



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 221576

DfES Number: 523370

### INSPECTION DETAILS

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Inspection Date | 12/01/2004              |
| Inspector Name  | Susan Christine Mcguire |

### SETTING DETAILS

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Day Care Type   | Full Day Care  |
| Setting Name    | Alphabet Day Nursery   |
| Setting Address | Station Road<br>Whittlesey<br>Peterborough<br>Cambs<br>PE7 2HA |

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

|      |                    |
|------|--------------------|
| Name | Mrs Christina Boon |
|------|--------------------|

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

Alphabet Day Nursery opened in 1993. It operates from brick-built premises on the edge of Whittlesey. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 84 children from 0 to 5 years on roll. This includes 16 funded 3 year olds and 10 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs.

The group opens 5 days a week all year round. Sessions are from 8.00 am until 6.00 pm.

Four part-time and fifteen full-time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Five staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Child Care partnership (EYDCP).

### How good is the Day Care?

Alphabet Day Nursery provides satisfactory care for children.

Staff take part in on-going training to update their skills and good procedures are in place for the recruitment and induction of new staff. The nursery operates with a good staff/child ratio. The environment is welcoming to both children and parents and each of the three rooms is well-organised for the age-groups it caters for. Good documentation supports the successful management of the nursery, although some policies need to be developed in order to fully meet the requirements of the National Standards.

Staff show a good awareness of safety issues and procedures are in place to help children play safely indoors and outdoors. Children are encouraged to manage their personal hygiene and are given strategies to enable them to be independent in putting on their own coats etc.

Meals and snacks are prepared on the premises and are healthy and nutritious. The organisation of mealtimes often leave children with little to occupy them.

A good variety of stimulating indoor and outdoor activities are provided, appropriate to the ages of children in attendance. Resources sometimes fall short of supporting the activity for which they are provided e.g. little sand available for the pouring and tipping activity, but a good range of resources is provided which gives positive images of the multi-cultural nature of society. Children who are present all day are given opportunities to rest and relax. There are very good relationships between the staff and children, and children who have special needs are well-supported in the nursery. Behaviour is well-managed.

Partnership with parents is given a high priority and good procedures are in place to ensure that parents are kept well-informed about their child's day at nursery.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to record significant incidents. There is now a book for this purpose in each of the three nursery rooms, and staff ensure that it is used consistently.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Staff training is given a high priority and children benefit from the expertise this provides.
- Staff know the children well and are proactive in ensuring that the needs of individual children are met. Children who have special needs are well-supported.
- Children are settled and happy in the nursery and have positive relationships with the staff and each other.
- Partnership with parents is very good. This is supported by the daily greeting of each family and the regular exchange of verbal and written information about how the children spent their day at nursery.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the organisation of whole group situations, so that the needs of all children are met, with particular reference to snack and meal times
- the provision of resources, so that they adequately support planned activities
- documentation, so that a lost child procedure is added to the uncollected child procedure and that the role of Ofsted in the nursery's registration is clarified.

| <b>Outcome of the inspection</b> |
|----------------------------------|
| Satisfactory                     |

| <b>CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION</b>   |
|---|
| <i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>                              |
| <i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i> |

## **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**

| <b>The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection</b> |   |
|---|---|
| Std   | Recommendation  |
| 2   | ensure that the needs of all children are met in whole group situations   |
| 5   | ensure that resources adequately support planned activities   |
| 14  | improve documentation by adding a lost child procedure to the uncollected child procedure, and by clarifying the role of Ofsted in the nursery's registration |

## **INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.**

### **How effective is the nursery education?**

The provision for nursery education at Alphabet Day Nursery is good. It enables children to make very good progress in their physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff show enthusiasm and create a relaxed atmosphere in which children are keen to learn. A key-working system is in place and staff know the children well. Assessment is used effectively to monitor children's progress and to plan the next steps in their learning. Staff are proactive in adapting activities so that all children are included. There is appropriate long, medium and short term planning but staff do not always follow daily plans. Staff have a generally good knowledge of the Foundation Stage, but opportunities are not always taken to extend activities.

