

Alphabets@Hollymoor

Hollymoor Centre,, 8 Manor Park Grove, Birmingham, West Midlands, B31 5ER

Inspection date	27/10/2014
Previous inspection date	18/11/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Staff are friendly and welcoming to children. As a result, children appear happy and settled.
- Children are protected from harm because staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding and recruitment procedures for staff are robust.
- The staff team has developed a creative and stimulating environment, and ensures that children can initiate their own play and follow their own interests. This supports children's active learning and emotional well-being.

It is not yet good because

- Staff do not always use information gained from observation and assessments, to plan children's experiences by taking into account their individual needs and next steps in learning. Consequently, children are not always fully supported during activities.
- Children's continuity of care is not always ensured during holiday periods because staff working during holiday periods are not always familiar with children's individual needs.
- The management team does not consider the impact that staff practice has on children's learning in sufficient detail when monitoring staff performance.

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 indoor areas used by children and the outdoor play area.
- The inspector and manager carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector spoke to the managers, staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation, a sample of records and policies relating to children's welfare, health and safety.
The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of the staff
- working with the children, the nursery's self-evaluation document and business plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Julia Galloway

Full report

Information about the setting

Alphabets@Hollymoor nursery opened in 1995 and is one of five provisions run by Longbridge Childcare Strategy Group. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from five rooms in the Hollymoor Centre in Northfield, Birmingham. The nursery serves the immediate locality and surrounding areas. The nursery opens five days a week, from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round, except on bank holidays and for two weeks at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children have access to an enclosed outside play area. There are currently 48 children attending that are in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are currently 12 staff working directly with children, 10 of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 or above. The manager holds a BA (Honours) Early Childhood Studies degree. The nursery employs two apprentices. The nursery receives support from the local authority. A holiday play scheme runs during all school holidays apart from Christmas. The opening hours are from 8am to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve the quality of assessment processes to ensure that all staff use regular observation and assessment of children's achievements to plan precisely for their individual next steps in learning
- provide continuity in children's care by ensuring that information about individual children's learning priorities is shared with all staff working with those children, so that the equipment used and the experiences provided are always tailored to meet their individual needs
- improve performance management procedures so that staff practice and the quality of teaching is accurately evaluated, in order to drive improvement and ensure that children's learning and development is well promoted at all times.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are happy and they benefit from an environment that supports their independent learning. This is because the nursery has a wide range of resources and equipment that stimulates children's interest in their surroundings. On most occasions, staff provide a

range of activities that ensure that children take part in experiences across all areas of learning. However, during the school holiday periods when numbers of children are low, the nursery does not maintain the normal routine. They also use bank staff, who are not familiar with the children or the setting. During these periods, children of different ages and stages of development come together in one group. Staff do not plan activities during this time that take into account children's individual next steps in learning. Furthermore, information gained from observations and assessments carried out by their key person is not considered. As a result, activities are not differentiated and not all children's learning is supported. For example, during a painting activity younger children are not able to fully take part because they cannot reach the paints and their aprons are too big, which means that their hands are obstructed by the sleeves. Although older children are asked questions, such as 'What will happen?' when mixing paint colours together, staff have fewer interactions with the younger children who look around and do not take part because they are not fully included in the activity.

All children have a learning journey file, which contains photographs, children's work, observations and assessment documents. Assessment profiles are completed on entry to identify a baseline of children's skills. Thereafter, staff carry out observations of children and use this information to monitor their progress. This information is shared with parents during review meetings so that they have opportunities to discuss their child's achievements. This includes the progress check for children aged between two and three years, which is routinely carried out. However, some staff caring for children are not fully aware of their individual progress because information has not been shared and not all children's files have been recently updated. Although all children have an identified key person, they do not usually work during holiday periods. Therefore, during these times children do not benefit from continuity in their education because staff are not aware of their achievements. Consequently, teaching is not always focused with clear learning objectives, to ensure that all children are learning new skills that help them to make continued progress.

Children play with toys and equipment that supports active learning because they can make choices about what they would like to do. Staff lay out a range of activities and they generally support children during their play. They read stories with them and talk to them about what they are doing. All rooms are well-laid-out and specific areas have been developed to provide a range of learning opportunities. For example, there is creative role play and areas for group or quiet time. Children show awareness of and take part in daily routines, which means that they are gaining important skills that support their ongoing learning when they move to school or other nurseries. On some occasions, staff successfully work in partnerships with parents. For example, in the pre-school room staff provide parents with information about current themes in learning and they make suggestions about how parents can support ongoing learning at home. This means that children, parents and staff have opportunities to discuss topics and learning topics together which strengthen the links between home and the nursery.

