

Alphabet City Day Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY350884
Inspection date	02 May 2008
Inspector	Melissa Cox
Setting Address	Alphabet City Day Nursery Ltd, Highfield, Sherborne Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 5TG
Telephone number	01256 322 090
E-mail	
Registered person	Alphabet City Day Nursery Ltd
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?

Alphabet City Day Nursery Ltd was registered with the present owner in 2007. The nursery is located in a large house within walking distance of Basingstoke town centre. Children are cared for in three main playrooms, according to their age and ability. In addition, there are kitchen, nappy changing, laundry, toileting and sleeping facilities, with separate staff facilities and an office. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. A maximum of 39 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 45 children on roll. Of these, 23 receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 16 members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and several are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff follow good procedures to ensure children's health is promoted. Tables are wiped between activities and toilets are checked throughout the day to ensure that they remain clean for children to use. Staff ensure nappy changing areas are clean and well equipped and adopt good procedures during these routines which prevent cross infection. Children learn the importance of hygiene routines, washing their hands appropriately before they eat, although they do not have access to liquid soap. They discuss the importance of hand washing to 'get rid of germs' and show good independence during this routine.

Children are appropriately nourished. They take plenty of fluids, as staff encourage them to drink water or milk at snack, and fresh drinking water is always available to them. Appropriate information has been obtained from parents about any special dietary needs and staff ensure those children are fully included at snack time. Children have an opportunity to stay for lunch club and have the option of bringing their own packed lunch or having a home cooked meal.

All required regulatory paperwork to ensure children's health, is maintained. All staff have current first aid qualifications, and records of accidents are shared appropriately with parents. Medication is only administered with written instructions and consent from parents and the record is signed by them to acknowledge every entry. There is a clear sickness policy which further ensures the children's good health.

Children benefit from daily fresh air and regular exercise, as they make use of the outdoor environment, local parks and trips into town. They enjoy their time in the garden where they run freely, play with sand or ride wheeled toys. Children take risks as they climb on the play equipment showing increasing co-ordination and skill, for example, as they slide down the slide or swing from the climbing frame.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have access to a classrooms which are welcoming and bright with displays of previous work on the walls. Children have access to a good range of toys and play materials which staff prepare for them at the beginning of the session with some resources organised to be accessible to the children. Children are confident to move around the setting and choose what interests them, for example, working on the computer or playing with the Happy street people.

Children are well supervised by staff at all times, who take good measures to reduce potential risks around the building, both inside and outside. Written risk assessments are carried out and these are supported by detailed policies and procedures to ensure that the staff are consistent in keeping children safe. Fire drills are practised regularly and the nursery ensure that they have an emergency bag on hand containing necessary equipment and resources to make the children comfortable during this routine. The nursery has suitable security arrangements in place and parents and visitors are let in and out and are challenged if staff do not know them.

Children are effectively safeguarded because staff clearly understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. They have a working knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms which would cause concern and how to manage

these. Supporting documentation is available, shared with parents and maintained to a high standard.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and young children are cared for by consistent staff in appropriate base rooms. As a result they feel safe and secure and are developing good relationships with staff. Staff in all rooms put in place suitable daily routines that include busy and quiet times, ensuring that babies have the opportunity to rest and sleep when they need to. A good range of creative play is offered and they particularly enjoy experimenting with sound as they shake the musical bottles, making loud and soft sounds.

Staff are responsive to babies individual needs and ensure they are fully informed of home routines which they try to follow in the nursery. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework as a focus for planning suitable activities for young children. Regular observations and assessments of children's progress are used to identify the next steps in learning. Older toddlers enjoy playing with plastic animals and have good opportunities to access crafts. Staff link well with parents and other room supervisors in deciding when it is appropriate for a child to progress to the next room.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound understanding of how children learn through play and they plan a broad, balanced range of practical activities each session. Most children are happy and settled and are confident when around staff and other children. Children have access to two adjoining play rooms where a range of floor and table top activities are available for them. Areas of play include the role play area, book corner, writing area and creative play. Sessions offer a suitable balance between adult led and free choice. Staff use weekly plans to identify structured activities and learning intentions. However children are not always grouped appropriately resulting in some children not being sufficiently challenged to extend their learning or less able not sufficiently supported.

