

Alpington & Yelverton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253995
Inspection date	03 July 2007
Inspector	Karen Pretty
Setting Address	Alpington Village Hall, Church Road, Alpington, Norwich, Norfolk, NR14 7NU
Telephone number	07880 592862
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Registered person	Alpington & Yelverton Pre School
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.

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Alpington and Yelverton Pre-school opened in 1972. It operates from Alpington Village Hall situated in Alpington, Norfolk. The pre-school operates from two main play rooms and also includes a kitchen and toilets. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open Monday to Thursday from 09:15 to 11:45 and an additional session from 12:00 to 14:30 on Thursday afternoon is offered, during term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for early education. Children primarily come from the local area and children attend a variety of sessions. The pre-school has a range of experience in supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well as the setting follows careful and thorough procedures that are documented and shared with parents. An exclusion policy ensures children are protected from cross-infection and cared for appropriately should they become ill. Good information regarding illness and exclusion periods is shared with parents in order to best promote children's health. Positive steps are taken to encourage children to manage their own personal needs with support from staff. Children are protected well from accidents as a fully stocked first aid box is available and a current first aid certificate is held by three members of staff.

Positive steps are taken by all members of staff to ensure that the kitchen is maintained to a high standard. Some staff have undertaken food hygiene training. Healthy snacks are prepared in the kitchen by staff and parent helpers. Clear written guidelines ensure that food is prepared carefully and properly using correct procedures. Individual dietary requirements and allergies are clearly recorded in written agreements from parents and respected, further reminders are displayed near to the snack bar on a list. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the session and ensures that children remain well hydrated. The children enjoy a relaxed and social snack time where food is attractively laid out to look appealing. Children gain good skills as they pour milk and offer fruit to one another. Staff sit with children role modelling good table manners and explaining the benefit of healthy and nutritious food. This reinforces children's understanding of healthy eating.

Children have access to fresh air for 30 minutes during every session. They exercise as they use a range of equipment, such as, the climbing frame, ride-on toys, hula hoops, bats and beanbags. In colder months or severe rain, staff plan action songs and obstacle courses inside to ensure that children gain some exercise. Children enjoy a range of planned trips, including walks and the animal adventure park. Children demonstrate increasing control while placing small puzzle pieces together, using a variety of mark marking tools and while practising their cutting skills to help them develop their hand-eye coordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The building is made welcoming with displays and posters on the walls and children have access to a suitable range of toys and equipment which meet safety standards. Children are able to move around freely and independently and access their preferred activities from those provided by staff and those stored in the child-friendly storage. When playing outside children benefit from a well-established grassed play area, which enables them to engage in different activities in safety.

Staff are vigilant in their daily risk assessments and maintain equipment well through good procedures to ensure that hazards to children are minimised. Children are kept safe on regular outings with good adult to child ratios and forward planning. Written consents are obtained from parents for all outings. The premises are secure and arrival and collection times are managed safely and effectively with one member of staff operating the door. Regular fire drills that are documented ensure that children know what to do in the event of a fire. Fire prevention equipment is all in place and checked regularly.

Children are protected well from harm as staff have a good understanding of their role in safeguarding children. Relevant documentation is all readily available which ensures correct procedures can be put into place should a concern arise. Staff have good knowledge of safeguarding issues, this is underpinned by relevant training and ensures children's welfare is paramount.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well and separate from their parents and carers confidently or are supported sensitively by staff to do so. Children spend their time playing together in small and large groups with staff interacting and supporting them in their play. Staff are caring and value individual children's contributions to help them develop pride in their own achievements. For example, responding enthusiastically when a child proudly shows her carefully rolled paper cone to make herself an ice cream.

A good balance of free play and whole group activities keeps children interested and well motivated throughout the session. Children are becoming familiar with the routines of the session, which helps them develop their confidence and self-esteem as they happily engage in their preferred activities. Children confidently cooperate with staff and each other as they understand what is expected of them, for example, at 'tidy up time' or when lining up to go outside. Staff have consistent expectations of good behaviour to which the children respond well and they remind children to say please and thank you. Children are learning to share because staff praise them for waiting for their turn and reassure them that they will all get a go, for example, when waiting to be the seller on the ice cream stall.

Staff reflect some areas of the 'Birth to three matters' framework in their practice with under threes and are keen to further develop their knowledge. They are aware of the younger children's different needs and currently informally adapt or plan activities for this age group to ensure they are able to be fully involved throughout the session.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have an adequate knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn to provide a sufficient range of activities and play opportunities based on the six areas of learning. Planning identifies specific activities and resources within each area of learning on a weekly basis. However, this short term planning currently has no system in place to evaluate it against the identified stepping stone, therefore, the monitoring of children's learning is not effective. Furthermore, learning opportunities are not identified within the everyday routine curriculum or based on the stepping stones to identify children's intended learning. Consequently staff are not necessarily aware what children are expected to learn from an activity.

Staff use open ended questions to encourage children to become involved in activities. However, there is currently no use of focused activities which include adaptation and differentiation to ensure they provide sufficient challenges and suit particular needs of children within the group. Lack of specific learning objectives and adaptation means that children may not always be offered appropriate challenges to ensure they make progress and remain interested. An assessment system recording children's progress through the stepping stones is in place based upon general observations of children's play, staff effectively link these observations with the areas of learning and have started to consider children's next steps.

Children develop a sense of self-worth when proudly taking responsibility for given tasks such as handing out the plates and cups at snack time. They form good relationships with each other and play together well, interacting and negotiating with appropriate staff support. Most children are confident communicators, they are eager to speak during whole group activities and offer their own contributions during the story time when identifying characters in the book. Children are encouraged to mark make with set out resources during planned activities, however, they have little opportunities to free access writing resources within the rest of the room to allow them to practise and develop their early writing skills.

