

# Alpha Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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## 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*.

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## Description of the setting

The Alpha Pre-School is a long established pre-school group, run as a part of the ministry of the Littlehampton Baptist Church, in Littlehampton, West Sussex. The management committee is made up from officers of the church and parents from the pre-school. It operates from the main hall and two side rooms in the Baptist Church building and serves the local community.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time and it is registered on the Early Years Register. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.30am to 12.30pm, term time only.

The pre-school provides care for children aged from two to the end of the early years age range. There are currently 21 children on roll. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is in training.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They receive appropriate levels of care to feel safe and confident, in a generally inclusive environment. The group is, in the main, appropriately led and managed and partnership working regarding the sharing of information is satisfactory. Staff understand their key responsibilities, though are less sure of some safeguarding procedures and are not always deployed as effectively as possible to support the changing needs and interests of the children. The organisation of the day, at times, lacks purpose to offer children plenty of challenging experiences, including play outdoors. Some reflective practice takes place to support their continued improvement, with priorities such as the new outdoor play space a positive addition to the provision.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the organisation of the day and deployment of staff to enhance children's learning and development experiences
- increase children's daily opportunities for learning in the outdoor environment
- improve the two-way flow of information with parents to promote a shared understanding of children's individual needs and involve parents in practical

ways to support their child's learning and development. Also, give particular consideration to gathering information about children's home languages so as to support those for whom English is an additional language.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

All mandatory documentation for the safe management of the group and care of the children is in place and appropriately maintained. Staff follow appropriate safeguarding procedures as part of their daily routines, including using risk assessment to ensure the environment is clean, safe, and suitable for the children. Staff have a secure understanding of child protection procedures if they have concerns about the welfare of a child. They are less confident about the procedures to follow if someone makes an allegation against a member of staff. Staff have harmonious and caring relationships with the children, which supports their emotional well-being in order to help them feel safe within the group. They encourage the children to make some of their own decisions and be active learners and staff have a satisfactory understanding of their roles. At times the organisation of the day is less successful because it lacks clear direction, meaning that children are not always having challenging experiences tailored to their individual needs and interests. At times staff deployment and teamwork are not completely effective, for example, when children have to sit passively waiting for some staff to be ready to go out for a walk into the library grounds.

Staff endeavour to create a child-friendly space within the shared premises, using posters and children's creative efforts to enhance the physical environment. There is a wide range of resources available to the children, which reflect positive images of equality and diversity. Children are able to make some choices for themselves about what they play with and are encouraged to share, particularly with equipment such as the computer, so that everyone gets an equal turn. Children learning English as an additional language are supported to an adequate level, though staff are not always fully aware of the different languages the children speak. This means they are not able to completely support their specific individual needs and this has an impact on how well they are able to narrow possible achievement gaps.

Staff show commitment to improving the provision for children, in order to enhance their experiences. For example, the addition of a child-friendly toileting and hand-washing area positively supports children's developing independence. Staff undertake further training and seek advice from the local authority to develop their skills and knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The views of parents also contribute to their self-evaluation and continuous improvement of the provision. The pre-school encourages parents to feel a part of the community within the group, with invitations to events such as the Harvest festival. They keep them informed about the pre-school through newsletters and verbal feedback but parents are not always actively involved in their children's development. For example staff do not routinely tell them their child's targeted next steps to extend their learning and progress towards the early learning goals. Partnerships in the wider context are satisfactory; the pre-school has positive links with special needs

services and works collaboratively with other childcare providers to support children effectively.

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

Children generally make progress in their learning because they are active learners and enjoy being cared for by staff who have a sound knowledge of the learning requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. A satisfactory observation, assessment and planning system is in place to monitor and support children's stages of development in each of the learning areas. Staff know their key children well, engage positively with them and provide them with a comfortable play environment. The current lack of an outdoor play environment, though planned for as part of their ongoing improvement, hinders children's opportunities to get fresh air and enjoy sustained physical exercise. This has an impact on their physical development and some children's behaviour. They enjoy playing skittles, learning how to control a ball as they throw it; they enjoy climbing and running around and going into the grounds of the library to search for insects. Children concentrate and persevere at chosen tasks, such as constructing a large model with plastic blocks, which they proudly show off to their peers and the staff. Other children have fun mixing flour, food colouring, and water to create their own play dough and explore their own creativity. Children enjoy using technology equipment such as the computer, which helps them gain important skills for their future development. They learn about diversity in the world around them through adult-led activities and the celebration of religious and cultural events. Pre-writing skills are developed as paints and pencils are accessible and are well-used by children in the role play area.

The outcomes for children are satisfactory, meaning they are safe, learn about a healthy lifestyle and making a positive contribution by being kind, treating each other with respect and behaving appropriately. Children show an understanding about keeping safe as they sit down to use tools such as scissors, and how to manoeuvre themselves on the climbing apparatus inside. They behave well when walking from the hall to the library next door, holding hands with an adult and following instruction. The rolling snack time enables children to make their own decisions about when to eat; these are sociable occasions when children sit together and select items to eat from the range of fruit and toast available to them. Drinks are readily available to them throughout the session, which contributes to them keeping healthy.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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