

# Alphabet Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY276060
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Joanne Graham
<b>Setting Address</b>	Chiltern Edge School, Reades Lane, Sonning Common, RG4 9LN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01189724783
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Aftab Ahmed
<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 2003. It operates from a purpose built premises within the grounds of Chiltern Edge School, Sonning Common. The nursery is within walking distance of Sonning Common village, with easy access to the surrounding local area. It operates within three main rooms used by the children. A maximum of 48 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open every weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round. There is a fully enclosed outside play area for the children to use.

There are currently 36 children on roll and this includes 10 children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery serves children from the local and surrounding areas. The setting has provision to support children with special needs, although none currently attend and currently support children with English as an additional language. The setting employs eight staff, of whom five hold a level 3 qualification and two are working towards a level 3 childcare qualification and one working towards a level 2 childcare qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment and learn simple health and hygiene procedures. They access tissues when they need them and know they wash their hands after messy activities and using the toilet, and before eating. Staff promote independence adequately through sensitive support and supervision. They provide suitable resources such as child-sized sinks and toilets, liquid soap and easily accessible paper towels. Although most areas have sufficient supplies to meet children's needs, these are not always monitored to support children's independence. Staff are good role models and practise satisfactory hygiene procedures, such as wearing gloves and aprons for nappy changing, and ensure tables are wiped thoroughly before using for meals. Staff make milk feeds on site in the milk kitchen. However, the cleaning products are stored on the same shelf as the closed tins containing the powdered milk. Children are protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill because staff follow appropriate policies and procedures and have a good knowledge and understanding how to promote these. They ensure children who have contagious ailments do not attend nursery, some staff hold first aid training and first aid boxes are easily accessible. Staff record accidents and medication administered thoroughly and make sure parents read and sign these. This promotes children's wellbeing.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because staff work well with parents. Staff are aware of the children's dietary and religious requirements and respect these when providing meals and snacks. Children eat healthy and nutritious meals and snacks and have a good choice and selection, considering their individual likes. This helps children develop good eating habits. Mealtimes are a lovely sociable event and babies enjoy meals and bottle-feeds within their routines. Children take part in physical activity both indoors and outdoors boosting their development adequately. The younger children enjoy balancing and climbing on the soft play equipment inside and the older children work as a team to make the parachute billow, lifting the teddy into the air.

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

The provision is good.

Staff highlight and minimise potential risks to ensure children play in a safe environment. Children benefit from good safety measures in place, such as socket and radiator covers. Children are secure within the environment and staff follow procedures to keep children safe. For example, they monitor entry to the premises, check identification of visitors and ensure they sign the visitor's book. Children demonstrate a growing understanding of keeping themselves safe and are clear about the expectations of staff. For example, children know they do not ride toys down the slope in the garden and do not push one another when they line up to pour their drinks at snack time. Children access clean, age appropriate and stimulating equipment and activities, which provide many opportunities for them to explore and investigate in a safe and challenging environment. Children play in a bright, child-friendly and spacious environment where staff welcome them on arrival, support their needs and display their work attractively. Children stay safe and secure due to regular rehearsals of the emergency evacuation procedure and good staff supervision and deployment.

Children are protected because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Most staff have attended child

protection training to increase their knowledge and they ensure children are not left unattended with persons not vetted. This safeguards children's welfare.

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

The provision is good.

Children settle, are comfortable and become happy in the setting because it is bright and familiar and staff are attentive to their nurturing and developmental needs. Children and babies gain confidence and self-esteem as staff praise and encourage their efforts and achievements, and provide good care and attention. Children and babies access toys and equipment which increase and reinforce their development and provide additional learning opportunities. For example, one child works out how to operate a toy train and repeats this as he enjoys making the train move, flash and make a noise. The baby in the room watches the child attentively, following the train around the room and smiling, enjoying this interaction. Although children access the garden regularly, staff do not effectively continue the curriculum to incorporate outdoor play or provide a good variety of opportunities, especially for the younger children.

Children acquire new knowledge and skills, increasing their language, maths, imaginative and creative development well. For example, one child moulds the play dough replicating each staff member's face, others work as a team to build with the brown and pink Montessori towers and all children enjoy singing their favourite rhymes and jingles. Children respond to adults who are interested in what they do and say. They provide sensitive support, ask effective questions and help to move learning forward. Staff anticipate children's needs well and provide a stimulating and fun environment for the children to enjoy. Children have their individual needs met well and staff demonstrate they have good knowledge of children's preferred activities, interests, routines and provide a wide range of activities to support children in their developmental needs. Staff working with the younger children have a good knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework and plan activities to incorporate the four components.

