

# The Oaks Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY433777  
**Inspection date** 08/02/2012  
**Inspector** Sarah Clements

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**Type of setting** 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*.

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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## Description of the setting

The Oaks Nursery was registered in 2011 and is one of five nurseries that are privately owned and managed by Alpha Nurseries Ltd. It operates from purpose built premises in the centre of Diss in Norfolk. Children share access to three enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 28 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 18 children attending who are within the early years age range. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six members of staff. All staff hold relevant early years qualifications to at least level 2. The manager holds Early Years Professional Status. Two members of staff are working towards further qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy, confident and flourish because of the staff's unquestionable commitment to meeting their individual needs. The nursery environment is exceptionally safe, warm and vibrant, and offers children a wealth of inspiring and challenging play opportunities. As a result, children are making outstanding progress in their learning and development. The staff make the most of every opportunity to keep parents and carers fully informed, providing them with an extensive range of information and encouraging them to share in their children's learning. The cohesive staff team is inspired by a highly ambitious and motivated management team. Together they value the process of self-evaluation and demonstrate an exceptional capacity for securing continuous improvement to the existing outstanding outcomes for children.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- extending opportunities to work in partnership with local schools, early years settings and other outside agencies in order to promote further continuity in each child's care, learning and development.

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

Children's safety is of paramount importance and all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to protect and safeguard children. They are expected to complete regular safeguarding children training courses to ensure they fully recognise the possible indicators of abuse and are clear about procedures for reporting concerns to the relevant agencies. The nursery's rigorous and robust recruitment procedures ensure that only staff who complete the necessary checks and who are suitable to work with the children are able to be in close contact with them. The nursery building is maintained to an exceptionally safe and secure standard as a result of the meticulous risk assessments which are carried out each day. It offers vibrant and airy surroundings where children have ample space to move around freely. Children's learning experiences are significantly enhanced by a superb range of resources, toys and equipment that are easily accessible to all children.

The involvement of parents and carers is fully valued and exceptionally well promoted. Their views, and those of the children, are regularly obtained through daily discussions, questionnaires and parents' evenings. For example, the management promptly respond to parental requests to improve the outdoor lighting at the nursery. Parents are highly satisfied with the provision. They appreciate the improved standards at the nursery since the change of ownership and express their gratitude for the way in which the staff help their children to progress 'in leaps and bounds'. There are a wealth of opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's learning and development. For example, they are encouraged to bring in recycled packaging for children to use in their play, and often provide photographs to add to their child's learning journey record. Parent observation sheets are routinely issued with monthly fee invoices, offering ongoing purposeful opportunities for parents to share their knowledge of their children's development. The nursery is very proactive in fostering strong links with professionals from outside health and education agencies. For example, she initiates contact with speech and language therapists and makes full use of their expertise when drawing up individual education plans for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is a well-established partnership with one of the local schools, which promotes further continuity for children as they move on to full-time school. However, wider partnerships with other schools, early years providers and agencies are still being developed at this stage.

The experienced manager has very high aspirations for the quality of the nursery, and inspires the staff to conscientiously reflect upon their practice. Morale is extremely high amongst the staff team, as they feel their professional development is very well promoted and they are given many opportunities to contribute their ideas. The manager and staff use the Ofsted self-evaluation form as a tool to establish ambitious targets for improvement including plans to develop a dedicated outdoor space for babies, and to promote a opportunities for grandparents to get involved in the nursery. As a result of their dedication and rigorous use of self-evaluation, the manager and staff team are in a highly positive position to enable them to sustain the existing high quality standards and to continue making the significant improvements they have planned for the nursery.

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

Children develop an excellent understanding of how to live very healthily. They are intuitively aware of the need to wash their hands at pertinent times and confidently help themselves to tissues to wipe their noses. The nursery is passionate about planning varied menus which are precisely balanced and tailored to meet children's individual dietary needs. Children enjoy social meal times and are routinely supported to use a child-friendly knife to chop soft fruits and to pour their own drinks. Tremendous emphasis is placed on ensuring children learn how to keep themselves safe. Purposeful discussions enable children to learn to use scissors very carefully and gentle reminders discourage babies from climbing unsafely. Fire drills are child-friendly and meaningful as staff use props to simulate where a fire might start and help children to consider the safest exit route.

Babies and children show that they feel very much at home in the nursery as they confidently move around, selecting the toys and activities that capture their interest. Resources are reviewed continuously to ensure they remain fully accessible and maximise opportunities for children to have a dynamic role in leading their own learning. For example, children are able to extend a salt dough activity as they find a small imaginary microwave to cook their model cakes. They show great skills in using technology as they turn the controls and press the buttons on the microwave and acknowledge that they may need to use oven gloves. An excellent key person system enables the staff to form genuinely secure relationships with the children. This has a significant impact on the time that children take to settle into the nursery when they first attend. Staff skilfully make the most of spontaneous opportunities to offer children rich practical experiences. For example, when the weather is snowy and cold, this is embraced as an opportunity for children to explore the feeling of snow and ice and to discover what happens when these begin to melt. Conversation is free-flowing amongst the children and the staff model clear use of language to promote children's excellent communication and language skills. Children have a wealth of opportunities to develop their early writing skills. For example, they delight in writing for a purpose as they pretend to be police officers and make notes on a clipboard. The partitioned space for babies works very successfully to foster their sense of security, whilst also supporting their ability to communicate and interact with the nursery as a whole. They enjoy ample space to practise their new physical skills as they pull themselves up to stand and push along a walker.

Rigorous systems are in place to observe, assess and record children's progress which means that planning is truly focussed on each child's interests and future learning priorities. This results in every child making rapid progress according to their starting points and capabilities. Children's awareness of diversity and the wider world is fully enhanced by a range of toys and activities that reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability. Cultural and religious festivals are actively planned for including opportunities to try Chinese food and make dragon masks during Chinese New Year. Beautiful drapes of Indian fabric hang from the ceiling in the baby area to add to the colourful and interesting environment. Pictorial

timetables and symbols are used throughout the setting as a communication aid and these support children to understand the features of the daily routine. This is particularly beneficial for the younger children in the group and those children who have English as an additional language. Children are building firm friendships, as they play very happily together and are often thoughtful of the needs of others.

## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### 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>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met