** 30 March 2006  
**Inspector** Margaret Baines

**Setting Address** 444 Fleetwood Road, Fleetwood, Lancashire, FY7 8AT

**Telephone number** 01253 878600

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Alphabet House Ltd

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Alphabet House Day Nursery is situated in a residential area of Fleetwood, close to Flakefleet and Larkholme County Primary Schools. It is registered to provide care for 42 children under 5 years, there are presently 62 children on roll, of which 23 are in receipt of funded education. The nursery is open from 08.00 to 18.00 each weekday apart from bank holidays.

The nursery building is a detached house with an enclosed outdoor play area. There

is a separate baby unit on the ground floor. The toddlers occupy a separate area on the ground floor and consists of a main playroom, bathroom/utility room and a quiet room for sleeping/nappy changing. There is a separate self-contained pre-school unit on the first floor. The nursery kitchen is situated on the opposite side of the staircase to the first floor adjoining staff facilities and office. The enclosed garden is directly accessed from the rear of the premises.

The nursery employs 13 staff of whom the majority are qualified in childcare. Children with special needs and English as a second language are welcomed into the setting. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children have a good understanding of the importance of hygiene and can talk knowledgeably about the risks from germs supported by good teaching from staff. The older children independently visit the toilets and wash their hands. Children develop a good awareness of how to care for their health needs and know that they need their hats and coats when it is cold. Children are learning that when they feel tired they can take a rest or have a sleep.

Their health needs are met through the provider's good health and hygiene policies and procedures. Children have a good awareness of healthy foods and drinks extended through well planned activities and in daily routines. They explore the taste of different fruits and snacks through the good range of healthy meals and snacks provided. The good range of healthy snacks and meals develops their enjoyment of nutritious foods. They know when they need a drink; older children help themselves from the water bottles available, whilst younger children are given regular drinks throughout the day. Their dietary needs are met as the staff ensure information from parents is recorded in detail.

Children thoroughly enjoy the good opportunities to be active indoors and outdoors and are developing good physical skills. They participate in daily outdoor play, enjoy music and movement and learn to coordinate their bodies and move safely. Their competence in using large equipment is very good as they use the outdoor equipment. Children are developing an understanding of how they feel after exercise and what happens to their bodies when they are active.

Very young children also have very good opportunities to enjoy the outdoors as they sleep in their prams and play in a safe environment. They also enjoy healthy foods and have their individual needs met through daily consultation with parents.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming safe indoor and outdoor environment. This is

planned to meet their needs by ensuring play areas continue to be maintained to a high standard both indoors and out. Children learn to keep themselves safe because the staff are skilled in the way they talk to them about safe procedures and reinforce safe practices as they ask children to pick up toys, not to run and remind them to be careful. The setting has a comprehensive risk assessment in place which effectively minimises the risk to children and helps to keep them safe as they play freely.

The nursery is very welcoming to parents and children, being enhanced by high levels of children's own work which is attractively displayed. Photographs of children at play also reflect the positive ethos of the setting. Children take pride in their achievements. They are eager to share them with others to further display their enthusiasm. Children are delighted to play in a setting where they can move freely and without restriction as they access good play materials and choose activities and resources from those stored within easy reach. The environment for very young children is carefully planned through staff's good knowledge to ensure their safety and enjoyment in all aspects of their play.

Children's welfare is protected to a high level because staff are very clear in their role in child protection and understand their responsibility to contact the named person. The named person is fully aware of her role and the procedure she needs to follow should a situation occur which requires a referral to the appropriate agency.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children look forward to coming to the nursery, they enter happily and eagerly greet staff and their friends. They go to play confidently as they await the arrival of all children. They demonstrate good independent learning skills as they select resources for play. They enjoy creative play, write, draw and paint; they are beginning to form relationships and make friends. They are developing good imaginative skills as they enjoy the role play area which is changed regularly from the home, to the garden centre or a pet shop. They actively respond in group time contributing their ideas facilitated by the good staff questioning. Their curiosity and eagerness to play and learn are fostered through the well organised provision of choices of play and the enjoyable focused activities. Children make good progress as staff have a developing knowledge of Birth to three matters and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and what children need to learn.

Children enjoy an imaginative and varied range of activities that helps them to make progress in all areas of development. Their individual learning needs are assessed regularly by their key workers. The very young children benefit from the detailed planning using the birth to three matters guidance, which clearly identifies the next steps in their learning. This process ensures that all children transfer very easily from one area to the next within the setting. Staff are clear about what children can do and therefore plan for the next steps within the planned activities. Both 3 and 4 year olds are becoming competent learners and use their very good number and language skills effectively in their play and as they respond in focussed activities. All children have their care needs met well through the daily routines and the time given by staff

to each child to support and encourage their well-being.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's individual learning needs are ably provided for by good curriculum planning that specifies the coverage of the stepping stones with consideration in the main given for ability levels and younger children coming in during the year. Their desire to learn is stimulated by the exciting range of activities planned, such as baking small cakes for snack time, designing play dough models of birthday cakes and people, creating paintings of mummy and making models using a good range of construction resources. The variety of themes explored throughout the year give children a developmentally appropriate programme to enhance their learning.