Children listen and respond to stories in a whole group and sometimes access books independently during the session to develop their enjoyment of books. Staff encourage the children to count how many grapes are on their plate at snack time and they are beginning to develop some simple problem solving skills. Children enjoy joining in with number activities, such as, counting out bricks to fill number pockets on the number snake, with some children confidently responding to 'how many left?' Children explore capacity during planned activities with water and sand, although they do not have frequent opportunities to engage in exploring and investigating other materials to develop their natural curiosity, other than using play dough.

Children enjoy having regular opportunities to operate simple everyday equipment, such as, tills and a tape player. They have frequent opportunities to use the computer and are developing basic skills using the mouse. Children design and build using construction kits, such as, 'duplo' and 'train sets'. They explore change, for example, while looking at the weather during registration.

Children enjoy using their imagination based on their own experiences while using the role play area and the dressing up clothes. They take part in regular planned craft activities, which can be very adult-led, giving them the opportunity to explore their own creativity. Children have planned opportunities to use musical instruments and they enjoy joining in with their favourite songs and rhymes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the setting. Staff value their individual personalities and ensure all children are able to play with toys and equipment which meet their individual needs, so they can become confident and independent. Photographs of the children, individual coat pegs and displays of their art work helps them to develop a good sense of belonging. The provision has effective arrangements in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and staff work in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific needs are met.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are learning right from wrong and show concern for others through the use of effective strategies. For example, praising children's helpfulness and kindness to others. Children are learning effective strategies to manage their own behaviour, such as, being reminded to think about the rules and not run in the hall. Children understand the rules of the group and explain them to others, children actively encourage others to participate at tidy up time. Children have meaningful opportunities to learn about the wider world and other cultures through festivals and celebrations.

Partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is good. All the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are looked after according

to their parents' wishes. Parents are invited to view the policies and procedures to inform them about the running of the pre-school and they receive a welcome pack offering an overview and information about the staff. Children benefit from the good relationships fostered with parents. Information is exchanged verbally on a daily basis to ensure children's changing needs are met and to provide continuity of care. Newsletters and displays are used to provide further information to parents about the Foundation Stage and what their children are learning. Parents are asked to contribute to their children's records of progress, which are regularly shared with them; they are invited to discuss their child's progress with the staff. Parents are very complimentary about the care and education provided and the good progress made by their children. They have very friendly relationships with the staff and are never in a hurry to leave. Most parents' names regularly feature on the parent helper rota, which demonstrates their commitment to becoming involved in the setting. The pre-school makes parents aware how they can make a complaint and are aware of their duty to log complaints, should they ever receive any.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for well by suitable adults who are motivated, dedicated and have had all the necessary checks to ensure children's safety. Good and effective policies that are shared well with parents are in place to support staff and ensure their well-being. Children are settled and secure as ratios are sufficiently maintained and the environment is organised and welcoming. Children's care, learning and play are supported well by the policies and procedures within the operational plan. All documents are in place to support the smooth running of the pre-school and these are regularly reviewed and stored securely. Staff are well qualified and work closely with the management committee to form a strong cohesive team.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The group has undergone several changes in senior staff and intense early years training has recently been successfully completed by the supervisor and her deputy. Staff meetings are beginning to effectively involve all staff in the development of planning and assessment. However, due to the recommendations and areas of development raised within planning under quality of teaching, it is felt the group still need to work further to ensure they become effective in the monitoring and evaluation of nursery education. Staff have appraisals to identify their strengths, weaknesses and areas for professional development. All staff value the support provided by the Early Education Support Teacher and generally reflect on her advice to improve their practice. The group share information with the local school reception teacher to ease children's transition into the school.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection three recommendations were raised. Firstly, develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development. Staff have attended training and written policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated to ensure all staff now have the skills and knowledge to manage children's behaviour appropriately. Secondly, ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. The group have purchased lots of new resources and have developed more opportunities for children to take part in activities which develop their understanding of cultures and traditions in the wider community. Thirdly, ensure that there are effective

procedures in place for checking that staff are suitably qualified and/or experienced to work with children. They have reviewed and updated all their recruitment and vetting procedures to a satisfactory level, this ensures all checks are in place to ascertain the suitability of staff and check any qualifications.

The previous nursery education inspection raised three weaknesses. Firstly, develop the use of assessments so that individual children's achievements are recorded and used to identify areas of progression in plans and are shared with parents. Children's records are now well established and clearly identify children's achievements, further work is underway to introduce children's next steps into the planning. Parents are fully aware they can access their children's records and opportunities are planned to share these records at set intervals throughout the year. Secondly, improve planning so that activities effectively create challenges for children across the curriculum, in particular, motivate children to make progress in early problem solving and mathematical development. Recent funding was used to purchase resources and equipment which promotes problem solving and mathematical development, for example, a number snake and counting stories. Staff frequently question children and extend their thinking, encouraging them to problem solve in their everyday learning. Thirdly, improve the staff's knowledge of how to question children effectively so that they are encouraged to fully participate and able to communicate their own ideas. Staff have recently completed early years qualifications, this has helped to develop their knowledge about how children learn and further developed their questioning skills with children. Children are given time to respond to questions and develop effective communications.

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

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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 satisfactory.

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):

- ensure written parental permission is obtained for seeking emergency medical advice and treatment

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):

- ensure planning identifies learning opportunities within the everyday routine curriculum
- introduce evaluation into short term planning to effectively monitor children's learning against the identified stepping stone
- develop adult focussed activities which include adaptation and differentiation to ensure they provide sufficient challenges and suit particular needs of children
- provide further opportunities for children to mark make and develop early writing skills in other areas of the room.

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