### **Nursery education**

Teaching and learning is good and children show curiosity. They are keen to join in activities, and approach these and staff with confidence, knowing they can participate and achieve. Children explore different media, such as sand, water and dough. They squeeze, roll and cut the dough into their desired shapes, such as into faces and transport shapes. One child places his dough transport shapes onto the seat of a chair to replicate an oven, to bake them. Children are beginning to link to others for guidance, support and to share their experiences with, such as with the parachute and tower building. The children are forming strong relationships with staff and their peers and often invite and welcome them into their play. Most children can recognise their bodily needs and carry out their personal care independently, such as pouring water when they are thirsty and accessing tissues. Children are able to follow verbal instructions from staff and they enjoy listening to stories and talking about what is happening. Children are confident and articulate speakers and enjoy sharing their news with Percy the penguin puppet at circle time, especially telling him about their trip to the railway station. Most children can count to ten and recognise the numerals, as staff effectively integrate mathematics into everyday situations, such as simple addition and subtraction with number rhymes. Staff increase the children's understanding of right from wrong, they respond to gentle reminders to care for the environment, the nursery's resources and one another. For example, tidying away the toys and equipment before mealtimes.

Activities and resources are appropriate for the ages and stages of development of the children who attend. Staff ensure children's individual learning needs are respected and adapt activities to ensure all children can achieve. For example, when walking through the maze of wooden rods, some children balance a beanbag on their head and others do not. Staff have a very good knowledge of individual learning and are attentive to children's differing needs. For example, one child struggles to peg his painting to dry independently so a member of staff introduces a colour matching peg game to support his learning. However, planning does not reflect this knowledge or demonstrate how staff differentiate activities. Children are very interested, keen to participate and have choices. For example, they chose if, and when, they want to play with the activities from the open shelving and with planned activities such as sponge painting and Montessori activities. Children demonstrate developing concentration skills and participate at activities for extended periods. Staff have a good knowledge of early years curriculum and plan activities to develop the children's learning. They are introducing a new evaluation and observation system, but do not always have sufficient time to complete this effectively to inform all future planning needs.

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

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in the setting. Their individual needs and differences are valued and respected and staff treat all children with equal concern and compassion. Children feel settled, happy and comfortable, contributing to them feeling secure. Staff follow babies' routines well and adapt these in consultation with the baby's parents. Staff ensure children have sufficient time to eat, play and rest. They sleep according to their needs, and use suitable sleeping furniture for their development and own preference, such as cots, mattresses and cushion. Children feel good about themselves and learn to show respect for others as staff are good role models. The older children are becoming aware of their own feelings and those of others. Staff praise and encourage children, boosting their confidence and self-esteem well. Children are forming strong relationships with adults and each other. Staff have a very good knowledge of children's family context, each child has their own peg to hang their possessions and the older children store their own work in their individual drawers. This promotes children's feelings of belonging. Children learn important social skills such as sharing, turn taking and sitting down to eat and drink. Their behaviour is good and they respond to staff's high expectations. Staff are consistent in managing boundaries and children act positively in response to their sensitive support.

The children have opportunities to learn about themselves, each other, the local community and the wider world through planned activities, visiting local places of interest and celebrating different festivals. Children access a wide range of resources, which depict positive images of race, culture, disability and gender. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and this contributes to children's wellbeing in the nursery. Parents have regular opportunities to speak with their child's keyworker to exchange and share information regarding their child's achievements at home and nursery, promoting continuity of care. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing, through daily verbal exchanges, regular newsletters, extensive notice boards containing useful information and parents' evenings. In addition, the parents with children under three years receive written day diaries, which inform parents of their child's routine and what they like to play with.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The premises are sufficiently organised, providing a welcoming and spacious environment for children to explore freely. Indoors space is set up to provide a variety of play opportunities. The person in charge holds a suitable level three qualification and all staff hold a suitable childcare qualification or are working towards a qualification. Leadership and management are good. Management supports staff training, holds regular meetings and completes appraisals for staff. Staff are committed to attending further childcare training and development courses. This helps them to reflect, monitor and improve the quality of the care and education they offer to all children.

All legally required documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place and contains sufficient details of parents and children. These records are well maintained and stored securely, sustaining confidentiality effectively. The certificate of registration is displayed during operational hours. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the setting had recommendations for the nursery education and for the National Standards in daycare. The children benefit from having many opportunities to access a good range of books that appeal to their interests, and do so independently during quiet reading times and when they desire. Documentation includes all details and staff maintain these records well to reflect accurate details of dates and staff's attendance. This supports children's welfare. Although hygiene practices are satisfactory and staff ensure children follow these procedures, in one bathroom the resources are not always sufficiently replenished to support children with their independence.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standard 2: Organisation. This involved an allegation that staffing levels were not correct. Ofsted carried out an investigation and as a result set two actions regarding recording children's and staff's attendance times accurately and ensuring all records relating to day care activities are readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection at all times. The provider has completed a new file of documents which is easily accessible and the daily registers contain dates and attendance times. Ofsted is satisfied that by taking these steps the provider remains qualified for registration.

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 provider has recorded all complaints made to Ofsted.

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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 storage of cleaning products in the baby room and ensure resources are replenished to support children's independence
- increase opportunities to bring the curriculum outside, particularly with the younger children.

#### 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):

- make sure staff have sufficient non-contact time to implement the new evaluation and observation system more effectively and ensure planning includes more detail to demonstrate children's individual learning levels.

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)