

Alphabet House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Janice Walker

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Alphabet House re-registered under a new name and new ownership in 2009 having previously been running for over 23 years. It is one of three nurseries run by a private company. It operates from a large converted house on the outskirts of West Bridgford near Nottingham. Children are cared for in five rooms according to their age and level of ability. Children aged over three years are based in rooms on the first floor. There are two secure outdoor play areas. The nursery serves families from the local area and surrounding suburbs.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and also on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is registered to provide care for 85 children under the age of eight and accepts children from six weeks to five years. There are currently 81 children on roll all of whom are in the early years age range. Children attend a variety of sessions each week depending on the individual requirements of each family. The nursery is open from 7.30am to 6.00pm. It is open all year round closing only for public holidays and a week at Christmas. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. There are 21 full and part-time staff employed to work with the children, 13 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications with five other staff working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from the development team from the local authority and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a comfortable and welcoming environment. Children are safeguarded and in the main, their welfare is generally well promoted through the settings clear policies, procedures and practices. Staff establish warm relationships with parents and exchange relevant information to enable them to meet children's individual needs. They have strong links with others who are involved with some children in order to ensure continuity of care and learning, although, systems are not yet in place for all children for whom this applies. Children make sound progress in their learning and development because staff provide them with a varied range of activities. However, systems are not yet secure in ensuring that every child makes progress across all areas of learning. The new Manager is establishing a good awareness of the settings strengths and areas for development and is in the process of developing a more robust system of self evaluation to fully promote continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that all supervisors hold a full and relevant

14/07/2010

level three qualification. (Suitable People)

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

- develop further the system for self evaluation to fully ensure continuous improvement of all aspects of the provision
- review the use of space, both indoors and outdoors, in order to maximise opportunities for learning
- develop further the use of observations and assessments in order to more effectively monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals and to plan appropriate activities for all children's continuing development
- develop further the opportunities for sharing relevant information with other providers for children who attend more than one setting, to fully ensure their continuity and progression.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has appropriate systems in place to safeguard children and promote their welfare. Clear recruitment, vetting and induction procedures, help to ensure the suitability of staff who have a sound understanding of their responsibilities relating to child protection and work collaboratively with other organisations as required. Risk assessments are in place and daily checks undertaken of the indoor and outdoor area to ensure potential hazards are continually identified and minimised. All required documentation, policies and procedures are in place and contain sufficient detail. Appropriate systems of induction ensure that staff are able to implement these appropriately in order to promote children's wellbeing. In the main, staff are deployed effectively to enable them to effectively meet children's needs and to support the smooth running of the provision. However, not all supervisory members of staff hold a level three qualification which is specific legal requirement. The new owners have begun the process of refurbishing the provision and newly renovated rooms are particularly warm, light, airy and welcoming. Resources throughout are suitable and in the main, children are able to freely access toys and activities of their choice. However, best use is not always made of available space. In particular, the organisation of the rooms children are based in limits opportunities for free flow and whilst newly implemented systems regarding use of the outdoor space ensures that all children regularly access this area, it is not yet used to maximum effect. Space within group rooms is also not always used to its maximum potential to provide the best learning opportunities.

The setting's policies relating to equality of opportunity and admissions help to promote equality and diversity generally well and ensure that all children and families are valued and respected in line with their individual beliefs and backgrounds. Staff act as positive role models and actively seek external support to ensure that each child is fully supported to make progress from their individual starting points. Good relationships are established with other professionals, particularly relating to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, ensuring such children are well supported to achieve their potential. However, systems for

sharing information with other providers where the care of children is shared are still in the very early stages of being established and are not yet effective in supporting continuity of children's care, learning and development. Staff establish warm relationships with parents, sharing relevant information to ensure that they are able to respond appropriately to children's needs. Planned events, such as, the forthcoming parents evening and Father's Day picnic are aimed at building upon these and involving them in their children's learning. The newly appointed Manager has established appropriate support systems and responds positively to advice and guidance offered. She is beginning to devise systems for continuing to extend the skills and abilities of the staff team through training and monitoring in order to ensure that children receive interesting and enjoyable experiences in a safe and nurturing environment. Along with senior staff members, she has undertaken a recent self evaluation and demonstrates a generally good awareness of the nursery's strengths and areas which would benefit from further development. She has introduced several new systems and practices which, when fully embedded in practice have the potential to further improve the outcomes for children. However, systems for ongoing monitoring of the provision as a whole have yet to be established in order to ensure continuous improvement.

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

Children attending this setting make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. They enjoy a wide variety of indoor and outdoor play experiences which cover all areas of learning with many opportunities to make their own choices regarding their play. They freely access a selection of equipment to support mark making and enjoy gluing and sticking during planned activities. They are encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through the provision of toys and activities that help them investigate and explore, such as, magnifiers and growing seeds and plants. Older children thoroughly enjoy story times when skilled staff and visiting story tellers capture their interest and imagination and encourage them to express their thoughts and ideas. Activities planned around different topics such as a football day to coincide with the football world cup and visits by a local Police Officer to talk about children in Africa, introduce children to new experiences and also the organisation of large groups during these activities support their developing social skills. Sometimes though, particularly for the younger children, adult led activities are not pitched at a level that is appropriate to children's levels of abilities in order for learning to be meaningful. Babies receive individual attention. They are held and cuddled throughout the day supporting their sense of security and they develop their senses through accessing a good variety of resources which they touch, smell, listen to and explore. Observations and assessment systems are in place, however, not all staff are effectively using them to monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals or to inform planning for each child's continued learning, resulting in gaps in some children's learning experiences not being identified and planned for.

Children are cared for in a secure environment where well maintained toys and resources and a good level of supervision by staff maintains their safety. They

begin to develop an understanding of possible dangers and how to stay safe through planned events, such as, practising fire drills along with gentle reminders as part of daily routines, such as, going up and down the stairs with care. Good hygiene routines help to minimise the risk of the spread of infection, effectively promoting children's health. They learn about maintaining their own health through daily routines such as hand washing and use and disposal of tissues for cleaning their noses. Their wellbeing is further promoted through clear exclusion and care of sick children policies and procedures. Daily opportunities to play outside in the fresh air also help to promote their general good health and older children enjoy frequent outings to the adjoining orchard which provides opportunities for them to develop their physical skills. A real strength of this setting are the wide ranging and appetising meals which the onsite cook freshly prepares with meticulous detail paid to the nutritional value of ingredients and careful consideration of children's individual dietary needs. Children form good relationships with each other and share and play co-operatively together. They behave well. Staff offer good levels of interaction along with support and encouragement and more skilled staff support children to learn to compromise and negotiate. They learn to value differences and diversity through their play, activities and discussions. For example, positive images of children's families and stories and activities covering religious and cultural festivals, enabling children to learn about the wider world. All of this helps children to develop the habits and behaviour appropriate to be good learners and to begin to meet their own needs and the needs of others.

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	3
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	3
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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Met