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

Children approach the staff and other children with confidence, which shows that they feel happy, secure and safe. Staff are friendly and welcoming to children which helps to ensure their emotional well-being. Children's behaviour is good and they play well together because staff remain close by to offer support as required. Although the key-person system has been developed so that all children benefit from a relationship with a member of staff who knows them well, continuity of children's care has been overlooked during holiday periods when the nursery is not always staffed by regular staff. Information about children's individual needs is not shared with cover staff prior to them working with children. For example, staff are only told children's names after they have begun caring for them. This shows a lack of consistent consideration for children's overall well-being. However, children do benefit from the opportunity to spend time with peers of different ages. Staff promote good behaviour by encouraging sharing and taking turns while children play, which means that they happily play together.

The nursery is equipped to meet the needs of the children as they are normally cared for in rooms designed for their age and stage of development. However, not enough consideration has been given to ensuring that children's care needs are always well met. When numbers of children are low, children of all ages are cared for together in the pre-school room, which is not resourced effectively to meet the needs of younger children. For example, babies sleep in a bouncer chair rather than a cot in the designated sleep room and when other, older children play nearby they wake them up. Children readily adopt healthy lifestyles. They are provided with opportunities to take regular exercise and eat healthy meals. During mealtimes older children's independence is well promoted because they have the opportunity to serve themselves and tidy away when they have finished. This provides opportunities for children to take small risks when using utensils and when carrying plates, which encourages them to be aware of their own safety when doing so. Staff sit with children at mealtimes and discuss the importance of eating healthy foods. All children have opportunities to play outside in the fresh air and a range of outdoor equipment provides different levels of challenge that support physical development. Staff carry out daily checks on areas of the nursery and equipment to ensure that the environment is safe and suitable for use.

On most occasions, children's moves between rooms are well managed. This is because children are taken for visits to new rooms and because their key person completes a transition document that is shared with new staff. Children are prepared when they leave to go to school because staff talk about what is going to happen. This gives them the opportunity to prepare for the move. A recent graduation ceremony was held to celebrate this important time. Parents are encouraged to stay for settling visits when children first start and they complete written documents about the children's needs to ensure that staff have important information. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported because parents, staff and professionals work in partnership to devise appropriate care and education plans. Staff have attended the required training, which means that they have a good understanding of how to safely administer first aid. In addition, they attend training as required to support children with health or medication requirements.

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

The nursery has made some improvements since their last inspection, where they were judged to require improvement. However, the overall quality of the provision is not yet consistently good. This is because they have not ensured continuity of the educational programme and care for children during school holiday periods. Therefore, children's overall learning and development and well-being is compromised at these times and leaders and managers do not demonstrate that they fully understand their responsibilities. However, safeguarding responsibilities are understood by all staff, who clearly explain how they would deal with concerns that relate to child protection. The information that is available to support safeguarding practice is detailed and informative. This means that staff have all the required information to support their practice. There are robust recruitment procedures for new staff, which include obtaining an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. Staffs' suitability is appropriately checked by the requesting of references, viewing certificates and verifying employment history.

Overall, the nursery provides an environment where stimulating resources and caring staff support children's learning experiences. Staff are attentive to children and playful interactions means that children are mostly learning while they play. Most staff interact well with the children and ensure that they take part a range of activities during the day. The performance management of staff involves supervision meetings where training requirements are discussed and targets for improvement are identified. However, this process does not yet involve regularly carrying out observations of staff working with children. This means that the quality of teaching and the impact that this has on children's learning is not always monitored effectively. Furthermore, inconsistencies in the way that planning is carried out means that children's individual learning needs are not always met. Managers do not demonstrate a good understanding of how to oversee the overall quality of the educational programme to ensure that children receive consistent care and education. This includes making sure that staff covering the holidays have the required knowledge about the children to allow them plan exciting and challenging experiences tailored to individual needs.

Managers undertake self-evaluation, by using documents that evaluate their overall performance and that identify areas for continued improvement. All required information about leaders and managers has been reported to Ofsted. However, managers have not fully considered the impact that changes to the normal daily routine have on those children who continue to attend during school holiday periods. Nevertheless, the nursery staff team has worked in partnership with local authority advisers to audit the range and quality of opportunities for children. As a result, they have made changes to the layout and arrangement of the rooms, which are well equipped. Room leaders have recently been appointed, to ensure that there are senior staff in each room. This means that staff practice is monitored and any training needs identified. Staff work closely with other professionals to ensure that all children and their families get the help and support that they need. This includes developing partnerships with local schools to effectively share information about children prior to them moving on to school. Information for parents is displayed on a number of parents' noticeboards and newsletters produced help to ensure

that parents are informed about what is happening in the nursery. They have recently been consulted about the renaming of each of the rooms where children are cared for; this demonstrates a commitment from the nursery to develop a community ethos.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	257171
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	962718
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	48
Name of provider	Longbridge Childcare Strategy Group
Date of previous inspection	18/11/2013
Telephone number	0121 683 1838

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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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