

# Alexandra Under Three's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY278148

**Inspection date**

13/03/2012

**Inspector**

Rachel Ayo

**Setting address**

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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**

Alexandra Under Threes Centre was registered in 2004 and operates from Alexandra Children's Centre in the Daubhill area of Bolton in Lancashire. The under three's provision is housed in a self-contained unit, with three rooms for children and its own outdoor play area. It is open all year round from 7.45am to 6pm each day, excluding the week between Christmas and New Year, and accommodates the families within the local and wider community. When children reach the age of three years they attend the nearby Alexandra Nursery School, to which the provision is connected.

The daycare centre is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 41 children in the early years age group. There are currently 49 children on roll including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

There are 11 members of staff employed to work directly with the children and additional staff are employed to undertake domestic tasks. All staff hold an appropriate early years qualification from level 2 up to degree status. The daycare centre receives support from their local authority, their sister nursery and health professionals on site.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare is promoted successfully in most aspects. Space and resources are utilised well overall to meet children's individual needs and individualised observational assessment processes are generally effective in promoting their learning and development. There is outstanding partnership working with parents and others to promote inclusion and there is a strong commitment to narrowing the achievement gap and integrating all individuals. There are high aspirations for continuous improvement and leaders and managers are exceptionally successful in inspiring the staff to work towards meeting or sustaining ambitious targets.

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

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

- review the arrangements for supervising very young children and the organisation of staff in order to meet the individual needs of all children
- make provision (space or partitioned area) for children who wish to relax, play quietly or sleep. This may be converted from normal play space providing children can rest and/or sleep safely without disturbance.

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

Children are safeguarded effectively in most aspects with external health and safety audits having judged procedures as outstanding. There is robust staff recruitment, vetting and induction and risk assessments are generally comprehensive in identifying and minimising risks to children. Adults' thorough awareness of child protection issues results in exemplary collaborative working with other key agencies and the comprehensive policies and procedures are implemented robustly where concerns arise. Regular welfare assessments of children are also undertaken. Security of the premises is excellent and there are generally good supervision levels. During the morning 'open door' time all age groups move between the babies' base room and the central area in order to gain a wider social experience. There is less vigilance of babies and toddlers during this period, however, and although adult to child ratios are met on the premises, there are times, for instance, when all children in the baby room are awake, when more staff are required.

Parents and carers are highly engaged to promote excellent coherence in children's care and education and there are outstanding arrangements for overcoming communication barriers. There is an informative array of notices, photographs and displays and daily record sheets are provided along with newsletters and leaflets giving different childcare advice. Parent consultations provide a more formal forum for sharing progress and parents are highly encouraged to support learning at home as planning and summary sheets are shared.

Record keeping systems are generally maintained well to promote the efficient and safe management of the provision. The setting is highly committed to continuous improvement and exceptionally well targeted plans arise from extensive self-evaluation systems. Although small weaknesses have not been identified. Regular staff and management meetings take place, objective plans are set and celebrated yearly, and external and internal observations are undertaken. Processes for managing staff's performance and professional development are used exceptionally well. Very good strides have been made since the last inspection with recommendations being effectively met overall. Parents are fully consulted on a range of aspects, for example, through questionnaires. Their suggestions, such as, changing the teatime routine and opening hours are positively addressed.

Children's individual needs are effectively met in most aspects and there are excellent systems for finding out about these. Comprehensive information is gained from parents through 'My Unique Child' forms and additional forms provided at regular intervals. There is excellent partnership working with other professionals and health, care and education plans are stringently followed in order to meet children's additional needs. Children come from differing backgrounds and linguistic diversity is very much celebrated and encouraged. Many different celebrations take place in order for children to learn about their own and other cultures and beliefs and they observe diversity further through a good range of displayed images and resources.

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

An overall effective key person system and good settling in arrangements enable children to feel safe and secure with each key person meeting their key child's individual routine. Children receive generally good levels of individual attention and support to promote their learning and development. Resources are plentiful of superb quality and are organised well at low-level to promote children's developing independence. The babies base room, also accessed by all as a 'cosy room' and post-lunch sleeping area, is enhanced by superb sensory equipment.

Space is generally organised well to meet children's individual needs. Although, when young children and babies require a sleep at times other than after lunch effective provision is not made to enable them to do so safely and without disturbance. There are an exceptional range of planning tools which undoubtedly consider children's individual needs and interests and there are thorough systems for individualised observational assessment. Although staff find out what children know and can do on entry, records do not clearly reflect this.

Children show good levels of interest in their environment are active and inquisitive and enabled to make choices and be independent within daily routines. Warm, positive interactions are observed between staff and children which promotes their self-esteem and confidence. Adults support learning and development well by engaging in children's play. They encourage children's imagination in the hairdresser role play area and exciting tray of soil, effectively incorporate simple mathematical concepts during daily routines and activities and talk about what different sensory objects feel or sound like as babies explore these. Children explore and investigate media and materials in the creative room, such as water which has chocolate cereal added to create a new dimension to this. Children's communication, language and early literacy skills are superbly supported, which is of particular significance to those children who use English as an additional language or who have a special educational need. There are circle time language sessions, dual language words and signs, the use of sign language and letters showing how vocabulary can be supported at home.

Nutritious meals and snacks are provided and mealtimes are very sociable and relaxed. Drinks are offered with meals and snacks, although children cannot independently access water in order to manage their own hydration. A healthy box and diary encourages parents to promote healthy lifestyles at home and staff model and encourage good hygiene routines to minimise the spread of infection. Children benefit from daily fresh air and exercise and the outdoor area is excitingly equipped, providing very good levels of challenge; children confidently and skilfully negotiate the small sloping paved pathway with wheeled toys. Adults remind children to be careful in order to help them learn about staying safe.

## 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>	2
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>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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