

Alpha Afterschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY292389
Inspection date	27 June 2008
Inspector	Silvia Richardson
Setting Address	Deansfield Primary School, Dairsie Road, London, SE9 1XP
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Registered person	Muibat Popoola
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Alpha after school and holiday club is one of three out of school groups owned and managed by the same provider. Alpha Afterschool, Deansfield, has been registered since September 2004 and operates from Deansfield primary school in Eltham. Children attend from Deansfield, Eltham

Church of England and Gordon schools. The Alpha club is open term times from 07:30 to 09:20 as a breakfast club, and 15:30 to 18:30 as an after school club. During the school holidays the group is open Monday to Friday from 08:15 to 18:15. The group is registered to provide care for a maximum of 40 children at any one time. There are currently 40 children on roll, aged from four to eleven years. Children attend various sessions. The group supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. A minimum of three staff work directly with the children. The provider and management team hold relevant qualifications. The setting receives support from Greenwich Early Years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing good personal hygiene habits, because adults encourage hand washing as part of their routines. Children understand how germs are spread and make reference to the posters displayed in the toilets. They have easy access to soap and paper towels, helping them to be independent. If children are sick or feeling unwell, there is a side room where they can rest away from the other children until collected. Jugs of water are left out on a table with a stack of cups, so children may help themselves to drinks at any time. Arrangements for tea are relaxed and sociable, with children sitting together as a group. They enjoy a variety of nutritious, cooked meals and a selection of different fruits. Children have some idea about which foods are healthy and those which are less beneficial, but their knowledge is not secure, because they are not talking about healthy eating regularly as part of tea times. Children's health is compromised to some extent, because food handling and hygiene procedures are not consistently followed when preparing meals. Arrangements are unhygienic because adults are not wearing protective clothing, such as aprons, when cooking and serving food, increasing the risk of cross contamination. Children have some good opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise because outside activities are scheduled every session.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and move around the premises safely, because daily risk assessment is used effectively to minimise hazards. Adults use a check list, that includes ensuring both inside and outside areas are safe and that equipment remains suitable. Children practise fire drills, so that they know what to do and how to stay safe in the event of emergency evacuation of the premises. Adults keep records of fire drills, so that they can evaluate any difficulties and take steps to improve safety. Children are well supervised, helping to keep them safe. Adults provide guidance and instruction, such as encouraging children to form orderly lines, so that children develop awareness of moving around safely and self discipline. Arrangements are in place to protect children from the sun and parents are asked to provide cream and sun hats. At least one adult working on the premises is trained in first aid, which means children receive appropriate care should an accident occur. Any accidents or incidents are recorded and details are shared with parents, promoting children's welfare. Children are kept safe and protected should safeguarding concerns arise, because the manager has attended training, knows what to look out for and how to make a referral if worried about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy and settled, because adults create a welcoming and relaxed environment. Children enjoy playing with their friends and particularly like role play, organising themselves in make-believe games, such as playing families or schools. There are very few quality resources for imaginary play, so children tend to adapt, such as 'pretend ironing' a piece of cardboard. The role play area is unattractively presented and there are few materials to extend children's ideas, such as notepads, pens and realistic domestic equipment. However, children enjoy talking to and playing imaginatively with each other, engaging in role play dialogue. Board games are put out on the tables in their boxes, so that children can choose a

game to play, but again, no other additional resources are supplied, for example, for children to keep scores or draw up a list of turns. A small range of construction resources are set out and these are largely ignored, because they are not arranged effectively to attract children's interest.

