



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

## **COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT**

**URN** 310364

**DfES Number:** 512437

### **INSPECTION DETAILS**

Inspection Date      13/01/2004  
Inspector Name      Joan Isabel Madden

### **SETTING DETAILS**

Day Care Type      Full Day Care  
Setting Name      Alphabets Private Day Nursery  
Setting Address      37 Poplar Grove  
                                 Sale  
                                 Cheshire  
                                 M33 3AX

### **REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS**

Name                      Mrs Valerie Brookes

## 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

Alphabets Private Day Nursery opened in 1994. It operates from four main rooms in a house in Sale. The nursery serves both the local area and further afield.

There are 61 children from birth to 5 years on roll. There are 5 funded 4-year-olds but no funded 3-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a number of children with special needs.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07:30 until 1830.

A total of 19 full-time and part time staff work with the children. The majority of staff have an early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Currently 3 staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. A qualified teacher is responsible for delivering the Foundation Stage curriculum to the pre-school children. The setting receives a range of support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) including advice from a teacher.

### How good is the Day Care?

The nursery provides good care for the children. Staff to child ratios are good and the manager and room leaders are well qualified and experienced. In the main the premises are clean, well maintained, secure and suitable. Generally documentation is detailed, organised and easily accessible.

The safety of the children is generally good. Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that children are safe and secure with minor gaps in safety inside and outside the premises. The children are provided with fresh, nutritious food and careful account is taken of their likes, dislikes, dietary needs and allergies. Written records of dietary needs are kept in the main rooms and in the kitchen where they are regularly checked. Good hygiene procedures are in place particularly at nappy changing, toileting and meal times. The staff have a secure knowledge of child protection procedures and cater well for children with special educational needs.

The care of the children is good. The daily routine successfully meets the needs of the children including allowing the children sufficient time to sleep and rest. Generally equipment for the children is sufficient and suitable. The children benefit from planned activities that have a positive impact on their learning and development however the babies and toddlers have insufficient opportunities to choose resources for themselves particularly those for role play and to promote equal opportunities. The children are well behaved.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The parents are well informed of their children's day and the progress they are making. The parents of the very young children receive a daily home/nursery book helping to establish a two-way exchange of information. At regular intervals all parents receive a diary informing them of events that have taken place.

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

At the last inspection the manager agreed to provide the children with more privacy whilst using the toilets on the ground and first floor. A screen is now in place to protect the toilets from view on the ground floor and cubicles have been installed around the toilets on the first floor. The children are now afforded more privacy as they use these toilets. No action was required on the toilet in the pre-school room but children would benefit if this toilet was also made more private. The manager also agreed to ensure all relevant details are noted in the record of fire drills. All details including absent staff are noted in the records ensuring the safety of all in the event of a fire.

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

- There is an effective operational plan with all required policies and procedures in place. Documentation is well organised and accessible. Children benefit from a good ratio of staff to children.
- Staff are well qualified and encouraged to attend appropriate training courses to further their professional development.
- The children are provided with fresh and nutritious food. The menus are varied and imaginative. Staff take into account the children's dietary needs and the records for these are regularly checked and updated.
- The staff have established good relationships with the children and adopt positive strategies to manage their behaviour. The children respond well to the staff.
- Partnership with parents and carers is effective. Through a prospectus and visits parents are well informed of the nursery's provision. Good procedures are in place to inform parents of the care their children receive and the progress they make. A regular diary goes home to parents charting significant events at nursery which is a worthwhile keepsake of their children's time at nursery.
- Effective hygiene procedures are in place throughout the nursery particularly

at nappy changing, toileting and meal times. The children are aware of the need to wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the day.

- The educational provision for the funded children is very good.

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

- the safety both inside and outside the premises
- the record of attendance of staff and children
- the toileting arrangements for the pre-school children
- the equipment and resources for the babies and toddlers.

#### **Outcome of the inspection**

Good

#### **CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

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

#### **The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
2	Include times of arrival and departure in the children's and staff's records of attendance.
4	Ensure the dignity and privacy of the children when using the toilet in the pre-school room.
5	Improve equipment and resources for the babies and toddlers to ensure that: there is sufficient, safe and suitable chairs at meal times; toys and equipment are more accessible particularly for role-play and to promote equal opportunities.
6	Improve safety by securing the outside gate leading to a storage area, making the area on the landing, outside the dining room, safe by eliminating the trip hazard and producing a risk assessment plan for escorting the toddlers up and down stairs to the dining room.

