

Alpha Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY283938
Inspection date	18 December 2007
Inspector	Elizabeth Ellen Mackey
Setting Address	198 Woodside Green, South Norwood, London, SE25 5EW
Telephone number	07956 813 466
E-mail	
Registered person	Yetunde Adedotun Osonaike
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 satisfactory. 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?

Alpha Day Nursery opened in 2004. It operates from a detached house located on a main road in South Norwood. Another nursery operated by the same provider is based in Thornton Heath.

The nursery's opening hours are from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday for fifty weeks of the year.

There are currently 39 children from six months to five years old on roll. Of these nine children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery has experience of supporting children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 staff and the provider also works at the setting. All staff have relevant childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority through an Early Years Advisor

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through the daily routine. They wash their hands appropriately and routinely. However for younger children, their hands are wiped by staff with baby wipes, which does not help children to develop effective hand washing routines with soap and water. Staff follow effective hygiene procedures such as washing the changing mat between nappy changes and wearing disposable gloves and aprons, this helps to prevent cross-contamination.

Children are learning about healthy eating because they are offered a good variety of nutritious meals and snacks. Children's dietary needs are clearly identified and adhered to. Jugs of drinking water are available for children to access in all rooms. This is not effective in the baby room as children do not have their own accessible beakers; they may not be able to make their needs known to ask or indicate they need a drink.

Parents' consent is gained to seek emergency medical treatment and children's health requirements are recorded. These are complied with to help keep children healthy. All staff have received first aid training, which means there is no delay in staff administering first aid if the need arises. A record is maintained of any accidents or incidents which is countersigned by parents to ensure they are informed. The settings medication procedures do not comply with regulation nor are they in line with their own policy. The settings policy states that only prescribed medication is administered and with prior parental consent. However records show that non prescribed medication is given, for example cough medicine and in some case for long periods as well as medicine administered following verbal consent from parents. This is a breach of regulation and poses a potential health risk to children.

The Birth to three matters framework and the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage of learning are used well to ensure children's physical development is planned and promoted indoors and outdoors. Children enjoy daily physical activity where they use a range of equipment, such as bikes, climbing frames and balancing apparatus. Children are able to move independently in the setting and rest according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a generally clean and well maintained building. Children are supervised by a vigilant staff team who ensure that the play resources and equipment used are age appropriate and suitable; this enables children to play safely. Fire safety equipment is in place and regularly maintained including extinguishes and a fire blanket located in the kitchen. Children and staff regularly practice fire drills, so that children know how to respond appropriately in the event of emergency evacuation of the premises.

Children are kept safe should child protection concerns arise, because all staff have attended child protection training. Children's safety and security are promoted well, because good systems are in place, especially at arrival and departure times. Children's safety is also promoted through appropriate records being kept, including details of any accidents that may occur. The building is secure and can only be accessed through the main door, visitors and staff sign in. Risks have been identified and measures put in place to minimise accidental injury. For example, all electrical

sockets are covered and internal doors have a bell that must be rung before entering to prevent it coming into contact with children who may be on the other side.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff provide a good range of resources for children, who are able to choose from different activities when they arrive. Children share good relationships with each other and some are keen to play together. Children benefit from a familiar daily routine that helps them feel secure, but which is flexible enough to follow their needs, such as when they need to have a morning nap. Staff join in with children's play and children enjoy spending time with them, cuddling up for a story or sharing pictures and talking about the members in their family. Staff work to an established system for using the Birth to three matters framework to plan activities for children under three years old and to make assessments of their progress.

Children are confident within the setting and have built secure relationships with the staff. Most arrive happily and quickly settle at an activity. Staff interact in a supportive and warm manner with children and have a secure knowledge of child development which improves children's achievements and supports their emotional development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The activities are related to each area of learning in the Foundation Stage. The interaction from staff and polite manner sets a good example to the children. They give the children a good balance of free play and guided choices and allow them time to solve problems. This allows the children to practise and consolidate their learning. Observations of the children are used to understand the child's starting point, their progress and their next steps for learning. Next steps are also reviewed so there is a clear record of whether children actually achieved the aim. This is recorded in a Foundation Stage profile and used to inform the planning. The staff have regular discussions about the children and know them well, activities are then implemented to sustain children's interests and development.

Children concentrate well and are proud of their achievements. They are confident and are happy to ask questions, use their imagination and find solutions to problems. The children work co-operatively, for example, when they become involved in imaginary play. The children are involved in the every day routine and help to tidy up before lunch time. Children are familiar with shapes, numbers and colours. Most children know and can write their full name and they can spot letters in story books. Children have access to a variety of graphic materials and confidently attempt to write. Staff encourage the children to participate in story time by testing their recall of the story, children eagerly respond to this. Children learn to sort, count, compare, when threading beads and build construction. They have opportunities to build sequencing puzzles; count and sort measure and access educational computer games.