Drawing and colouring is a popular activity and children have a few sheets of paper, some templates to draw around, a pot of fibre-tip pens and coloured pencils. Children's creative play opportunities are somewhat limited, because there are insufficient materials and resources available for children to make things of their own design. Additionally, colouring and dot to dot books are set out for shared use, rather than children having their own books, enabling them to take pride in and own an individual piece of creative work. Adults respond to children's requests for resources and play activities, but are not proactively thinking about how they can extend and enhance children's play ideas, especially through the provision of a wider range of supporting resources. Adults sit with the children while they are playing, so that they get plenty of attention. Adults relate warmly to children and relationships are positive, helping children to settle and feel secure.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

A small range of resources are provided that reflect diversity and images of differences, such as dolls and books, supporting children in developing a positive identity. However, the range of books is situated away from the area where children sit and relax, so they tend not to select books or reading for pleasure as an activity. Adults create an inclusive environment, in that all children find something to do and adults sit with them, so that they feel able to play and join in group activities. The arrangements for tea are effective, enabling all children to sit together comfortably and share a social setting. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities integrate successfully, because adults support individual children very well. Children are very well behaved, cooperative, friendly and sociable, because adults provide good role models and have high expectations for behaviour. Parents are greeted warmly and adults establish positive relationships with them, promoting children's welfare. Adults would like parents to become more involved in the after school group, but do not really have strategies in place for encouraging parents and carers to make a positive contribution to children's play and learning. They receive some useful information about activities, so they know what is planned for their children in the after school and holiday clubs.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Adults are properly vetted, ensuring they are suitable to look after children. A good ratio of qualified staff and assistants are employed, so that children receive appropriate levels of support and supervision. Adults are well deployed both in the hall and in the playground, so that they are available to play with the children and talk to them about what they are doing. Records, policies and procedures are in place, ensuring the safe and efficient management of the setting. These are implemented effectively, so that children's care and welfare are actively promoted. The hall is reasonably well organised, so that there is a range of activities from which children make choices. However, a limited range of resources are set out and these are unattractively arranged and presented, so they are not being used to their full extent to promote children's enjoyment and achievement. Additional resources are available in storage and children feel able to ask for these. On the whole, however, adults are not proactive in planning, organising

and making easily accessible a stimulating range of activities and play materials, so that children enjoy play opportunities that enhance their learning, creative skills and imagination. Space is generally well utilised, so that children can spread out and play happily together in small groups. However, the popular drawing table is a little squashed in the corner, reducing the number of children who can play comfortably around the table. Also arrangements are not providing sufficient space for a wider range and variety of creative tools and equipment. Weaknesses in play provision are not adversely impacting on children's care and welfare and overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the provider has attended to three actions to meet National Standards 1: Suitable person, 6: Safety and 7: Health. The provider is ensuring they only care for children within the age range for which they are registered and that adult to child ratios are maintained. Daily risk assessments are effective in ensuring hazards to children are minimised and arrangements are in place to protect children from the sun, including requesting parents to provide sun hats and protective cream.

Since the last inspection, the provider has addressed five recommendations to improve the quality and standards of care provided. Written consent is obtained from parents to administer medication to children, promoting their health. Regular fire evacuation procedures are carried out and recorded, helping to keep children safe. The manager has improved knowledge of child protection issues and has obtained the appropriate guidelines, helping to safeguard children. Staff are clearer about their roles in helping children to enjoy and achieve and have developed positive behaviour management strategies.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been two complaints made to Ofsted 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 6: Safety and National Standard 7: Health.

The first complaint raised concerns relating to the safe transport of children to and from the setting. An unannounced visit to the provider took place and, as a result, two actions were set under National Standard 6 and National Standard 7. These actions were subsequently met by the provider.

The second complaint raised concerns that the provision had relocated to a new area of the school without informing Ofsted and that there were younger children attending the provision than the registration allowed. Further concerns were raised regarding safety and health. Ofsted asked the provider to conduct an investigation and report back. A response was received from the provider, but this was not sufficient and the provider was set actions under National Standard 1, National Standard 6 and National Standard 7. A further response was received confirming that appropriate action had been taken in order to meet the National Standards. Ofsted took no further action in this matter. 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 QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

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):

- promote the good health of children, ensuring proper food handling and hygiene procedures are followed when preparing and serving meals; and develop children's knowledge and understanding of healthy eating
- plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's capabilities
- organise space and resources to effectively meet the children's play needs

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