

Alpha Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY408710
Inspection date	23/09/2010
Inspector	Susan Harvey

Setting address	Freshbrook Community Centre, Worsley Road, Freshbrook, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN5 8NU
Telephone number	07875422315
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Alpha Preschool opened in 2010. It operates from a room in Freshbrook Community Centre, in West Swindon. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9am to 3pm term time only.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time, of these 12 children may be under three. There are currently 26 children from two to under five on roll, some in part-time places.

There are four members of staff who work directly with the children, two are qualified to level two and the manager and deputy are qualified to level three. There is an administrator working in the group and the pre-school is managed by a committee.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children from Alpha Pre-school benefit greatly from staff members' inclusive practice. They have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development regulations. This means that children make good progress and their individual needs are successfully met. Partnership with parents and other settings is well established and children's welfare is significantly enhanced by staff members' promotion of their safety. Staff know the children well and the caring ethos of staff enables children to feel secure and enjoy their time in the pre-school. Staff are very keen to attend training, as a result, outcomes for children are consistently improved.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop a robust process for ongoing self-evaluation that covers all aspects of the childcare in order to identify the strengths and priorities for development
- ensure that the risk record is regularly maintained as required to include the date and by whom it has been checked

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a very clear understanding of child protection issues and their responsibility to safeguard children. Staff have recently attended safeguarding training which ensures that they are up-to-date with the latest legislation. A

detailed risk record is in place for every area with which children come into contact. It is regularly reviewed but lacks details of who and when the review was carried out.

Children learn through play and make effective progress. Staff have a clear understanding of children's individual learning needs and provide a good level of support when children need it. Children are independent and are able to choose activities for themselves from a good range of resources available to them. They are able to extend their learning by having the freedom to play either inside or out-of-doors. The Early Years Foundation scheme chosen by the staff includes recording children's progress in their individual learning journals. This is managed through the use of observations and assessment and is well documented with photographic evidence and examples of children's work.

The relationship with parents and other settings is good. Children who are also cared for by childminders and those moving onto school benefit greatly by the close partnership. This makes for a strong contribution towards children's achievements and well-being. Parents are provided with a wealth of information when they first register their child in the pre-school. This exchange of information continues with regular meetings with parents, as well as a contact book for each child so that parents can make comments about what their child has been learning at home. This has proved to be very successful as a means of communication between staff and parents. The strong parent committee is very supportive of what the staff are trying to achieve with the children.

Equality and diversity is promoted through the positive approach taken by staff to treat all children and their families as individuals. The welcome children and their families receive, is part of the caring ethos of the pre-school established by the staff. Books and resources support children's culture. Staff have aims and objectives for the future in order to improve opportunities for children. This includes developing the outside play area, building areas in the garden where children can grow vegetables and flowers and where they can have a permanent climbing structure and an area to run around freely. Even though the local authority self-evaluation programme has been started, it is not sufficiently robust to ensure that a full evaluation of the setting is effective.

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

Children are cared for in an environment where they are nurtured and supported. Children are very well behaved and the consistent management of their behaviour by staff is one of the strengths of the pre-school. Children learn in a positive way about the impact their behaviour has on others. They are beginning to learn how to negotiate and cooperate as well as sharing and taking turns. Therefore, children are well aware of the boundaries and they feel safe in the setting, which gives them a strong sense of security.

Children learn about a healthy lifestyle. They do this from the good example set by

staff. For example, children have free access to outside play and fresh air, at all times. At snack time, they independently choose from a selection of fruit bowls and carefully pour their own drinks from jugs. This is a social occasion where staff and children sit together and talk about the events of the morning. Children readily access drinking water throughout the day from jugs set out on a table for them to reach easily. As a result, they are beginning to know their own bodily needs.

Children enjoy learning and their time in the pre-school. There are many opportunities for children to be creative. Resources provided for both inside and outside help children to experience their own different ways of learning. An example of this is, the pleasure children have in painting pictures outside, playing in the water tray and sand pit. They sit together and work out the picture for a floor puzzle. Children sit comfortably in the book corner surrounded by a good selection of books. They treat books with respect and enjoy listening to stories.

Children make friends in pre-school easily. They are confident and show good levels of self-esteem. This is developed through staff members' encouragement to take the initiative by giving children choices to work independently, as well as cooperating with each other. Children are at ease with staff and talk with visitors confidently. They are curious about how things work. For example, following a discussion with staff about how a volcano works, they decided to make a volcano from newspaper soaked in water and glue surrounding a plastic bottle. Each child adds strips to the bottle while talking to the staff member who is supporting the activity. They keep adding paper until a volcano shape begins to appear. Children enthusiastically contribute to the activity which, when finished, will introduce them to a simple science activity when they see the result of mixing water, vinegar and bicarbonate of soda to give the smoke effect of a volcano. One recent joy for the children is the colourful goldfish which they have named and take turns in feeding. They enjoy a cooking activity each week, making biscuits and scones which are shared with visitors and eaten at snack time. Overall, children are beginning to show how to be responsible for other things, learning to cook while developing skills for the future.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