Children are gaining in confidence as they independently access resources, feed themselves at meal times and meet their own needs for personal hygiene. They are learning to share and take turns and staff plan activities that support this learning, for instance in waiting for a turn to play on the computer. Children are developing good relationships with each other and several sit together and discuss what Minnie Mouse wants for snack time. All children enjoy themselves at the nursery and the activities offered are fun and enjoyable.

Children are gaining confidence as they speak and communicate with others. Staff encourage this by giving them the opportunity to share news at circle time. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. However large numbers of children present during whole group story time results in some younger children losing interest. Children enjoy some mark making with pencils, crayons and chalk. Children are gaining confidence and an understanding of technology as they use the computer and other programmable toys. They learn about growth and change as they watch tadpoles mature in a tank in their outdoor area. Most children respond appropriately and show satisfactory levels of concentration throughout the session. Overall children are making sound progress in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into the nursery by staff making the children feel valued. They show familiarity with this routine and settle fairly well. They have access to appropriate resources within their natural play which reflect positive images of society, such as puzzles, dolls and books. Religious and festival dates are celebrated, for example, Diwali, Chinese New Year and Easter. This ensures children learn about traditional celebrations and learn about other people's way of life and helps to promote understanding and acceptance. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are adequately supported as staff are beginning to work more closely with parents and other parties. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Behaviour in the nursery is satisfactory. Children generally manage their behaviour appropriately and understand their actions affect others. Staff provide lots of praise and encouragement to support and develop children's self-esteem and confidence through the use of rewards to promote tidying up or encouraging good manners. However, on some occasions children become restless during the session, for example, waiting for snack and staff attempts to manage their behaviour are less successful.

The nursery shares information with parents which is available on the notice boards or through newsletters and which includes details of topic work and themes. Parents of younger children are given colourful books containing information about their child, including photographs and daily entries. Parents speak readily of their satisfaction with the care the children receive. They comment on the support they receive from staff who always make the make time to be available to talk to them. Parents are made aware that the group have an open door policy and are encouraged to spend as much time as they like at the setting.

Partnership with parents of nursery education children is satisfactory. Parents take the opportunity of talking to staff about their child's achievements and progress, daily on arrival or collection. There are further opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress, however the group does not provide regular opportunities for all parents as to how they can be more involved in their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a well organised setting. Effective and robust recruitment and vetting procedures help to keep children safe. Staff ensure that all people working with children are fully vetted and assessed. New staff undergo comprehensive induction procedures that include policies and procedures and health and safety issues among others. All staff are encouraged to develop their skills through ongoing training. Space is organised very creatively to offer opportunities for children to play safely and enjoy a variety of activities. Day to day organisation of the nursery is effective in meeting children's needs. Comprehensive and well organised documentation is in place. Policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. While there are some weaknesses in the delivery of nursery education senior staff are fully aware of and keen to address them. The manager and owner have a positive aim for the setting and have high

expectations of the whole staff team. Staff working with the children are enthusiastic and consistently work to promote the children's well being. Self-evaluation is continuous and detailed action plans have been developed covering all aspects of the curriculum to ensure that improvement for children's learning is on-going. The staff team work well together and have a good professional relationship, which enables them to motivate children and so they progress well. Systems are being developed to monitor the staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage and their implementation of it but are not always used to identify ways to improve teaching. As a result children are making satisfactory progress in their learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

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:

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):

- develop staff's awareness and understanding and implementation of effective ways to manage children's behaviour in the 3-5 room, taking into account their age and stage of development

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):

- provide a stimulating range of activities and experiences daily, which challenges children appropriately in their learning
- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation stage to improve the quality of teaching and children's learning in all areas
- ensure information about the activities provided for the children and the children's development is shared on a more regular basis with parents

- improve systems to monitor and evaluate teaching and the curriculum

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