

Alphabet Day Nursery

Camphill Centre, Hunsbury Hill Road, NORTHAMPTON, Northamptonshire, NN4 9UW

Inspection date	23/04/2013
Previous inspection date	22/07/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Relationships with parents are highly effective. They are fully involved in the care and learning of the children, which ensures that children receive exceptional support and consistency and continuity in their learning and development.
- Children are highly motivated to explore and learn in this vibrant nursery. They are able to choose freely from an exciting range of indoor and outside activities and resources that successfully promote their all-round learning and development.
- Children have an exceptional relationship with their key person and they develop secure attachments. As a result, children's well-being is very effectively promoted.
- Partnership working with other early years providers and agencies are excellent. This supports children to have extremely positive transitions between settings and onwards to starting school.
- Leadership is inspirational. The management team are highly motivated and successful in working together to drive and sustain improvement. They have created a high quality early years provision where children achieve their very best.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector held a meeting with the provider/manager of the provision and spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the provider/manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector observed activities in all rooms and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector looked at a selection of children's assessment records and planning, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation and a range of other documentation.

Inspector

Hazel White

Full Report

Information about the setting

Alphabet Day Nursery is one of two nurseries run by the company. It registered in 2004. It is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery operates from a purpose built building in the Camp Hill area of Northampton. It is open each weekday from 7.45am to 6pm all year round, except bank holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions and share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 63 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 13 members of staff, 12 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one staff has a level 2 qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- enhance further babies exploration of the rich and stimulating natural environment, for example, by providing chimes, streamers, windmills and bubbles to investigate the effects of wind.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have an excellent understanding of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use their extensive knowledge to effectively plan activities that successfully promote individual children's learning. This ensures that children thoroughly enjoy interesting activities and a wide range of experiences. Regular assessments of children's progress are well documented and consistently shared with their parents. This enables parents to become fully involved in children's learning. In addition, staff provide detailed information about activities children take part in at the nursery and also make suggestions about how parents can support their children at home. For example, children take home books to read with their family. This significantly contributes to their learning. Staff make very good use of the 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage' guidance, to track children's development. This ensures teaching focuses on individual children's interests and the next steps in their learning. As a result, children make rapid progress in readiness for school.

The quality of teaching is outstanding. Staff give excellent priority to the prime areas of learning, such as personal, social and emotional development, with children under three. They effectively use the progress check at age two to identify when early intervention may be needed. This helps to ensure that children receive the appropriate level of support. Staff use open-ended questions and follow children's lead in their play, which encourages children's natural curiosity to learn. Play is adapted according to the child's ability so that all are provided with very good challenges. For example, pre-school children make intricate models, such as a 'robot' and 'binoculars' from empty boxes and plastic cups. They work out how much glue they need to make different materials stick together. Young children have tremendous fun painting their feet and hands, pressing them onto the paper to make marks.

Children become skilful communicators who fully understand the importance of listening attentively and taking turns in speaking. They are captivated as they listen to stories, enthusiastically joining in, using props to become the various characters. They confidently use descriptive words as they talk about the story. Toddlers are very proud of their 'story theatre', they competently move the 'animals' around as the story is being told. Staff model clear language during their activities without discouraging children's efforts as they copy new words. As a result, children extend their vocabulary and become articulate speakers. Pre-school children recognise their names as they self-register and have plentiful opportunities to make marks and develop early writing skills. For example, children use clip boards to record information about the 'tools' in the 'builder's yard' and write 'shopping lists' in their role play. Therefore, developing key skills for their future learning.

Children immensely enjoy outdoor play and are physically active. They confidently move, balance and climb on a wide range of apparatus, including more challenging adventure play equipment. Children thoroughly enjoy the use of the upstairs gym, which includes a cross trainer, cycling machine and running machine. They perform the 'Sticky Kids' warm up routine, therefore, learning the benefits that exercise has on the body. There is a strong emphasis on outdoor learning, which children relish. Children organise tea in the garden, transform the pergola into a 'super hero's den' and instigate their own games. This promotes children's imagination and fantasy play extremely well. In addition, they use magnifying glasses to aid their examination and investigation of objects and insects. Babies use their physical skills and developing coordination as they pull themselves up to standing on sturdy furniture. Staff encourage their drive to stand and walk by offering supportive words and lots of praise as they take tentative steps when practising their new skills. They experience lots of fresh air as they regularly access the garden, using sit and ride toys and walkers to aid their mobility. However, there is scope to further extend babies exploration of the exciting natural environment by using an even wider range of resources, such as streamers, so they can observe the effects of weather.

