

Alphabet Day Nursery (Kingsthorpe)

Kingswell Rd, Kingsthorpe Village, NORTHAMPTON, Northamptonshire, NN2 6QB

Inspection date	15/01/2014
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

- Children make very rapid progress based on their starting points and are extremely well prepared for their future learning in school because the quality of teaching is high.
- Staff provide rich, varied and imaginative experiences for children and they have a very good understanding of how children learn. Planning is highly effective and seen as integral in supporting children's individual interests and next steps in their learning.
- Children display excellent levels of independence because they are encouraged and motivated from a young age to be helpful and to do things for themselves.
- The innovative leadership of the management team means that all staff have excellent opportunities to further their professional development. Sharply-focused self-evaluation and monitoring identifies areas for improvement to maintain the high standards already achieved.
- Babies and children are nurtured and thrive in welcome surroundings. They develop strong attachments with attentive and caring staff, who expertly and sensitively develop each child's confidence, independence and strong sense of belonging.
- There are excellent relationships with parents and carers. Their views are highly valued, enabling them to fully contribute to their children's care, learning and development, and to influence the continuing improvement and development of the nursery's provision and facilities.

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 rooms and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector held meetings with the provider/manager of the provision and spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the provider.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection and of written feedback from parents.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability of all members of the staff team, their qualifications and the provider's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The inspector looked at documentation, including children's records, learning and development information, staff records and a selection of policies and procedures.

Inspector
Hazel White

Full report

Information about the setting

Alphabet Day Nursery (Kingsthorpe) opened in 1994 and is one of two family run nurseries. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery operates from a two-storey building in the village of Kingsthorpe. There is no lift access to the first floor and entrance to the nursery is via a sloping pathway. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas. Children attend for a variety of sessions and share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.45am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 65 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are 13 members of childcare staff; all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including one with an early years degree. 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:

- enrich children's already excellent understanding of healthy eating, for example, through encouraging discussions at meal times.

Inspection judgements

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

The staff team provide an extensive range of activities which motivate all children and maximise their learning opportunities. Children make rapid progress as all staff have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and recognise how children learn through play. They use their expertise to effectively plan activities that successfully promote individual children's learning, and make superb use of guidance documents to track children's development. This ensures teaching sharply focuses on individual children's interests and the next steps in their learning. Staff 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. As a result, all children make significant progress in readiness for school. Regular observations and assessments of children's progress are well documented and reliably 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, providing parents with a list of their child's favourite songs and the books they enjoy. In addition, children invite their parents and grandparents to join them for tea and for play and stay

sessions. These methods are highly effective in helping parents to be fully involved in their children's learning and development. This significantly contributes to children's learning.

The quality of teaching is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn and are acutely aware of how different they can all be. They are constantly looking for ways in which to promote learning for all children. Staff recognise that children have different learning styles and take time to plan for their individuality. For example, some children weigh and measure water and soil in the outdoor environment, and others prefer to weigh and measure ingredients when they cook. As a result, all children make the best possible progress in their learning. Staff provide high levels of support when needed but allow children to try to resolve their own problems and develop their own games with their friends, such as taking turns when playing card games.

All children are extremely well supported in acquiring very good communication and language skills as they engage in conversations with staff and each other while they play together. They are enthralled as they listen to stories, enthusiastically joining in, using puppets as props. 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 have plentiful opportunities to make marks and develop early writing skills. For example, labelling their own work and writing for a purpose in their role play, therefore developing key skills for their future learning. Babies and younger children show great enjoyment and enthusiasm as they use paint, water and brushes to make patterns. These excellent sensory and physical experiences enable young children to start to make connections with their movements and the marks they make.

Children make remarkable progress in mathematics because they consistently explore shapes and numbers during play. For example, a child drawing a boat recognises that the flag is triangular and the steering wheel is a circle. They also learn to match and recognise numbers on the displays around the room. Excellent opportunities are provided for children to learn about the similarities and differences in the world around them. Staff are committed to providing an inclusive environment where everyone is welcome, valued and respected. Children understand about different festivals and cultures and play with multicultural toys. They create dragon masks in celebration of the Chinese New Year, learn that it is the year of the horse and why 'red money envelopes' are exchanged. Babies are learning about the world around them because staff effectively support their gradual independence in moving, exploration and communicating. They 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.

