

Alphabets Nursery

2 Hillary Road, Penenden Heath, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 2JP



Inspection date

27 July 2015

Previous inspection date

12 August 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Outstanding	1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Outstanding	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Outstanding	1
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding across the nursery. As a result, all children make exceptional progress in their learning and development and are extremely well prepared for starting school.
- The nursery manager and her deputy are an inspirational team. They accurately identify what needs to improve in the nursery and make the necessary changes.
- Concerted action has been taken since the last inspection to improve the quality of teaching. Staff should be commended for the dedication they have shown in accessing training and external support to improve their practice so quickly.
- Children thoroughly enjoy their day at nursery. They form exceptional relationships with the staff who look after them and the other children. Throughout the nursery, there is an extremely relaxed, homely and calm atmosphere.
- Meticulous attention is given towards keeping children safe. Staff thoroughly understand their role in protecting children and clearly know what to do if they have any concerns.
- Parents are extremely happy with the nursery and have supported its improvement over the last year. One parent expressed the view of many by telling the inspector, 'The staff are brilliant. I would not change a thing.'
- The attention to detail in supporting children's well-being is exceptional. Staff are extremely caring; they know the children so well and are extremely responsive to each child's individual needs. Consequently, each child settles very quickly.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to develop ways to help staff monitor their own practice and identify their own areas to improve.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching, both inside the nursery and outside.
- The inspector talked to staff about how they plan for each child's learning needs and how they monitor all children's progress.
- The inspector talked to children and asked them about what they enjoy at nursery.
- The inspector carried out two joint observations with the nursery manager to evaluate the quality of teaching.
- The inspector talked to parents who were available on the day of inspection to seek their views.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager to evaluate how well leaders and managers make improvements within the nursery and monitor staff practice.

Inspector

Jo Caswell HMI

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is outstanding

Staff are highly skilled and access extensive training to help them plan activities which really engage children and capture their interests. Across the nursery, staff have developed their skills in supporting children's language and communication. This has had an outstanding impact on the quality of teaching. Babies confidently use 'signs' to convey their needs and staff respond positively to these. Teaching has significantly improved as staff now use more in-depth questioning to encourage children to think things through and build on their knowledge. As a result, all children are extremely curious, inquisitive and keen to learn. For example, as part of a group activity observing the weather and talking about summer, one child asked the staff member, 'Can you tell me about the seasons?', which the staff member did. Extensive planning has significantly improved how accurately staff monitor how well all children are learning. Any early indications that a child may not be making as much progress as the others, are quickly responded to and any potential delays are stopped. Meticulous attention has been given towards helping boys to develop an interest in writing and recognising that print carries meaning. An excellent selection of activities and resources has successfully addressed this and boys now make good progress with their early writing skills.

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

The care provided for every child is exceptional. Throughout the nursery, children are extremely happy and thoroughly relaxed in the staff's care. The safety and welfare of all children is paramount to the staff. Children develop an excellent range of skills to support their future learning. For example, they are extremely independent and their behaviour is exemplary. Staff support children's self-esteem and confidence by continually praising children and celebrating their individual achievements. Staff motivate children to ask questions, to develop curiosity and to try things for themselves. As a result, children show deep levels of interest and concentrate for long periods of time.

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

The leadership and management of the nursery are exemplary. The manager's in-depth knowledge of early years has been extremely influential in the rapid pace of improvement. Highly effective support from the local authority has contributed towards the nursery's swift improvement. Comprehensive action plans have been drawn up to address improvement areas and these are monitored closely. Regular meetings ensure time is given for staff to reflect on their own practice and identify future training needs. Opportunities for staff to observe one another are starting. However, the manager frequently observes practice and highlights areas to improve. Safeguarding arrangements are given the highest priority. Partnerships with local schools, early years settings and parents are all excellent and contribute to the outstanding provision and the exemplary support for children's learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY263151
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	1006077
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	38
Number of children on roll	66
Name of provider	Alphabets Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	12 August 2014
Telephone number	01622 762045

Alphabets Nursery opened under new management in April 2003 and is registered on the Early Years Register. It is situated in the residential area of Penenden Heath, to the north of Maidstone, Kent. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round from 8am until 6pm. There are currently 66 children on roll. The nursery is in receipt of funding for early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. A team of 11 staff work with the children. Of these, nine hold relevant early years qualifications. The nursery manager holds Early Years Professional Status.

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