

Alphabet After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	203407
Inspection date	25/02/2009
Inspector	Philip Hewett
Setting address	St. Mary's School, St. Mary's Road, Kelvedon, Essex, CO5 9DS
Telephone number	07751 382315 + 0778 4728726
Email	
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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Alphabet After School Club opened in 2000. It operates from portacabins in the grounds of a school in the village of Kelvedon, Essex. All children share access to an outdoor play area. The setting serves the children attending the school on site. A maximum of 40 children aged four years to under eight years may attend at any one time. It is on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 99 children on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The club is prepared to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language. There is disabled access via a ramp.

The group opens five days a week during school term times and holidays. Sessions are from 07.45 until 09.00 for the breakfast club, 15.00 until 18.00 for the after school club and 08.00 until 18.00 for the holiday scheme.

The group employs six members of staff, four of whom have appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from 4Children, an organisation that advises out of school clubs. It works closely with the school and the pre-school on site.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Provision in the Alphabet After School Club is good and it meets the needs of early years children well. It has strengths in the friendly atmosphere and good range of resources. Children enjoy very good relationships with the staff and as a result feel valued and well cared for. In the main there are good links with the school to ensure the safe handover of children. The club is part of a quality assurance scheme with 4Children, and has engaged in a thorough process of self-evaluation in order to gain future accreditation. It is well led. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed effectively and as a result the setting has a good capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are understood by all
- ensure that planning takes account of all the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- liaise with the reception teacher in the school so that all parties can be aware of the progress made by the early years children

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Good leadership and management ensures that the club's very clear and thorough policies are followed effectively. Statutory vetting procedures for staff, risk assessments and procedures to ensure health and safety all meet requirements. For example, a suitable daily record of visual checks is kept to ensure that the premises and equipment is fit for purpose.

The club has a commitment to learning through play. There are good links with parents and the school which helps children to settle quickly. The manager and chairperson of the committee have already undertaken training and are taking account of the new government requirements to offer young children activities across the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting had identified the need for all members of staff to do this training and they are booked on to relevant training courses. At present the weekly themes and planning for sessions do not show how these areas can be addressed on a consistent basis. The club has a well-established system of key people to ensure that each child has someone who knows them really well and provides a point of contact for parents. However, there is scope to build on this aspect of provision because observations and assessments made of children's progress are not discussed with parents and the reception class teacher.

The club's management has made a commitment to gain accreditation through the 4Children quality assurance scheme. This means that all staff are involved in evaluating the club's effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. The management encourages all staff to attend relevant training courses on a regular basis. As a result the provision meets children's needs and secures their welfare and safety very effectively. Consequently parents are delighted with what the club offers their children and speak highly of the approachability and helpfulness of staff, resulting in a feeling of strong partnership.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The quality and standards of the early years provision in the after school club are good. It is housed in a mobile classroom and has the use of a second linked mobile next door, therefore the children have plenty of space for a wide variety of activities. The club room is attractive and good use is made of children's work in displays. A corner of the room has been turned into a kitchen area and enclosed behind cupboards and a work surface. This ensures that food can be prepared hygienically and safely while the club is in session. To ensure children's safety they are collected from a shared area inside the school building. The register is taken here and thorough checks made if children are unexpectedly absent. Staff are very aware of the needs of younger children and give them extra care and attention if needed. The children's behaviour is exemplary and this contributes particularly well to the safety and enjoyment of what they do as they play happily together. For example, children responded perfectly to an unannounced fire drill.

The staff join in with children's games, asking questions, encouraging language

skills and counting. They clearly have a very good relationship with the children and the children are enthusiastic about attending. A variety of activities are available including craft, computer games and table tennis with more vigorous games available in the school grounds just outside. Whilst children are encouraged to join in these vigorous games to promote their health and fitness they can choose to do quieter activities if they wish. For example, two children chose to go through some mathematics that one of them had found difficult in class, whilst another spent a considerable amount of time writing a story. Snack time is a pleasant social occasion where children sit together chatting while eating a freshly prepared healthy snack. Staff remind children about eating a healthy diet and the importance of washing their hands. Therefore children lead healthy lives at the club.

The club organises circle times so that the theme for the week can be discussed in greater detail. It takes advantage of a wide variety of festivals such as Christmas, Divali and Chinese New to have fun and increase children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The children's future economic well-being is supported well through helping them to work together in teams, the provision of information communication technology, and activities that encourage good progress in the development of language skills.

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

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

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.