Pre-school children competently and independently use the computer, camera and various programmable toys. Babies and young children show great interest in toys with buttons, flaps and simple mechanisms, which they capably operate. Consequently, all children are gaining the key skills they need for the next steps in their learning due to the excellent range of activities and learning opportunities available to them. Children greatly 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 in the local park. There is a strong emphasis on outdoor learning, which children relish. Children use

water sprays, buckets and sponges to wash dolls and equipment. They colour the water and have a fabulous time spraying it onto large sheets of tarpaulins which they slide across. Children enjoy relay races using small bowls and jugs filled with water, carefully passing them to one another, trying not to spill them in the excitement. This promotes children's learning in a fun way.

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

Children thrive in this welcoming, vibrant and nurturing nursery. Each child is allocated a key person depending on which adult they have become most attached to in their room. This provides consistency for the child and parents, and it enables staff to provide excellent care and emotional security. Children's individual needs are thoroughly known because staff work admirably with parents. This approach ensures the transition from home to nursery is smooth, resulting in children settling easily and happily. Children are impeccably well behaved and are very responsive to the individual attention received from staff, who consistently raise their self-esteem. This is because staff consistently praise and encourage children to try new activities and develop their independence. Children are learning extremely good skills for their future development and when moving on to school. They help to tidy up, prepare their snacks and learn to put on their wellington boots and coats before going outside to play.

Children have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. They spend ample time outdoors, experiencing plenty of fresh air and developing their physical skills to the optimum. Babies and young children have dedicated quiet and sleep areas, which are clean and comfortable for when they wish to sleep or rest. Children grow and harvest vegetables in the garden and they are offered a wide range of healthy snacks and meals each day, which are freshly prepared by the nursery cook. Meal times are social occasions as all of the children eat together and have the opportunity to chat to their friends. Their already very good understanding of healthy eating could be extended even further by using meal times more effectively to discuss healthy options. Children are aware of the importance of following meticulous hygiene practices, such as washing their hands before eating and baking.

Staff are deployed responsibly and demonstrate exceptional supervision of the children indoors and outside. They help children to become aware about their own safety, for example, through discussions about safety when using scissors during activities. Pre-school children know that they must hold on to the hand rail when using the stairs. Children know the nursery rules and are encouraged to tidy after themselves. They participate in regular fire drills and staff use these occasions to discuss why certain routines are followed in order to fully support children's understanding of how to keep safe.

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

Staff place a very high priority on children's safety and well-being. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements for the Statutory

framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities to protect children from harm, and are secure in their knowledge of the procedure to follow if they have any welfare concerns about the children in their care. Rigorous and robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that all adults are suitable to work with the children. Staff receive high quality professional supervision. The training and deployment of staff is highly effective in meeting the needs of the children attending and in enhancing staff skills and knowledge. Comprehensive risk assessments are regularly reviewed and adapted, as and when required. This means that potential hazards are swiftly identified and dealt with immediately. The manager ensures that the correct staff ratios are maintained at all times and very often they exceed minimum requirements.

The leadership and management of the nursery is inspirational. The provider strives for excellence amongst her staff and staff morale is very high. She has rigorous systems for evaluating their priorities and in identifying future targets for implementation through extensive action plans in order to improve their practice further. Parents, children and staff contribute to this evaluation through their suggestions, feedback and written questionnaires. The management team is therefore extremely confident to demonstrate and highlight their strengths. Staff attend a significant number of training courses, attend team meetings and liaise with the local authority advisors. As a result, staff personal development is effectively supported. There are excellent systems in place for monitoring and evaluating children's progress by sampling learning journals to oversee the quality of assessment and planning for their individual learning needs. As a result, outcomes for children are exceptionally good.

The partnership with parents and others involved in the children's care is outstanding. Parents and carers receive extensive information about their children's progress and achievements in a variety of ways. Information displayed on the noticeboard, regular newsletters and frequent parents' meetings provide an abundance of useful information to keep parents fully informed about the nursery. Parents are consulted regularly through discussion and questionnaires about the service to help staff consistently meet children's individual needs. Parents are highly complimentary about the care and education their children receive. They comment upon the excellent care and range of activities provided, as well as the extremely good sharing of information. Parents are encouraged to observe their children at home, extend learning activities and to share their children's achievements. Highly productive partnerships with others, including speech and language therapists, make an exceptional contribution to meeting children's needs. There are excellent arrangements in place with feeder schools so that children can move confidently on to their next stage of learning. These first class partnerships allow all children to reach their full potential and make the best possible progress in readiness for school.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	220088
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	950461
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	65
Name of provider	Angela Evans
Date of previous inspection	22/07/2010
Telephone number	01604 715558

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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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