

The Alphabet House Nursery School

Canberra Road, London, E6 2RW

Inspection date	10/07/2013
Previous inspection date	26/01/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children show high levels of independence, curiosity and imagination have good relationships with the staff and each other.
- Expectations for children's behaviour are clear. Children do what is asked of them, behaving well and developing their ability to share and take turns.
- Staff are aware of and respond well to particular needs of children who are learning English as an additional language.
- Partnership with parents is very well developed and this helps to contribute significantly so that the individual needs of all of the children are being met.
- The manager carries out regular performance monitoring and supports staff's professional development to improve their practice.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always follow consistent practice to support babies to learn to feed themselves and gain early independence skills at meal times.
- Staff do not fully implement clear and consistent systems to support individual children when they reach the age to need to move to a new classroom. Staff do not consistently plan extra time to help children in transition, such as when they moving in to the next

classroom.

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 observed activities in all three classrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and invited the manager to carry out a joint observation.
- The inspector talked with some staff from each room, parents and the nursery manager.
- The inspector examined documentation, including a representative sample of children's records, development plans and staff suitability records.

Inspector

Amanda Allen

Full Report

Information about the setting

Alphabet House Nursery School (Canberra Road) is one of five nurseries that is privately owned and is part of a Children's Centre. It registered in 2004. It operates from three rooms in a purpose-built building shared with Early Start Vicarage. The nursery serves the needs of the local families. It is situated in a residential area of East Ham, in the London Borough of Newham. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. All children share a secure outdoor play area. The nursery is fully accessible. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 118 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education to children aged two, three and four years. Staff care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning English as an additional language. The nursery employs 13 staff, including the manager. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consistently develop babies' independence at mealtimes by allowing them to feed themselves their own meals

- strengthen systems to consistently support children's well-being when they make the move from one classroom to another.

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy a wide variety of indoor and outdoor play experiences, which support their learning and development well. Good staffing ratios enable children to move freely and choose from the different activities provided indoors and outside. Caring and enthusiastic staff use good teaching techniques. These have a positive impact on the children's learning and development, so that all children make good progress. Children have plenty of resources to choose from on a daily basis including a wide range of toys and equipment to help them develop their imagination. These include play food and boxes, shopping tills and dressing up clothes for make-believe play. Attentive staff support and enhance children's learning in all rooms, providing much individual attention.

Staff speak to children clearly, making good eye contact and giving the children time to think before they answer questions. Staff extend children's vocabulary by describing what the children do. Children play with water and glitter in a trough in the garden. They sit swirling and splashing the water and staff encourage them to 'draw circles' when swirling the water in their hands. Staff demonstrate precisely what this means so everyone, including the youngest children, can understand and copy. Children hear words such as 'splish' and 'splash', and enjoy moving the sea creatures around the water pretending they can swim, showing their enthusiasm for learning. Staff use correct grammar when speaking to the children, providing good role models for the children as they develop their speech.

Children practise gaining good hand and finger control in a number of activities. They use shovels and buckets in the large sand pit and they use cups of water to help create sandcastles together. Staff are particularly skilled in encouraging children to reflect on activities they have been doing, asking them to recall the steps they have taken to create the sandcastle. This helps children consolidate their learning.

Children know they can use all the resources available. Resources are well labelled with words and pictures so that the children can easily find what they want to play with. Individual interests are used to spontaneously create experiences for the children. For example, when planning a group drawing activity about people who help us, children who prefer to dress up, can become a fire fighter or police officer and role play to enhance their learning. A key strength at the nursery is the sharing and learning of different languages. Children are given regular opportunities both to speak and to listen. This helps to ensure staff meet the needs of children learning English as an additional language, so that they can participate fully. Staff encourage parents to share action rhymes, books and stories from many cultures, sometimes using languages other than English. Many children at the nursery are learning English as an additional language. Children then all hear a range of languages and recognise the skill needed to speak more than one. Wall display, posters and labels are all in a wide variety of languages to help both parents and children feel welcome.

Children draw shapes in paint on the table with their hands and staff encourage them to think about the shapes they are making and ask how the paint feels. The staff are skilled in their questioning techniques and give children time to respond to what has been asked. Additionally, children visit the inviting soft cushioned book area independently, choosing and browsing through books happily. They replace books carefully before leaving the area. This demonstrates how staff place a strong emphasis on the care of the nursery environment and children respond well to this.

Staff plan children's experiences, to cover the seven required areas of learning by using planning documents detailing a broad programme of activities both indoors and outside. The learning environments offer a wide range of materials and resources that add depth to children's experiences. Planning is adapted to respond to children's individual interests, determined by both discussions with parents and useful observations of children's play. Staff establish what children can do when they first start by talking with parents and completing observations while the child plays as they settle into the nursery. Staff record children's achievements frequently, often through photographs and written observations in

their 'learning folders'.