Children bring construction materials into their imaginative play, by making pretend mobile phones. Children ask staff to make a mobile for herself and confidently tell her, how many and the shapes of the construction she needs. Children learn about the world around them and are introduced to a variety of cultures and traditions through good topic based activities and appropriate resources. They look at their own growth and their family life. They use dressing up games to practice skills such as doing up buttons and zips.

Good planning ensures activities are well planned, purposeful with clear learning aims. Activities are planned to follow children's interest. Children have enjoyed some interesting themes including autumn and harvest, where they planted seeds in the garden. The garden is not used to its full potential and currently only offers a resources for children's physical development.

Children use their imagination very well playing with role play resources. They become very engrossed in their play, children join in as the game develops. The children are provided with a variety of musical experiences, for example, exploring instruments from around the world, they listen to music whilst dressing up in costumes. They develop good levels of hand eye co-ordination through using small tools such as scissors and pencils.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The nursery offers an inclusive service and it is fully committed to ensuring all children are welcomed. Staff liaise closely with parents and when required, other professionals to help them effectively support children in the setting. Staff are very proactive at working with parents and invite them to join in celebrations with their children, for example the children recently performed a nativity which parents came to see. Detailed reports and parents meetings keep them up to date with their children's progress.

Children become aware of the wider world through a good range of resources reflecting diversity and the recognition of customs and celebrations from many cultures. The nursery recently celebrated international day which was attended by parents, children, extended family members and staff. Many people dressed in their traditional dress and a wide range of cultural foods and customs were shared and celebrated.

The behaviour of the children is good. Staff remind children about sharing and they respond positively to this. Children also respond well to familiar triggers, such as 'tidy up time' or line up to go outside. Children understand the boundaries in place and staff have implemented a consistent approach to managing behaviour which, promotes good behaviour.

Children are cared for by staff who work closely with parents to meet their individual needs. Children experience a sense of belonging as they have their work valued and displayed. In addition to written records, a photographic record is made of the children that they take with them when they leave. Children also have photographs of themselves and their family members with them in the setting which builds their self esteem and helps them to feel secure.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive regular information about how their child is progressing. A good range of policies and procedures are shared with parents and children's records are kept secure. Information regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum and the Birth to three framework are displayed on notice boards. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the life of the nursery. They are very happy with the care their children receive and contribute positive comments about how their children are settled and enjoy coming to the nursery.

The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting is well organised, with play and learning areas are effectively divided to create different areas for learning. Resources are well arranged at child eye level and easily accessible, creating and interactive environment. This does not extend to the outdoor area which is under developed.

Children organise themselves well in small groups around tables, developing their social skills. The routine is set so that children have periods of independent and free play sessions as well as active and rest times. Arrangements for drinks and meals are less well organised. Younger children can not independently access drinks and they are not encouraged to develop good hygiene routines prior to meals. Childrens meals are served to them which means, more able children do not develop independence in this area.

There are good systems in place keep children safe inside and children are cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been vetted, however a recommendation is made for the recruitment procedure to be further developed to ensure it is robust. Most policies and procedures are in place and work well in practice, however the system for administration of medication does not meet regulation. The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. There is a strong commitment to develop the provision and effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate teaching. The nursery participate in the Foundation Stage curriculum and staff are supported by regular meetings where planning is discussed. The provider successfully oversees the delivery of the curriculum and provides opportunities to support staff in their professional development. The nursery welcomes the support of the early years development worker, this improves the quality of care and education for children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to improve procedures to ensure hygienic nappy changing. Nappy changing procedures are carried out hygienically, this promotes healthy outcomes for children. The provider also agreed to improve the details in the record of attendance and ensure staff ratios were adhered to at all times. Children's safety is improved because staff ratio's are adhered to and the record of attendance clearly shows children's hours of attendance and the names of the adults caring for them.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received two complaints that required the provider or Ofsted to take action in order to meet the National Standards. The complaints related to National Standard 1: Suitable person, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 4: Physical environment, National Standard 6: Safety, National Standard 11: Behaviour, National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers.

The first complaint raised concerns regarding adult child ratios, the number of children sleeping in one room and that parents were not able enter the setting when collecting their children. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to discuss the concerns and from the subsequent investigation, an action was set under National Standard 2. The provider responded to Ofsted to confirm that suitable measures had been taken to meet the action set. The provider met the

National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

The second complaint raised concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour management. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to discuss the concerns and asked the provider to investigate. A response was received from the provider with full details of their investigation and the action taken to ensure that the National Standards are met. Ofsted was satisfied with the response and the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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.

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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):

- comply with the regulations for medication and ensure practice is consistent with the settings policy
- improve hand washing procedures and ensure all children develop good hand washing routines
- improve recruitment procedures to ensure they are robust and include systems to check staff's ongoing suitability
- ensure the system to make available drinking water at all times, is appropriate for 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):

- develop the outdoor area to provide an environment which provides greater learning opportunities for children
- provide more opportunities for children to develop independence at mealtimes

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