

# Alpha Kindergarten School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY284159  
**Inspection date** 30/07/2009  
**Inspector** Sandra Hornsby

**Setting address** 66 Fletton Avenue, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2  
8AU

**Telephone number** 01733 311080

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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

## Description of the setting

Alpha Kindergarten School is one of two privately owned settings run by Alpha School Kindergarten Limited, both of which are located in Peterborough. It originally opened in March 2001 and transferred to its current ownership in June 2004. The nursery is located in Fletton, close to Peterborough city centre. The provision serves the local area and operates from a two-storey building. It has good access for users of the provision. The provision operates five days a week from 08.00 until 18.00, all year round, with the exception of bank holidays.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 113 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 101 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. This provision offers funding for the two year old pathfinder grant as well as the three and four year old nursery education funding. The setting has systems in place to support children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 25 members of staff. Of these, 22 are core staff working daily with the children, whilst three are relief staff available for covering absences. Most staff hold an early years qualification to Level 2 or 3. One member of staff holds a level 5 qualification and two staff are working towards an Early Years Foundation degree. The setting receives support from a pedagogical support officer and childcare adviser from within the Peterborough Sure Start Strategic Partnership. The nursery are members of the National Day Nursery Association.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The uniqueness and individuality of each child is recognised and valued by staff. All children are offered the most appropriate support for their needs, sometimes including working with parents and other agencies, no child is disadvantaged. All children make good progress because most staff have good knowledge of supporting children's learning and development through observations and individual planning. Children's emotional well-being and welfare needs are met to a good standard and children are welcomed into a happy, relaxed, colourful environment. The management team have excellent knowledge about the settings' strengths and weaknesses and are extremely pro-active in monitoring, reflecting and implementing changes and systems for sustained improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- continue to develop knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements in the Early Years Foundation Stage to enable staff to use children's assessment consistently, inform planning and make

effective use of activities, especially relating to role play areas.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

Good quality leadership and management enables the setting to run smoothly and efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Good quality policies, procedures and record maintenance make sure children's needs are identified and met to a very good standard. Risk assessments are managed and organised very well as all staff are involved in identifying hazards and eliminating risks. This means children are cared for in a safe environment. Vetting procedures for those who work with children are robust. Staff are efficiently and effectively deployed and deputies support staff on a day to day basis. Regular appraisals, team meetings and training help to keep staff up-to-date with current practices, new systems and regulatory changes. The management team strive for a high quality provision and continue to invest time to ensure they provide good quality care and education to all children. Regular monitoring and quality checks are undertaken and they identify and prioritise improvements that needs to be addressed and provide action plans with dates. These are realistic and enable staff and managers to make continuous improvements. Self-evaluation takes into consideration the views of parents, staff and children and is effective in further identifying strengths and weaknesses. The recommendation made at the last inspection and those issues identified by parents in a recent questionnaire have all been addressed positively.

Good links with other EYFS providers, the local authority and parents mean children's needs continue to be met to a very good standard. Parents are provided with good quality information about the provision and the EYFS. There is a good two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise between parents and all agencies involved in the children's care and learning. Regular meetings are organised and they share observations, records, photographs and children's profiles. This keeps parents up-to-date with their children's progress and supports continuity of care. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and they share their achievements on the 'growing tree'. These are used to form some of the next steps and individual planning for each child. Staff respect parents wishes thoughts and feelings about their children and work together to seek help and guidance where they both feel there is a need. Children are well supported by this relationship and their development progresses with the additional support of individual plans. There are effective systems in place and good links with other agencies to support children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It enables all children to meet their own learning goals, at their own pace regardless of their individual needs.

Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and reviewed by the staff team. The policies and procedures are managed and understood by staff and are effective in identifying any child at risk of harm or neglect. Appropriate information and contact details are in place so staff have information to hand to prevent there being a delay in getting the most appropriate care. Named contacts for the collection of children are on children's files and good security on entering the provision further protects children.

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff have a positive impact on the children's learning and development and are implementing effective systems to enable children to progress well. Most of the staff have good knowledge about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning and development requirements, and understand how to support children's learning through play. Staff carry out regular observations of the children as they play and these are added to children's individual assessments to inform planning and identify the next steps in each child's learning. This is a new system implemented recently and being rolled out to the staff gradually. Most staff have grasped these new systems and children are making good progress in a warm, welcoming, interesting environment. Some staff have less confidence, however they are supported well by room leaders to ensure children still make good progress and enjoy their time at nursery.

Babies are offered eye contact, lots of smiles and help to participate in activities without interfering, and children feel confident and safe in the setting. They show a healthy relationship and dependence on the staff they are familiar with and all children are secure with their keyworkers and enjoy the company of staff and peers. Children play in an environment that is, on the whole, well organised and offers children a good range and selection of age-appropriate equipment which covers, in breadth, the six areas of learning. Draping curtains, soft music and cosy book corners help children to feel secure and comfortable and encourage children to use their environment in different ways. Interesting treasure boxes and hanging sensory equipment means babies explore their setting and use all their senses. Children use a sensory room where they watch lights, listen to sounds and relax in an environment that is safe and warm, this supports children's emotional well-being. Role play areas are less well resourced, but children still use their creative imagination well and play doctors and wash babies and involve their peers in role play games. Staff involve themselves in games when they are invited and pose questions to children, this helps them to think about what they are doing. Staff help children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to access and use all the equipment to explore, experiment and understand their feelings and support their learning and development. Staff actively help children to take, sometimes small, but significant steps in their continuing development as they are aware of children's individual needs and uniqueness and plan individually. Older children are suitably challenged as staff use questioning, offer interesting experiences and enable them to make choices and decisions about their play, promoting their independence. Children have access to well stocked book corners and ample writing and mark making material. They see their names, labels and posters around the rooms so they begin to understand that words have meaning. Labels and signs are written in different languages. Children freely paint and draw pictures which are displayed for others to admire and enjoy. Babies are encouraged to take their first steps to mark-making as they use brushes to draw patterns in rice and make patterns in food with their fingers. Posters and puzzles show children from different countries, wearing different clothes and head-dress. Children acknowledge and celebrate different religious festivals and have food from different countries. This helps children to understand and appreciate diversity, their

friends, the community and the world around them. There are free-flow opportunities for children to use the garden and inside areas. Tepees, climbing apparatus, and sit and ride equipment support children's physical development. Babies have home-style furniture and tunnels which support their early walking and develops confidence to pull themselves to stand and balance without fear. Staff organise the environment for young children to take supervised risks in their early physical development without getting hurt.

Children's health and welfare is promoted very well by staff. They share good hygiene procedures and staff act as role models, as children are beginning to understand about keeping healthy and each taking precautions to prevent cross-infection. For example, children throw away tissues after they have used them. Current information about the children's health and dietary requirements means children are treated according to their needs and uniqueness. Staff hold up-to-date first aid knowledge and can offer appropriate care in an emergency. Health menus and snacks ensure children are offered a variety of healthy foods. Children can choose what they want to have and make a decision about how hungry and thirsty they are. Children use outside play to further promote a healthy lifestyle. Hazards identified by staff are eliminated and children play in a safe environment. They are learning about keeping themselves safe as they practise fire drills and talk about not running because they might hurt their head. Children get along well, and enjoy the company of their peers. Children cuddle each other and read books together in the cosy corner. Children who have difficulty sharing are helped to understand turn taking by calm and caring staff who are patient and use children's interests to distract and help children understand about sharing and turn taking.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met