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

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

The children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The programmes for the six areas of learning are all very good. Staff provide a stimulating learning environment and the pace of delivery of the programme successfully maintains the children's interest.

The teaching is very good and a strength of the nursery. A sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum is reflected in planning, activities provided, children's assessments and in the questioning of children. Planning is very detailed, comprehensively covering all areas of learning. It takes account of the children's ages, abilities and their attendance patterns. Assessments of the children's attainments are thorough and are used effectively to inform planning. The provision for children with special needs is a strength of the nursery. Staff intervene early if they have concerns about a child. They work well with the parents, other professionals and support networks to meet the needs of the children. Staff cope very well with challenging behaviour, they are understanding and sensitive towards the children, they use positive methods, such as, reward and praise to reinforce acceptable behaviour and set very clear guidelines for the children to work within.

Leadership and management are very good. There are no formal procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating the educational provision, however through informal methods the teacher effectively monitors strengths and weaknesses.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. The parents receive comprehensive information on the educational provision provided by the nursery. Through written reports, parent's evenings and informal feedback the parent's are kept well informed of their children's progress. The feedback from the parents is positive.

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

- Quality of teaching is a major strength of the provision. Staff are well qualified and experienced. They are conscientious, hardworking, understanding and able to empathize with the children.
- Staff place high priority on reading and the enjoyment of books. The children are very attentive during story times and enjoy looking at books independently.
- Planning of the curriculum is very good, it comprehensively covers the six areas of learning, groups the children appropriately to take account of their wide range of abilities and needs. Assessments of the children's attainment and progress are used effectively to inform planning.
- Provision for children with special needs is very good. Staff intervene early if

they have concerns about children and work well in partnership with parents, professional and support networks to meet the needs of the children.

- Staff management of the children's behaviour is effective and positive. They are sensitive towards the children and use positive strategies, such as rewards and praise, to promote acceptable behaviour.

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

- formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating the education provision including staff appraisals.

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

The nursery has made very good progress since the last inspection. The teacher is able to effectively evaluate the educational activities provided and how improvements can be made. This is done through observations, children's responses to the activities and assessments of their progress. Judgements made on the educational activities are used to inform future planning improving the quality of the provision. Through informal methods accurate assessments are made of the professional developmental and training needs of the staff and they are encouraged to attend training courses where appropriate.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children are interested, animated and confident learners. They happily talk and work with visitors. The children often initiate interaction with one another throughout the sessions and are able to choose activities themselves. They work within a clear framework and know the ground rules, such as, the maximum number of children allowed at any one activity. They celebrate birthdays and other significant events in their lives helping them to develop a sense of self and belonging to a community.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Through role-play, child initiated activities and story time the children have good opportunities to develop their language skills. They listen attentively to stories and are developing an enjoyment of looking at books. Children are beginning to recognise letter sounds with some children able to recognise words and read simple sentences. They make good use of the opportunities for mark making and writing with some children beginning to write independently.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children make good use of mathematical equipment, as when they were learning to recognise patterns by matching different bears to pattern cards. Children play mathematical games, such as, dominoes that encourage them to count, match and calculate. As children sing number rhymes, a favourite being 'Five Currant Buns' they are beginning to solve number problems. By playing with construction kits the children handle different shapes, many of which they can name and describe their properties.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Through the theme of 'Weather' the children observe changes and patterns in the daily weather and why things happen, such as, ice melting into water. Children are becoming adept at building models from a range of construction kits and use the computer independently. In visiting the local area and going further a field they are learning about different features of the environment. Children often look at the photographs of themselves helping them to differentiate between past and present events.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children move around freely in the large outdoor area where they also learn to develop physical skills, such as, throwing and catching a ball. In completing obstacle courses the children learn different ways of moving around and through objects. In eating healthy food the children are beginning to identify nutritious food and they are developing good hygiene routines. In activities, such as, playing with play dough and collage the children are becoming skilled in using hand held tools.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

A wide range of activities allows the children opportunities to explore successfully the properties of materials and objects and to use their imagination and express themselves. They enjoy building with blocks, painting, playing with sand and creating collages. They have responded well to the current theme by creating collages of 'snowy nights' and a 'winter tree'. Children make good use of the role-play area and small world scenes to make up their own stories.

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



## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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**

*There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:*

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following: developing formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating the education provision including staff appraisals.

*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.*