



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 132242

DfES Number: 533040

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 24/03/2004
Inspector Name Jenifer Kirby

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name The Alphabet House Nursery School
Setting Address 23 Harold Road
Upton park
London
E13 0SQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Alphabet House Nursery School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Alphabet House Nursery School
Address 23 Harold Road
Upton Park
London
E13 0SQ

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

The Alphabet House Nursery School opened in 1999.

It is a nursery which offers full day care for children aged three months to five years. The nursery offers a Montessori classroom facility and combines these methods with the Foundation Stage for children's learning.

The centre is open each day between 08:00 - 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. Currently 60 children attend throughout the week. They are drawn from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel to work into the City of London. Their hours of attendance vary to suit the needs of the working hours of the parents.

There are 15 children who have English as an additional language, and some children have special educational needs. There are 11 children who receive funding for nursery education, 9 are 3 year olds, and 2 are 4 year olds.

The nursery is based in a two-storey building which was previously used as a social services day nursery. There is a paved area available for outside play. There are 14 staff who work with the children; of these one has a diploma in Montessori teaching and all other staff hold or are working towards either the diploma in nursery nursing (NNEB); the national vocational qualification (NVQ); or the early years care and education qualification, level 2 or 3. Staff receive support from an advisory teacher from the Newham Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Alphabet House nursery school provides good care for children.

The environment is warm and welcoming for parents and children. Staff have high expectations of children's achievement levels and many activities reflect this. Staff are warm and enthusiastic about including all children in activities. However it was observed that in group activities with the under 3's, staff were not always aware of the individual needs of some of the children taking part in the craft activities. There is

a wide range of toys, play activities and craft materials, and they have access to outdoor play.

The quality of care for all age groups is good. The staff plan and record their observations of the activities they provide, though the planning does not always fully reflect the way staff work with the children.

Snacks and meals are nutritious, and there is clear record keeping for individual dietary requirements.

Good behaviour is valued and encouraged, though some staff need to develop confidence in explaining why certain behaviour is not acceptable. Partnership with parents is good, the staff work with parents to provide the care required; feedback from parents reflected this. Information is shared with parents on a regular basis, they also have parent's evenings and a newsletter for general information. Risk assessments are conducted on a daily basis, they have a secure entrance to the building, and all visitors sign in. There is a named member of staff for Child Protection, and this is included in staff induction. The group are keeping up to date with changes in Child Protection legislation in London.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- There is a stimulating range of toys and activities which help children to progress in all areas of their development.
- Staff are warm and enthusiastic in their interaction with children. They offer praise and encouragement to children and are interested in what children do and say.
- A warm and welcoming environment is provided for parents and children, and children are looked after according to their parents' wishes, and all parents have regular feedback from staff.

What needs to be improved?

- the operational plan so that systems for planning, recording, observing and monitoring are clear and comprehensive
- the planning of group activities in the one to two and two to three age rooms so that children's developmental needs are met
- staff confidence in promoting good behaviour.

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
3	Planning and observation of group activities with the under 3's, so that each child's needs are met in the planned activities.
11	Improve the confidence of staff in promoting good behaviour

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 House Nursery School is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in their mathematical, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world and generally good progress in all other areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff plan a variety of activities both in and out of doors. Staff support children's learning and encourage new vocabulary and their thinking. There is a generally good balance of group times and free play activities. However, staff do not always organise their time to give children individual support. Group activities for the funded children are presented in an enthusiastic and lively manner, but are not always presented in a way that offers choice particularly in aspects of creativity, literacy and personal, social and emotional development.

Staff observe children and make notes on children's learning in each of the six areas of learning. However, their assessments are not sufficiently evaluated against the stepping stones and the early learning goals. As a result, they do not provide a secure basis on which to plan the next steps for individual children's learning.

The leadership and management of the day nursery is generally good. The manager has been effective in developing a committed staff team and has encouraged their development and training to ensure that they are working towards developing a secure knowledge of the foundation stage. However, the system for monitoring the quality of teaching is not applied frequently enough to be effective.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents spend time talking informally to staff about their children and are informed about forthcoming events in the centre. Displays and documentation, policies and regular newsletters are readily accessible to parents. A home to school method of sharing information has been developed but has not yet been implemented.

What is being done well?

- Staff plan a range of interesting and enjoyable activities to enable children to learn about different cultures and religious festivals.
- Mathematical development is given a priority in the setting and most children can count to ten and use mathematical language confidently.
- Children are developing an awareness of the world they live in to build on their own
- self-esteem through planned topics about themselves and their families.
- Children interact and talk with confidence, they concentrate and sustain interest in the activities provided.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of mealtimes and resources for creativity to enable the children to develop more independence and choice and freedom of creative expression
- opportunities for the children to gain more interest in books for the enjoyment of stories
- the monitoring and evaluation of teaching
- the evaluation of assessment and observations of children to enable staff to plan for the next steps in all six areas of learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made generally good progress since the last inspection. Additional resources including balls and hoops have been obtained and the children take part in throwing and catching games. Children now have regular timetabled access to a computer. A writing table is now available throughout the day which children can access freely. Opportunities for creative development have been increased and children's free art work is displayed and valued. However, there are still insufficient opportunities for the children to develop their individuality in this area and resources are not made freely available throughout the day.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's progress in this area is generally good. They are confident and show good concentration skills. They relate well to each other and to staff. They are able to express their needs and to be sensitive to others. Behaviour is good, however the structure of the activities does not always give sufficient opportunities for children to make choices and to develop their independence and initiative.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's progress in this area is generally good. Children are keen to communicate with staff through talk and discussion. They have good opportunities to learn the sounds of letters and words and to understand that print carries meaning. Children recognise their first names and are beginning to write these correctly with well formed letters. The book corner is used infrequently by children and opportunities for children to handle and look at books for pleasure is limited.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's progress in this area is very good. Many children can count up to ten, and are developing an awareness of shape, weight and size. They compare quantities and sort and match objects. Children recognise numbers and are able to understand about how many more or less they need. One child estimating that she needed 'two more'. Children sing songs and rhymes and add and subtract and problem solve in every day routines. Children recognise complex shapes such as hexagons and pentagons.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's progress in this area is very good. The children explore a wide variety of resources. The themes are planned to encourage the children to use all their senses. Children explore similarities and differences and talk about their own families and those of others in the community. Children discuss the past and future events when they discuss the weather chart. They celebrate festivals and commemorate these. Children have regular access to the computer on a planned group basis.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's progress in this area is very good. The children use a wide range of tools and equipment. They can manoeuvre a computer mouse and use hole punches, staplers and scissors. Children have opportunities to climb and balance and with adult support are learning to throw, kick and catch a ball. They regularly take part in planned activities in the outdoor play area to help them exercise and learn about how their body works when they move quickly and slowly.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's progress in this area is generally good. Children have regular opportunities to use musical instruments and to sometimes make their own. They sing nursery rhymes with great enthusiasm and are confident with all the words and actions. Children create art work for displays which support themes and celebrations such as 'My Family. However, there are limited opportunities for children to access and use resources for free art work and to develop their individual ideas and imagination.

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

- Develop the system for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching.
- Improve the assessment and evaluation of children's individual progress to enable staff to plan the next steps for children in all six areas of learning.
- Ensure that sufficient time and value is given to developing the children's interest in books and the opportunities to express their individuality, creative ideas and imagination throughout the day.

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.