Children very ably use information technology and programmable toys. Their understanding of the wider world is also developing well, through opportunities to talk about their own families and visiting places in their local community. Children support various charities by taking part in sponsored events and receive certificates for their fund raising efforts. Consequently, children learn the importance of helping others.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are very relaxed and confident in the nurturing care of staff. They develop high levels of self-esteem because staff are attentive and value their contributions. Children are superbly behaved as they follow consistent boundaries and rules. For example, they learn to walk indoors and to share and take turns with popular toys. Staff are excellent role models, constantly encouraging children to say please and thank you. As a result, children have impeccable manners and are very polite. Children are increasingly independent as they manage their personal care, serve themselves at meal times and dress themselves for outdoor play. The learning environment is exceptionally well organised so that children can choose resources and move freely between indoor and outdoor areas.

Children benefit from very good settling-in procedures, which are based around their individual needs. This effectively supports them in the transition between home and the nursery. Children and babies show a secure sense of belonging because they develop strong bonds with their key person. Successful handover systems within the nursery ensure children are introduced to their new key person and spend time visiting their new room which enables them to build close relationships. Babies' emotional development is well promoted as they develop secure, trusting relationships with staff. For example, babies are cuddled closely when they are tired or upset and this ensures their emotional needs are met.

Children are well nourished because they are provided with an extensive range of nutritious foods and a choice of fruits and vegetables. Mealtimes are social occasions as the children sit chatting to their friends, eating freshly prepared meals and snacks. Children choose when they have their snack and this allows them to continue their activities and enhances the flow of the session. Children grow their own fruit and vegetables, such as strawberries, runner beans, cabbages, tomatoes, and sweet potato. This produce is then included in the menu, which effectively promotes children's understanding of healthy eating. Children are encouraged to take risks and learn about safety through everyday experiences. For example, they learn to climb stairs and use scissors and cutlery safely. On nursery outings, children wear high visibility vests, hold hands and know that they must stay close to an adult.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language, are provided with extensive support. Staff are skilled at working with outside agencies and increasing their own skills, so they provide support that is clearly focussed on children's specific needs. Children are very well prepared for managing new situations, including moving on to school. Staff organise 'lunch box days', whereby they discuss what order to eat their lunch, practice opening sandwiches wrapped in cling film and piercing drink cartons. Children practice getting into their PE kit and recognising their own belongings. These are all valuable skills in readiness for their next stage in learning.

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

There are highly effective safeguarding arrangements in place that protect children from harm. The management team and all staff have attended safeguarding training and so have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities. Rigorous recruitment systems are in place to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children and, through the comprehensive induction, all staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis and staff are well deployed to ensure that children are kept safe.

The management team are very effective leaders, setting high aspirations for quality. They share their vision with staff which means they all work together as a cohesive team. The provider has an excellent understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements. The pursuit of excellence is supported by highly effective monitoring and evaluation. The management and staff team consistently and accurately review the impact of the educational programme and resources on children's learning and development. They rigorously track and monitor each child's progress while they are at nursery so that any gaps in individual learning or the curriculum are promptly identified and addressed. Professional development of all staff is supported well through regular supervisions and appraisals. All staff work hard to provide high quality care and learning opportunities for all children. They are well qualified and regularly attend training, in order to further enhance the service they provide.

Highly effective partnerships with parents make a significant contribution to the nursery's effectiveness in promoting children's welfare, well-being and development. Parents speak highly of the nursery and staff team, explaining they feel very well informed, their children are happy and extremely well supported. They welcome the many opportunities to discuss their children's achievements at home and nursery with their key person and to agree their next steps. Parents are fully consulted regarding future plans for the nursery through questionnaires and newsletters. Highly successful links with the local school mean that expertise is shared in order to fully support pre-school children's needs, including those who need additional support. Consequently all children make smooth transitions into full-time education.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY283423
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	909287
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	77
Number of children on roll	63
Name of provider	Angela Evans
Date of previous inspection	22/07/2010
Telephone number	01604 771166

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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