



# Alphabet Day Nursery (Kingsthorpe)

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	220088
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Kristin Hatherly
<b>Setting Address</b>	Kingswell Rd, Kingsthorpe Village, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN2 6QB
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<b>Registered person</b>	Angela Evans
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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 Day Nursery opened in 1994 in a single storey building in the old village area of Kingsthorpe on the outskirts of Northampton. The facility is made up of three group rooms. There is a small secure outside play area.

The registration is for 32 children under five years. There are currently 44 children on roll, and of these 11 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery opens five days a week, all year round, except for bank holidays. They are open from 7:45am to 18:00pm. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

Thirteen staff work directly with the children and all have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from an Advisory Teacher and a Birth to three advisor.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted by staff who follow clear health and hygiene procedures and ensure they have appropriate medical information such as details of any allergies. This information is checked at each meal and signed off to ensure that children have received appropriate meals for their needs. Children learn about their own personal hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times such as before meals, after messy play and after going to the toilet. This sustains the level of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children's welfare is safeguarded because the majority staff have up-to-date first aid knowledge in the event of any accidents and appropriate procedures are in place if children are unwell.

Children gain an awareness of the role of healthy eating in developing their good health and growth as they are provided with a variety of nutritious well-balanced snacks and meals. They learn about healthy eating as they grow vegetables which they then cook and eat. Children have access to fresh drinking water at all times. As a result children are thoroughly hydrated and comfortable.

Children have regular opportunities to obtain fresh air, enjoy physical exercise and learn about the importance of activity in a healthy lifestyle as they have their own secure outside area. They take part in a variety of activities in the fresh air as they balance on balancing and manoeuvre wheeled toys. Children move spontaneously with increasing control and co-ordination, developing an awareness of space around them and the close proximity of others.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very safe and well cared in a nursery that the staff and management ensure it's fit for purpose and in an environment that is comfortable, welcoming and child friendly. Their safety is further promoted as a result of the adults' very good awareness of health and safety and because all reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risk of accidents. For example, the staff and management ensure that furniture and equipment are of suitable design and condition, well-maintained and conform to safety standards. Thorough risk assessments and good supervision allow children freedom to choose activities that offer variety. They have access to a good variety of toys, resources and equipment appropriate to their age and development which are regularly checked and cleaned.

Children's safety is very well promoted as effective and regular risk assessment procedures are in place within the setting and proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents. For example, there is a good ratio of staff to children to ensure that children are well supervised at all times and each activity is risk assessed. Children understand and practise fire drills regularly which are carefully recorded. Children are further kept safe as there are clear and comprehensive procedures for outings. Children are protected and their welfare promoted through regular risk

assessments of equipment and premises. All the required procedures and documents are in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted.

Children are well protected because staff have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the local child protection guidelines. Their safety and welfare is further enhanced by staff carefully monitoring access to the premises, checking all equipment and complying with fire requirements. A good understanding of safety aspects is integral to the induction process for new staff.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the nursery. Children's self-confidence is promoted by staff who build warm positive relationships with the children and have consistent expectations and clear routines. Staff demonstrate a caring attitude towards the social side of the child and encourage children to share and play together. Children develop their independence as they express their ideas during play using a wide range of resources which capture their interests, for example during imaginary play in home corner made into a hairdressing salon and during craft activities. Children enjoy playing in the outside play area and going out for walks to the local park and library which develops and supports their physical skills. They begin to understand their own needs, and with adult support, become aware of the needs of others. Children behave well, for example, they take turns and share resources. All of these promote their emotional, physical, social and intellectual development.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. The planning is based on the six areas of learning and the 'Birth to three matters' framework which shows that staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and 'Birth to three matters'. There is a system for evaluation of activities and observation of children and detailed child profiles are kept. However, evaluations do not clearly show whether learning intentions are met and if there are areas for improvement. Staff are friendly and caring and form good relationships with the children which help them to feel secure. They give regular encouragement and praise which develops children's confidence and self-esteem. As a result, they behave well. Throughout the setting, children's personal social and emotional development is promoted by the staff's caring attitude towards the social side of the child. They encourage children to respect each other and to play co-operatively. Children work well together, sharing and helping each other.