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

All children move around the nursery happily, including those who only started recently, owing to the trusting relationships established with staff through the key person system. Staff know each child well and they form particularly close bonds with the children and families for whom they take special responsibility. Establishing secure emotional attachments helps children feel safe, so they quickly develop confidence and independence, readily exploring their surroundings. Staff adapt settling-in procedures to respond to the needs of the individual child. However, the emotional attachments are not consistently taken into account during each child's transition to their next classroom. Some children are not given enough time to adjust and settle into their new classrooms before moving. This has impact on children's learning as they can be a little unsettled in their new surroundings.

Staff in each room take a consistent approach in their expectations for children's behaviour, so children quickly learn what is acceptable. Children who are familiar with the nursery play alongside others well. If necessary, staff intervene quickly and positively, resolving behaviour issues amicably. Staff organise themselves effectively so someone is always available to provide support for children's care needs. For example by providing a lap on which to have a cuddle or someone to help with nappy changes when needed. Older children become independent in their personal care, competently wiping their own noses and washing and drying their hands and putting paper towels in the bin.

The nursery provides healthy balanced meals for children. They have a cooked meal and are aware of healthy eating, knowing about the importance of eating the vegetables with their meals. Children chat about their health with staff, discussing what they like and dislike. Older children's independence is further promoted at mealtimes, as they serve their own food and pour their own drinks at the table. Babies receive a smaller portion of the meal but they are not all given the same opportunities to learn to feed themselves at meal times to develop their early independence skills.

Children's understanding of safety is threaded through the daily routines. They learn that some resources, such as sand, must be used with care and they know that they must not run around when inside the nursery or throw sand outside to keep themselves and others safe. Complying with expectations, making friends, learning self-care skills and being interested in their activities, means all children enjoy their nursery experiences and gain good skills and attitudes to underpin their eventual move to school.

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

Safeguarding arrangements for children's well-being are in place and effective. The staff team demonstrate a high level of commitment to promoting children's safety and

undertake regular safeguarding and first aid training. They understand their individual responsibilities and the need to provide safe play environments for children, which they do. Robust risk assessments cover all aspects of the environment, which are checked on a twice-daily basis. Staff and children regularly practise fire drills making sure all children have an understanding of what to do in an emergency. Children are taught to be safety conscious without being fearful. The children show a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know they can run around more freely in the garden than they can indoors as this can cause accidents.

All required policies and procedures are in place. Staff are required to read the policies and procedures as part of their induction training, then the manager checks their understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All records are completed appropriately. The manager regularly monitors staff performance, and discusses this with the staff at supervisions and appraisals. Supervision sessions are used to discuss key children's development and any emerging issues with performance that have been identified. This helps to ensure that all staff receive training they need to improve their practice.

The staff team closely liaises with parents from the start through clear settling procedures and by asking them to provide information about their children's routines likes and dislikes. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning as they are informed through daily diaries and verbal feedback about activities their children undertake. Partnerships are well established and make a strong contribution to children's achievement and well-being. Parents are constantly encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and are provided with ideas to continue their child's learning, such as searching for colours and counting items at home. Parents express appreciation of the staff's work, finding everyone approachable and friendly. They state that they particularly enjoy the coffee evenings where they can share ideas and discuss their child's developmental progress. They receive a pack of useful information about the nursery before their children start, including about settling visits. The staff team work closely with parents, not only helping them settle children, but also assisting in such things as potty training, so everyone takes a consistent approach.

The manager works closely with several support staff from the local authority, actively seeking advice and acting on it to improve the provision. The manager works with the managers from the company's other nurseries to build up a support network that continually look at ways to improve the service being provided. They understand the importance of good partnership working with parents and encourage and suggest ideas on how to support their child's learning at home. Partnership with other agencies, such as the local schools, supports the care of older children. Transition plans are in place to support children's movement through to school. The manager and staff are aware of the importance of partnership working with external agencies to secure appropriate interventions.

Thorough self-evaluation takes into account the views of staff, children and their parents. The manager carefully monitors the provision and regularly consults with staff, parents and children ensuring their views are taken into account. The drive for improvement is demonstrated by a clear action plan that supports children's achievements over time. Strengths and weaknesses are effectively identified. Planned actions to overcome

weaknesses have been targeted with the outcomes they would like to achieve. There are strong links between identified priorities and plans for improvement. For example, because of a recommendation from the previous inspection, all staff attended in-house training to help extend their ideas for planning and how to identify children's next steps across the areas of learning. This training has improved the ways staff organise their focused activities and plan for each child's development.

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
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	EY281129
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	901698
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	47
Number of children on roll	118
Name of provider	The Alphabet House Nursery Schools Limited
Date of previous inspection	26/01/2010
Telephone number	020 8552 0078

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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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