

# Best Start@Alma Park

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY437137

**Inspection date**

16/08/2012

**Inspector**

Anne Archer

**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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

Best Start @ Alma Park is a well-established day nursery which re-registered in 2011 following a change in company legal status. It is one of two settings run by a private provider. The nursery operates from a purpose designed barn conversion on Alma Business Park, located just off the A5 road at Wibtoft between Hinckley and Lutterworth in South Leicestershire. The nursery serves a wide rural and urban area. Children are based in two ground floor play rooms and there is an enclosed outside area for outdoor play.

The nursery follows the Montessori approach to early years learning and is registered on the Early Years Register to care for up to 20 children in the early years age group at any one time. There are currently 39 children on roll, of whom nine three- and four-year-olds are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. The nursery is open from 7.30am until 6pm each week day throughout the year, only closing between Christmas and New Year and on Bank Holidays. Children attend a variety of sessions depending on the individual requirements of each family.

The nursery employs a manager and four staff to work with the children and the team includes staff who hold Early Years Practitioner status and Montessori teaching diplomas. A cook is employed to support the childcare staff. The nursery is in receipt of support from the local authority.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children participate in a rich and varied programme of learning experiences and opportunities enabling them to make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points and capabilities. Their welfare and well-being are extremely well supported by a dedicated staff group in the calm and supportive, yet stimulating environment. Safeguarding is given the highest priority and the implementation of policies and procedures is robust. Relationships with parents are professional while being friendly and valued by both parties and partnerships with other agencies are well established and effective in providing excellent support for those children with additional learning needs. Systems to forge links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage work well in the majority of cases. The owner and senior management are a strong cohesive team and as a result their capacity to sustain high standards is outstanding.

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

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

- developing the way information is requested from other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage to further support children's progress towards the early learning goals.

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

Children's welfare is absolutely secure because the adults working at the nursery at all levels have a very good understanding of their responsibilities in relation to child protection and are highly skilled in keeping children safe. Their understanding of potential concerns and how to respond depending on their role is highly commendable. Policies and procedures are reviewed very regularly to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children is a priority. Recruitment and induction processes ensure staff are suitable to work with children and staff are loyal to the provision. There are very secure systems practised in relation to the collection of children and the monitoring of visitors.

The nursery accommodation is very well suited to its purpose. Space is used very well, including the outdoors, to maintain a highly stimulating learning environment in which children make excellent progress. Regular risk assessments are conducted on all areas of the nursery and equipment that children may come into contact with and they are updated effectively. Daily early morning checks before children arrive ensure the nursery is ready for them and staff are vigilant throughout the day to ensure that the risk of any potential hazard for individual children is reduced. Resources are of high quality, plentiful and suitable. They are used very effectively to support children's ongoing learning. The nursery owner takes steps to ensure resources and the environment are fully sustainable.

The effectiveness with which the nursery promotes equality and diversity is excellent. The owner and management have high aspirations for quality and a strong commitment to equality for all. The methods used within the nursery to support children's learning are practised by all staff and consistently improve outcomes for children. The effectiveness of the nursery's engagement with parents and carers is outstanding. Relationships are both positive and well established enabling staff to be fully informed of children's changing needs. Parents are regularly asked for their views and are keen to give them. They are kept very well informed about their children's achievements, well-being and development. This includes verbally each day with the key worker and through diary sheets, regular progress reports, newsletters, parents evenings and other events throughout the year. Parents are encouraged and enabled to contribute to their children's ongoing assessment by sharing their knowledge of children's progress, development and experiences.

Partnerships with other agencies support children's progress exceptionally well. Strategies used to encourage information sharing with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage are usually successful, although, occasionally information does not include detail about children's progress towards the early learning goals. This means that staff can not make a fully informed decision about children's next steps. The owner, management and staff work together to ensure self-evaluation

procedures effectively bring about continued improvement to further benefit the children who attend. As a result, there is outstanding capacity to sustain high standards.

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

Children arriving at the nursery are excited to find out what experiences and opportunities are on offer. They are confident in their surroundings whilst showing trust and contentment in the presence of all staff. Children make choices about the activities they participate in. While planned activities reflect their interests and learning needs, any new ideas and interests are picked up quickly by staff and incorporated into the day. This results in the weekly planning being flexible and very much linked to children's individual needs. Children feel valued and develop a strong sense of security in the warm, caring environment. They clearly enjoy the attention of their carers and show by their behaviour and mannerisms that they feel safe. Children show by their actions that they understand nursery rules and boundaries and behave exceptionally well. The positive behaviour management consistently implemented by all staff significantly impacts on children's well-being.

Children adopt health routines with sensitive support. Three- and four-year-olds understand why they must wash their hands at certain times and are efficient at cleaning their teeth after lunch. They remember that the dentist has said to brush them for two minutes to keep them healthy. Children enjoy well balanced, nutritious meals and snacks and are encouraged to try new foods, subject to any dietary requirements they may have. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as they are shown how to use equipment properly. Gentle reminders by staff about potentially dangerous actions, such as reversing the toy car while other children are in close proximity supports this.

Outdoor play is a very important part of the learning programme at this nursery. Experiences and play opportunities outside support children in all areas of their learning. They participate in bug hunting, develop negotiation and balancing skills on the apparatus and help to tend the beans and other vegetables which they may at a later date eat for lunch. Children learn about growth and height as they discuss which is the tallest sunflower and also develop problem solving and reasoning skills as they practise reversing the car in tight spaces. Children play a full and active role in their learning by showing great curiosity and a desire to explore. Dinosaurs are a particular favourite of some children and they consult and work together to make a structure out of the most unlikely materials. Other children show an interest in fire control equipment after a successful emergency evacuation practice and make a fire extinguisher from bricks.

Children play independently and in small friendship groups, often supporting each other. Staff ensure that younger children who choose to play alone or watch their older friends for a time, are happy and content. Older children are keen to choose which books to look at after lunch and give clear instructions to the staff about which they would like to listen to first. They usually join in with the storytelling. These children are keen to discuss everything that they are involved in, sometimes

with friends, but more often than not drawing in the adults. Staff successfully provide them with snippets of information to encourage them to think more deeply about the subject. Younger children are content to listen to a story and to look at the pictures in the book, enjoying the closeness of their carer. Children develop skills to support their future learning as they make excellent progress in all areas of learning given their starting points and capabilities. They do so in a truly supportive environment where each child is made to feel special.

## 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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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

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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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