

Alphabet Corner

309 London Road, PORTSMOUTH, PO2 9HQ



Inspection date

5 May 2015

Previous inspection date

8 April 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Staff do not carry out the children's progress check between the age of two and three years and share this with parents. This means that parents are not fully informed of their child's progress or encouraged to support learning at home.
- Teaching and learning is not consistently good. Staff know children well, but they are not consistently promoting children's next learning steps because of weaknesses in the planning of adult-led activities.
- The process of observation, assessment and planning is not clearly linked to children's individual needs. There is no evidence to demonstrate they make good progress and leaders do not monitor this carefully.
- The learning environment, particularly in the pre-school room, lacks innovative play spaces.
- The role of the key person does not include carrying out children's intimate care routines which could have an effect on children building very strong emotional attachments.

It has the following strengths

- Staff place a strong emphasis on children's communication and language development as they support children well in their freely chosen play. Therefore, children gain skills for their future life.
- Children's care and well-being are good. Children behave very well, show confidence and are focused and engaged during whole group teaching in the pre-school room.
- There is a strong emphasis on safeguarding children and keeping them safe. Management ensures that staff training in this aspect is consistently up to date.
- Staff have good links with the children's centre to offer parents support and guidance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review children's progress between the ages of two and three and provide parents and/or carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas and how they can support learning at home
- ensure there are clear links between assessment and planning, implementing the learning aims for each individual child's learning path so all children make good developmental progress.

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

- develop the role of the key person or key buddy to include carrying out children's intimate care routines
- develop innovative, inspiring play and learning spaces, particularly in the pre-school room
- monitor closely the quality of teaching and learning, particularly the observation, assessment and planning process.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the children's play activities, indoors and out, looked at the available resources and read relevant documentation.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider/managers about their leadership and management, including self-evaluation methods.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with one of the managers/provider.

Inspector

Lorraine Wardlaw

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Staff have a secure understanding of how to promote children's learning and development through good-quality interactions during freely chosen play, indoors and out. However, there is a lack of attention to precise assessment and planning tailored to each child's specific learning path. This means that not all children make good progress from their starting points. Staff have high expectations of children in the pre-school room during whole teaching and they manage the large group well. They promote mathematics, problem solving and ask skilful questions of older children to develop their thinking skills. The confident, able children rise to the occasion and proudly show off their knowledge and skills. Staff are in the process of developing play spaces which are inviting and attractive because some areas, such as the library room, are unkempt.

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

Children are happy, settle quickly, and feel safe and secure. They gain confidence and self-esteem because all staff form positive relationships with them and are very caring. However, they receive less attention from their key person during nappy changing in the room for two-year-olds, because staff do this on a rota basis. Staff help children to be ready for the move to the sister nursery and between the two age groups through flexible settling-in visits. Resources in each room are easily accessible to children, which helps them to make independent choices. Staff are starting to display children's work, which helps children feel valued and special. Children enjoy regular exercise, developing their physical skills in the small garden. Staff use the snack-time routine effectively to promote children's healthy eating, self-help skills and responsibility.

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

The joint leadership and management team has clear roles and a generally good understanding of their legal responsibilities. However, recent lapses mean that not all the requirements are being met. The monitoring of the educational programmes and children's progress is not robust. Self-evaluation and drive for improvement is not wholly accurate. Parents are happy with the communication they receive about their child's progress. However, staff do not do this in a consistent, clear and well-documented way through the progress check when children are between two and three years of age. Partnerships with other agencies and professionals are good, particularly for the most vulnerable families and children, because staff follow child protection protocols. The management team has clear, rigorous procedures for the recruitment, vetting and induction of staff. They supervise staff and support their training needs appropriately.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY386386
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	830000
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	65
Number of children on roll	145
Name of provider	Anderson & Brett Ltd
Date of previous inspection	8 April 2009
Telephone number	02392 792150

Alphabet Corner nursery was registered under the present owners in 2008. It is one of two privately owned nurseries which operate from two properties in the North End area of Portsmouth. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year, closing for one week over the Christmas period and all Bank Holidays. The nursery offers early education funding for two, three, and four-year-old children.

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