Children are very confident to speak to and question staff and visitors to the nursery. They have access to a range of books which they select and read independently. Staff are able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. Children are developing their number skills through a variety of activities, construction, games and puzzles relating to number, shape, measure and weighing. They are encouraged to count spontaneously during activities.

Children explore and investigate taking part in experiments such as looking at ice cubes and how they melt and by planting and caring for seeds and plants. They have visitors such as police

dog handlers and firemen to the nursery which encourages them to develop a sense of community. Children celebrate a variety of festivals to develop their understanding of other cultures. They develop their physical skills through outdoor play, movement to music and handling of tools such as pencils, scissors and rolling pins with clay and play dough.

Children have frequent opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoy moving to music and experimenting with musical instruments. They have a variety of opportunities to explore media and materials and colour during planned activities and during free play. They are encouraged to experiment with colour and use a variety of items to make designs and patterns. Children engage in dressing up in costumes and play independently in role play corners to develop their imaginative play. They respond and express ideas and share feelings during free play and when talking to each other and staff.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy activities and resources which promote a positive view of the wider world. They celebrate festivals, for example Chinese New Year and Christmas and have access to resources such as jigsaws, dolls and a variety of books. This increases their awareness of diversity and their understanding of others.

Children learn about their local community through visitors to the nursery such as firemen and police dog handlers. They are valued and respected as individuals and are fully included in the life of the setting. The nursery understands their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and is pro-active in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken to support children with identified needs. As a result children receive appropriate support.

Children behave well as they are made aware of what is appropriate behaviour. They respond well to the consistent boundaries set them and by the encouragement to behave well which is given by the caring staff. Inappropriate behaviour is consistently managed by the staff who take into account the individual child's level of understanding and maturity. Children learn to share, take turns and consider others. They receive regular reassurance, praise and encouragement which promotes their confidence and self-esteem. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are provided with information through a very comprehensive prospectus and notice boards. Policies are included in the Prospectus and also the Complaints Policy. All of which ensures that parents are aware of the ethos of the nursery. Staff ensure that all parents are aware of how their children are progressing towards the early learning goals by sharing assessments and comments on a regular basis either through discussion with the children's key worker or the two parents' evenings. Parents are given information about the planning of activities. They are given written information daily about what the children have been doing. Parents are encouraged to come in and join in play sessions or share a particular skill or expertise with the children. All of which contributes to the consistency of care for the children. They report positively about the nursery.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of the space and resources both indoors and in the outdoor area so that they can make choices and develop their ideas as they play. They benefit from the good staff to child ratios as can be seen through the good supervision and interaction. However, sometimes children have to wait too long for an activity to begin and for dinner to be served. Staff support children well during activities and allow them time and space to initiate their play. The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. Resources and equipment are organised to promote children's safety, welfare and development.

Children's care and welfare are safeguarded by clear and well-maintained documentation and a comprehensive Operational Plan which shows clearly how the nursery operates. Policies and procedures ensure staff are clear about their responsibilities and parents are aware of the nursery's ethos. All of which contributes to the children's healthy, safety and well-being.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The Registered Provider, manager and staff work well together as a strong and effective team. Staff are well qualified and continue to attend training for their own personal development. This helps to ensure that they are up-to-date with information to allow them to meet the needs of all children and offer a range of interesting activities. There are clear recruitment and induction procedures in place with regular appraisals. There are monthly management meetings and fortnightly planning meetings with senior staff. All staff take part in an annual review to reflect, monitor and improve the quality of the care and education for the children. The nursery works closely with the Birth to three Advisor and the Advisory teacher. Overall the needs of the children are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At last inspection the nursery was asked to conduct a risk assessment of the premises, ensure provision was made for children to sleep safely without disturbance and appropriate furniture provided and ensure the child protection procedures complied with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures.

The nursery now has comprehensive risk assessment procedures in place. These include clear risk assessments of all outings and the building inside and out is checked morning and evening. Regular checks are also made of resources and equipment. Children have appropriate furniture and can sleep comfortably without disturbance, all of which ensures the safety and well-being of the children. The Child Protection procedures have been reviewed and are clear and comprehensive and comply with the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, thus further ensuring the safety of the children.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints 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:

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### 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 daily routines in order to minimise periods of time when children are not sufficiently occupied.

#### 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):

- continue to develop the evaluation of activities to ensure that learning intentions are met and areas for improvement are identified and acted on.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)