



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 126972

DfES Number: 510458

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	28/09/2004
Inspector Name	Alison Weaver

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	The Alphabet Train Nursery School
Setting Address	Len Fagg Hall 71a St. Johns Road Tunbridge Wells Kent TN4 9RR

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Ms Amy Clarkson
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## 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 Train Nursery School has been run by the current owner since 2001. It operates from the first floor of a rented building near to the centre of Tunbridge Wells. The accommodation consists of a spacious hall area, one large play room, a small kitchen, toilets, and a number of storage rooms. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 26 children from 2 to 4 years on roll. This includes 16 funded 3 year olds but currently no funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting does not currently support any children with special needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times only. Sessions are from 08.30 until 12.15 on Mondays and Fridays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays the sessions are from 08.30 until 12.15 and 13.00 until 15.45. On Wednesdays the nursery is open from 08.30 until 15.00.

Five staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3. Two staff are currently working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

### How good is the Day Care?

The Alphabet Train Nursery School provides good quality care for children.

The staff provide a calm, relaxed, and friendly environment where children feel secure and settled. The staff work well together as a team and are very supportive to one another. They are enthusiastic and show commitment to improving practices in the setting. The recruitment procedure is satisfactory. The induction of new staff is basic and does not include any written guidance to ensure that new staff are fully aware of the procedures of the group.

The setting is well organised and effective use is made of the space. The emphasis is on making the environment as child friendly as possible. Overall staff give high priority to ensuring children are safe at all times. Children develop a good understanding of healthy eating. In general there are appropriate hygiene procedures in place.

There is an extensive range of very good quality equipment for the children to choose from. Children are involved in a broad range of activities which promote their individual development. They are interested in the activities and concentrate well. The staff provide positive support and encouragement which results in children being well behaved. Staff are good role models and show that they value and respect the children's contributions. They are skilful in developing children's confidence and independence.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive a variety of helpful information about the setting and regular verbal feedback about their child's progress. They are happy with the care provided and feel able to share any concerns with staff. All the required documentation is in place with one minor weakness.

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

Not applicable.

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

- The environment is used exceptionally well and it provides a very warm and welcoming atmosphere. The hallway is used effectively as an area where parents can read a variety of helpful information about the group and the curriculum. The whole setting is child friendly and visually very stimulating. There is a wide range of colourful and attractive wall displays, posters, and interest tables.
- There is an excellent range of high quality resources for the children. The toys and equipment are very safe, well maintained, and used imaginatively to support children's learning. The storage of the resources is effective at promoting children's independence as it enables children to make their own choices from some of the equipment.
- The children are very confident, settled, and happy. They relate well to each other and to the adults. Staff build warm, caring relationships with the children. The children are well occupied and clearly enjoy their time in the setting.
- The staff team works very well together and are very supportive of one another. They are all very experienced and keen to develop their knowledge.
- Despite the lack of an outdoor area the staff provide the children with regular opportunities to play with a variety of larger equipment where they can extend their physical skills.

**What needs to be improved?**

- the induction process for new staff to ensure they are fully aware of what is expected, with particular regard to behaviour management and child protection,
- hygiene procedures in the setting particularly at snack times and after messy activities,
- the register, to show times of attendance of staff and children,
- safety, with regard to the storage heater.

**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	Produce and implement a thorough induction process which includes issues such as behaviour management and child protection.
6	Ensure that the storage heater in the hall does not present a hazard to children.
7	Improve hygiene practices at snack times and after messy play activities.

## 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 The Alphabet Train Nursery School is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a very good understanding of how children develop and learn. They plan a range of activities based on real life situations that help children progress in all areas of learning. Staff know the children well and make observations and use these to assess children's progress. The short term planning does not clearly show the learning intention of the activities.

Relationships between staff and children are good. Staff support children's learning by asking questions that help children organise and express their thoughts. Staff encourage children to make choices by making the toys and resources easily accessible. The use of praise and encouragement help children understand the clear and consistent boundaries. Staff create a stimulating environment where children's work is beautifully displayed and labelled.

Leadership and management are very good. Staff work well as a team and clear communication allows them to provide a stimulating well-balanced programme. Staff meet regularly to evaluate their work and to discuss future activities.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Staff provide a welcoming and supportive environment where parents feel comfortable in communicating their ideas and concerns about their children. Parents receive good quality information about all aspects of the setting. Parents share information with staff and receive regular feedback about their children's progress.

### What is being done well?

- The partnership with parents is very good. The information about the foundation stage outlines what children are expected to learn and how they will learn. This ensures parents understand that play has an important role in developing children's skills for the next stage of learning.
- Staff are good role models and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning by presenting activities in an interesting and enthusiastic manner. Staff interact well with children supporting their learning through good questioning techniques.
- Relationships in the setting are very good. Children respond positively to staff, develop good social skills and behave well. They are keen to join in with activities and their levels of concentration are high. Staff are sensitive to the needs of the children.

<b>What needs to be improved?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● the short term planning</li></ul>



<b>What has improved since the last inspection?</b>
<p>The group have made very good progress since the last inspection when they were asked to improve the opportunities for parents to review children's progress reports regularly and make comments where appropriate.</p> <p>All parents have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress during meetings with their child's key worker. Parents receive a written report and there is space for parents to comment and add to their children's assessment.</p>

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are extremely well motivated and enjoy new challenges. They concentrate well at self-chosen activities. Children are independent. Children are developing good relationships and get on well with peers and adults. They are beginning to understand the need to share and take turns when playing together. Children behave very well and respond to requests for good behaviour. They talk happily about their home life and family.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children speak very confidently to peers and adults. They talk openly during circle time about themselves and their families. They express their ideas and experiences well using good vocabulary. Children are confident writers. They recognise and write some letters of their own name correctly. Children's listening skills are very good. They listen and take turns when speaking and playing in large and small groups.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children count confidently and recognise numbers that are important to them. They enjoy number activities and are beginning to understand the concept of simple additions and subtraction. Children's understanding of space, shape and measure is developing well. They learn about the properties of simple shapes and make patterns using beads and pegs. They use appropriate mathematical language during free play activities.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore objects and materials using their senses. Children are beginning to understand past and present. They discuss people, places and events in their own lives. Children learn about their environment and different cultures through well planned topics such as transport. They have regular access to a computer and enjoy playing with everyday communication technology.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move confidently and in a variety of ways. They are competent when using the climbing frame. They show good co-ordination when jumping and balancing. They respond and move enthusiastically during music sessions. Children's fine motor skills are developing well. They are competent when selecting and using small equipment such as scissors, glue sticks, pens and pencils. Children learn about the need for a healthy diet through food tasting activities.

<b>CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children use their senses to explore and describe experiences such as tasting and smelling food, listening to music and feeling a range of textures. Children enjoy music and respond enthusiastically during music sessions. They regularly play with musical instruments. They experiment with sound and enjoy beating out rhythms. Children express themselves creatively through a range of mediums. They paint, draw and make collages that represent their experiences.	
<b>Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.</b>	

### **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:
- the short term planning to reflect, clearly, the learning intention

*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.*