

The Alphabet House Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 132242
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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).

Description of the setting

The Alphabet House Nursery School (Harold Road) is one of five privately owned nurseries run by Alphabet House Nursery Schools Limited. It opened in 1999 and operates from a purpose-built two storey building with six rooms. It is situated in a residential area in Upton Park, East London. Children have access to appropriate toilet facilities and can play in a large secure garden area under supervision.

The nursery is open on Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register to care for 60 children in the early years age group. There are currently 40 children from one month to under five years on roll. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 11 members of staff and, of these, nine, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting regularly supports volunteers and students. The nursery offers a Montessori approach with older children, and combines this method with the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The setting receives support from the area Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) via the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The setting has a very good understanding of all children as individuals which results in their welfare and learning needs being given good attention. Children play and learn in a well organised and child-friendly setting and can freely access a range of enjoyable and challenging learning opportunities. The manager and staff take effective steps to ensure they continually improve the outcomes for children. Policies and procedures are embedded in practice to effectively promote children's welfare and learning.

The setting uses self-evaluation to identify both key strengths and areas for improvement within the setting. The manager is constantly working with the staff to strive to improve the outcomes for all children who attend the nursery.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- support the development of younger children's communication, language and literacy skills (in particular the under two's) by ensuring access to stories that are suited to their age and stage of development and that allows them to listen with enjoyment.
- ensure children's starting points are clearly identified in the assessment files of all children

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children benefit because there is a common sense of purpose between the manager and staff, who work well together as a team. Communication is highly effective across the nursery as staff share informal discussions, meet weekly to plan activities and engage in full team meetings on a regular basis. Strong, informal relationships with parents are established, which helps children to settle and gain in confidence. Most staff in the setting are experienced and qualified and show a good understanding of relevant working procedures. This results in children being very well safeguarded as they thrive in a stimulating and well managed environment. Regular and effective risk assessments take place to ensure that children do not face unnecessary hazards as they play. This, together with very good levels of caring supervision, enhances children's safety and promotes their development in a very positive way. Children's interests are followed well by staff who demonstrate very positive attitudes to children. Children's good health and well-being are promoted by staff, for example, in cases of illness or minor injuries. Children are given a good understanding of their own personal hygiene, safety and healthy life choices as they play, eat healthy snacks and meals and learn about themselves.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of the setting's strengths and weaknesses which has been derived from regular self-evaluation and target setting. The nursery has made improvements since the last inspection and has clear targets for the future, for example, enhancing the outdoor play area and developing the under two's room. The provider takes great care to respond to feedback provided by parents and also includes the opinions of staff when making decisions about the setting. This has had a very beneficial effect on the setting, such as the new range of menus and the weekly trips to the local library with the pre-school children.

The setting has an excellent partnership with parents and carers. Parents value the links that they have with the nursery staff which allows them to have a very clear understanding of the progress that is being made by their children. The setting shares learning intentions for each child with parents and ensures that they have a good understanding of the nursery's work, for example, how it arranges the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are very actively involved in the activities that the children undertake and are regular visitors to the setting, taking part in events such as Easter egg hunts and cultural diversity days. The setting also organises open evenings where parents and staff meet informally to discuss children's learning and the curriculum provided. The parents receive informative feedback at the end of the child's sessions and receive regular newsletters which keeps them updated with what is happening in the setting. Parents contribute to the work of the nursery, which helps to ensure that children achieve with positive outcomes.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

All children make good progress in the setting and enjoy the support of staff who have a good understanding of their individual needs and who promote their independence very well. Children are well settled and go about their routines with increasing confidence. A strength of the setting is its ability to respond to choices made by the children. This ensures that children are very well supported as they play freely alone, work in small groups or undertake focused activities with adults. Staff recognise the learning potential from activities they provide and use these to develop their plans. Weekly plans effectively cover all areas of learning and these are reflected in the activities provided. Planning is individualised, tailored to match each child's individual abilities and interests. The staff complete detailed observational assessments on all children and this enables staff to promote children's next steps for learning.

Interaction between staff and children is really good across the nursery. Staff know children well and play alongside them supporting their learning. Staff recognise the learning potential from activities they provide, particularly in relation to outside play, and use these to develop their weekly plans. Although there are good systems in place to identify children's individual needs on entry, they do not currently identify children's starting points before they attend the nursery. Planning is individualised, tailored to match children's abilities and interests for all children in attendance. Secure procedures are implemented to assess children's ongoing progress and this information is used effectively to identify learning priorities for individual children.

Children are able to make very good progress in all areas of learning as the setting tracks each child to ensure that they access a broad range of learning opportunities. The setting revolves around the needs of children and uses its available space and resources very well. Children enjoy using outdoor play areas even in poor weather and are very well supported by staff, who show that they are committed to working with children. Children's language skills are developed well in the setting as children take part in numerous conversations and are confident when explaining things to adults or answering questions. Children also show an interest in books and writing as they share books with adults and learn about letters and become used to using labels and providing information displayed in the play areas. The older children thoroughly enjoy their weekly trips to choose books from the local library and the weekly visit from their French teacher. However, the development of younger children's language and literacy skills is limited as they have minimal access to books and stories that are suited to their age and stage of development and that allow them to listen with enjoyment.

The setting ensures that all children have access to meaningful activities, for example, children with special needs use sign language and the setting works closely with the support of local authority advisors. Children enjoy messy play, role play equipment and musical activities. In addition children's understanding of numbers is enhanced through practical activities and games. They can also access computers and everyday technology such as digital cameras and telephones. All children enjoy taking part in activities that enhance their physical skills and the

setting arranges very good visits within its community to offer the children useful additional experiences. All children make progress, including those with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

Particular strengths within the group include children's awareness and understanding of safety issues and staff management of children's behaviour. Children discuss group rules showing a good understanding of right and wrong and talk about the importance of keeping hands and feet to themselves when playing and why it is not safe to run inside. They value themselves and their peers, recognising the differences and similarities between themselves, the way in which they communicate, their families, homes and cultures. Diversity is reflected throughout the setting and children's individuality is truly appreciated and celebrated. This helps to foster good relationships between children enabling them to solve conflicts and work well together.

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

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