Leadership and management are generally good. The proprietor and staff are highly committed to improving the care and education of the children, through their use of self-evaluation and their work with the early years mentor. There are regular meetings between the staff and proprietor and relationships are good. There is a system for staff appraisals and on-going training is supported. Staff changes have been accommodated by giving staff different roles in the nursery but progress in their new areas is not being sufficiently monitored. Staff are not always clear about their responsibility towards students in the nursery.

Partnership with parents is excellent, they speak highly of the nursery. There is a daily exchange of information about the child. Parents are provided with paperwork about the provision and open evenings giving information about the Foundation Stage are planned to begin this year. Staff encourage parents to share what they know about their child, to be involved in their learning by providing them with progress files and a shared reading scheme. Feedback from parents is valued.

### **What is being done well?**

- Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is excellent. They have a good understanding of, and interest in, their own environment and culture, and good strategies are in place to enable them to explore the wider world.
- Staff have a good understanding of the need for children to have fresh air daily, and ensure that time is set aside to allow them to develop their physical skills both indoors and outdoors.
- Children's relationships with the staff and each other are very good. They are learning to consider the feelings of others, and to share and take turns.

**What needs to be improved?**

- staff's awareness of unplanned opportunities to extend children's learning
- children's independence skills, and opportunities to select resources and activities, and to help themselves and each other at mealtimes
- the mathematics programme, so that more able children are given opportunities to problem-solve and to explore the concept of more or less in everyday activities.

**What has improved since the last inspection?**

Very good progress has been made in addressing the 2 key issues identified at the last inspection.

Opportunities for children to use a range of equipment to develop their climbing and balancing skills are provided daily.

Assessment is used effectively, and parents are given opportunities to contribute to their child's learning by observing them at home, e.g. shared reading scheme.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

|            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
|------------|----------------|

Children separate from their carers with ease and are confident to approach adults in the setting. Most children are confident to speak in group situations. Staff encourage turn-taking and children share activities well. Children are learning to be independent in their self-care, e.g. managing personal hygiene and putting their own coats on, but few opportunities are provided for children to select activities and resources, or to become independent and helpful at mealtimes.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

|            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
|------------|----------------|

Children are learning to use language for communication and thinking. They see that print conveys meaning through labelling in the room. Children show enthusiasm for stories and are also using books for information. More able children recognise their own name and that of others, and can write simple words. A variety of tools is provided for mark-making. Some staff miss opportunities to extend planned activities about letter sounds however, and children rarely write in role-play situations.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

|            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
|------------|----------------|

Children count forwards and backwards confidently in rhymes and songs, and some children can count beyond 10. They recognise shape and colour, and use positional and comparative language with understanding in conversations e.g. "you are taller than me." Measuring and weighing is introduced in planned activities. More able children are not being sufficiently encouraged to problem-solve, or to explore the concept of more or less, in everyday situations.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

|            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| Judgement: | Very Good |
|------------|-----------|

Children are being given a sense of time and place through themes and activities which use the weather and the local community. Magnifying glasses help children investigate objects. They discuss past and present events with understanding. Knowledge of other cultures and beliefs is also being well developed through looking at the wider world through the eyes of the nursery 'holiday bear' whose destinations are followed on maps. Children are given good opportunities to develop computer skills.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

The outdoor play area is used to set physical challenges such as climbing, crawling, stopping, balancing pedalling and ball skills. In these ways they also learn about personal space by steering around each other. Indoors, children are learning to manipulate objects of different sizes and can use some tools like scissors safely, and with increasing control. Paintbrushes and pencils are used with confidence. Topic work introduces bodily awareness e.g. clothes which keep us warm.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are beginning to use a range of media and materials e.g. textured playdough and gloop, to develop their creativity. Their imagination is being developed through role-play for which a variety of resources are available. Singing and music is enjoyed daily and musical instruments are explored. Children are unable to express their own ideas and thoughts through self-selected activities and construction materials, however, and planned craft activities are very adult-led.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**



## OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

## WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Key Issues
- Develop staff's awareness of the value of taking unplanned opportunities to extend children's learning.
- Improve children's independence skills at mealtimes, and provide opportunities for them to select activities, and resources for construction.
- Provide more able children with the opportunity to problem-solve, and to explore the concept of more and less, in everyday situations.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*