

Alpha Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

25/02/2010

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Alpha Day Nursery opened in 2004. It operates from a detached house located on a main road in South Norwood. Another nursery operated by the same provider is based in Thornton Heath.

The nursery's opening hours are from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, for 50 weeks of the year.

There are currently 29 children in the early years age range, from six months to five years, on roll. Of these, nine children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They have experience of supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 13 staff, including the cook. The registered provider also works at the setting. The provider has achieved Early Years Professional Status, and one staff member is working towards it. Four members of staff hold a Level 3 qualification in childcare, with one of them working towards Level 4 and seven staff hold a Level 2 qualification and are working towards Level 3. The setting receives support from the local authority through an early years advisor.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The established staff team work well together and provide a varied curriculum across the six areas of learning. Staff are committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. Staff engage well with children and parents, providing an inclusive and welcoming environment. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the provision and management demonstrate a commitment to ongoing improvement and staff training.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure there is at least one member of staff who holds a full and relevant Level 3 qualification (as defined by Children's Workforce Development Council) deployed in the group for children under three years (Suitable people) 12/03/2010

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

- improve the system for registration to ensure it fully details staff's names and identifies where they are deployed in the setting
- improve the system to extend opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's developmental records, including information relating to their children's starting points and the next steps in their learning journey
- ensure that assessments of children provide an overall picture of their development across all areas of learning, and that their next steps are regularly monitored, reviewed and followed up, in order to track progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure both indoor and outdoor spaces are effectively organised to enable children to move more freely and develop their autonomy in the setting
- value children's linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning
- continue to develop the use of self-evaluation and seek the views of parents and children in the process.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust recruitment procedures ensure children are cared for by suitably vetted staff, which helps to safeguard their welfare. Staff are aware of their responsibility and the nursery's procedures in regard to safeguarding children. The designated person for safeguarding has completed Level 3 training and all staff have completed Level 1. The management are committed to staff development and the staff team are able to access ongoing training. Staff hold relevant qualifications, however, specific legal requirements relating to the qualifications of staff working with children under two years old are not currently met.

Regular risk assessments are conducted and a daily log is maintained of checks. Whilst these are effective in identifying and addressing potential hazards they do not extend to contingency arrangement in the event of staff shortage, which results in poor deployment of staff. All required policies and procedures are in place and are generally well organised and up to date. Resources are satisfactory and used appropriately to support children's learning and development, although they are not always organised to promote children's autonomy and independence.

Staff work in partnership with parents and build strong links with other partners where necessary, for example, the local schools. Staff seek information from home, which helps to ensure that they have a good understanding of children's backgrounds and needs, which helps to promote equality and diversity. This information does not extend to children's home language, which is not effectively reflected in the setting. Parents are kept well informed about the setting through newsletters, notice boards and regular meetings. Staff seek parents' input on a regular basis, although their views do not currently form part of the setting's evaluation. The management team take appropriate steps to address recommendations from previous inspections in order to improve the service provided. They are also using self evaluation to improve outcomes for children and they are making progress. However, at times the deployment of staff in the group

room for children under two years, is not effectively organised to ensure consistent leadership.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are cared for in welcoming, well maintained premises where they grow in confidence. They access a satisfactory range of resources and materials. Children in the pre-school are able to choose activities for themselves, which increases their independence. Resources for younger children are not effectively organised, particularly in the outdoor play area, which lacks planning. This results in children becoming frustrated as they try to manoeuvre wheeled toys in an overcrowded space. Children adopt simple good hygiene routines when they wash their hands before they eat, using liquid soap. All staff hold an up-to-date first aid certificate and are familiar with the nursery's health and safety procedure through a planned induction. Children enjoy nutritious meals and snacks that are freshly prepared on the premises and take into account their individual dietary needs. The older children serve themselves at the table, which promotes their independence. They tuck in heartily and talk to each other about how nice it tastes. Staff follow food hygiene procedures diligently at mealtimes and make sure children are appropriately supported. Children throughout the nursery benefit from playing outside every day, as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Children make positive relationships with staff and each other and come into the setting happily. They benefit from a varied routine and take part in a varied range of activities and experiences throughout the day. They are occupied and engaged, although some activities are overly directed. Staff make regular observations of the children and incorporate the next steps, which are identified into the weekly activity plans. However, observations records do not consistently show a full picture of children's achievements across all areas of learning. Next steps are not always followed up and reviewed in order to track progress towards the early learning goals.

Children have ample opportunities for mark marking as resources are available within various activities. The children enjoy making patterns in the sand by blowing through straws; they compare sizes and shapes and race each other to make a long line. They use language such as 'bigger, longer, down and round'. Children are able to solve simple problems and count confidently during everyday routines. Children are supported in their play, for example, at tidy up time a part completed puzzle is put aside for the child to complete later, this acknowledges children's efforts and shows their work is valued. Children enjoy painting and younger children experience making footprints by having their feet painted after stepping onto the paper. Staff take the opportunity to extend the children's learning, for example, asking them appropriate questions about their play.

Children of all ages are keen to communicate and enjoy conversations, stories and books. Children cuddle up to staff when sharing a book. Toddlers enjoy small world play and have opportunities to investigate sensory materials. Children develop skills in using everyday information and communication technology as they

enjoy a range of resources including a Dictaphone, which they use to record and listen to their voices, a camera and a microscope for exploring things in more detail. Children talk about their lives and families and bring in items from home to share. They learn about the world around them through planned themes and activities, for example, a current project is about foods from around the world. Imaginative play is well resourced which encourages children to develop their own games, for example, they make a bus out of the chairs, pretending they are going on a journey. There is a good range of resources to reflect diversity, for example, the home corner has a range of play utensils from different countries. Children enjoy practising their physical skills as they play outside in the secure garden. Outings are included in the routine, including a major outing every year for all staff, children, parents and carers.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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