Children eagerly select resources for their play ideas and freely move around the areas of the well planned continuous provision to paint, to model, play in the home corner or enjoy a book. Children persist at their play for good periods of time and concentrate intently in the group times that are well focussed by staff to encourage their sharing and listening skills. Their progress is regularly assessed by staff identifying the key skills achieved, using information from parents at admission and planning for children's next steps to learn. Children's specific achievement of stepping stones towards the early learning goals are recorded within their record of achievement files.

Children are making good progress in all areas of learning supported by effective teaching that stimulates their curiosity and motivation to learn. They use number readily in their play and can count to ten and some beyond as staff make good use of everyday opportunities and planned activities to extend children's mathematical skills. Their calculation skills are developing as they decide how many children have eaten their snack and how many children are in the circle. They can readily identify a square, a circle and a rectangle. Children have good opportunities to recognise numbers as they consider the day of the week and match numbers in activities.

Children also have very good communication, language and literacy skills as they eagerly use their good range of vocabulary to express their ideas in circle times and recall and anticipate in story time. They are also developing their understanding of Spanish as they recite numbers in Spanish and are learning the days of the week. They use their thinking skills in their play, for example to consider who will have a turn to unwrap the parcel in the pass the parcel game. Children's early writing skills are developing as they label their work and make marks for a purpose in their play. There are, however, few labels on the low level shelves and boxes, which children independently select resources from, therefore missing opportunities for them to make connections in their letter recognition during every day activities.

Children competently use tools as they make models with the play dough, for example they make cakes. They have good opportunities to develop their imaginative and creative skills as they enjoy the role play in the home corner and the dressing up clothes. They enjoy music and are learning to sing songs from memory. They have good opportunities to play the musical instruments developing their skills to recognise loud and soft sounds. Children are learning to work together, they wait their turn to

paint and make models with older children helping younger ones in their play. Children show good care and concern for each other and readily relate to each other's experiences and news. Their good self-esteem is encouraged by staff who foster children's sense of belonging to their close-knit community and their place in their close and extended families.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are enthusiastically welcomed into the setting, they are valued and respected because staff ensure each child has the opportunity to engage in all aspects of the curriculum whether they attend daily or on a part time basis. The inclusion of all children is actively planned and monitored and the differentiation aspect is covered in planning.

Children are learning to take responsibility for their behaviour because the staff follow positive and effective strategies for helping children learn to manage their behaviour. Children learn the boundaries and guidelines because staff are consistent and are very good role models, having high regard for each other and the children. Children's behaviour is very good, they learn right from wrong because staff are consistent in their approach and provide gentle reminders to reinforce boundaries.

The partnership with parents is good and contributes significantly to children's well-being. Parents are provided with detailed information which informs them about the care provided including Birth to three matters initiatives and the foundation stage. Parents' views are actively sought and they are provided with regular newsletters to update them on aspects of the nursery. Parents learn about their child's development through discussion and strong links with their key worker. They are actively involved in their child's learning by providing detailed information at the time of the child's registration. They also update the key worker on any significant changes and development and they contribute to the topic work particularly with the funded children. This ensures children's individual needs are met and a strong link is made with home.

The children learn about their community and other cultures as they engage in activities which promote their understanding. For example, they recently made mother's day crafts and are preparing for Easter. They enjoy playing together and learn to share and take turns, for example when playing in the sand tray. They learn to manage their behaviour and are well mannered as they ask for a drink saying please and thank you. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation of the environment, which enables children to make choices from quality resources. Children's needs are met

and safeguarded because all legally required documentation is in the main well maintained. All policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated, although the medication and incident records do not totally ensure confidentiality of information in their present form.

The setting has provided a robust system for the vetting and clearance of all staff, in line with the change in legislation, to further meet the needs of children. The setting has a procedure for informing parents of the complaints made as required by the new guidance and, therefore, parents are informed of any complaints made against the setting.

The leadership and management is good, with staff being led by a committed management team. They work well together as a team and support each other in their roles. Training is promoted for all staff to increase their knowledge and skills, to improve their practice and, therefore, the care of the children.

The setting promotes the education and outcomes for children well, with a team of committed staff who continuously monitor their own performance by evaluating activities provided and monitoring children's progress. The staff monitor their own performance through the staff supervision system, through regular staff meetings and the evaluation of activities in order to improve the care and education provided for children.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of those children who attend.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to: develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues; ensure all information contained in the operational plan is accurate and up to date; ensure that sufficient and suitable toys, equipment and bedding are available to meet the needs of all children, ensure the complaints procedure is accurate and up to date; ensure the privacy of children when intimate care is being provided, request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. These actions have been met and the care and learning of the children has improved.

At the last education inspection there were no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to develop the formal planning to identify the 'next step' activities, particularly for the more able children. Planning now clearly identifies the next steps, so enhancing children's learning as they progress along the stepping stones towards the Early Learning Goals.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since April 2004 there has been one complaint relating to National Standard 13, child protection. The provider followed the local Area Child Protection procedure and reported the outcome to Ofsted.

No further action was required and as a result the provider continues to meet the

National Standards and in doing so remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

## **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review the medication and the incident records to ensure that information is recorded in a manner that meets confidentiality requirements.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- increase the number of examples of print available in the environment, in particular by labelling boxes from, which children select independently, so providing additional opportunities for them to make connections in their learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)