

Inspection of Alpha Bears Day Care Nursery

1 The Causeway, POTTERS BAR, Hertfordshire EN6 5BQ

Inspection date: 21 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children quickly form strong bonds with their key person. Babies instinctively turn to staff for reassurance and comfort when they need to. Children learn to be kind to their friends. They apologise from a young age with support from staff. This helps them to develop positive relationships with others around them.

Children settle well at the nursery. They demonstrate that they feel safe and secure. For instance, they interact positively with visiting adults. Babies show visitors the toys they are playing with. Older children kindly share small ladybird pebbles out with visitors without the need for adult support. They confidently demonstrate their understanding of numbers. Children count the number of ladybird pebbles they have. They point to each one as they say the corresponding number.

Children enjoy learning outside. They develop their larger muscles as they play ball games. They excitedly join in with external sports coaching sessions. Children smile with pride when they receive a certificate from the coach. Their friends clap to congratulate them. This helps children to recognise and celebrate other people's achievements. Children explore different sensory opportunities outside. For example, they use foam to clean toy babies. They talk to staff about how the foam feels on their hands.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Children learn new words rapidly. Staff in the baby room talk to babies using single words and short sentences. They encourage the babies to repeat what they say. This helps babies to communicate effectively. The oldest children confidently share their vocabulary with others. For instance, they talk about the 'bendy' trees outside during a circle-time activity where they discuss the weather.
- Children make connections between their own experiences and their learning at the nursery. Toddlers talk about things that they see in pictures as they read stories with staff. For example, they discuss the honey they put on their toast as they look at a story about a bear eating honey. Older children explore their interests and staff provide them with books to support their learning. The children look at a model volcano with interest. Staff talk to them about the different parts of the volcano and how the volcano looks in the story. This helps children to develop a deeper understanding of the topics that interest them.
- Relationships with parents are strong. Parents speak highly of the care that their children receive. Staff shared ideas with parents so that they could support children's learning at home throughout local lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, staff recorded video sessions for parents to share with

their children at home. Staff also recorded a tour of the nursery before children returned to the setting. They showed children the changes they had implemented to keep them safe. As a result, children moved back into the nursery smoothly.

- The manager is well supported by other senior staff members. The deputy manager ensures the smooth running of the nursery when the manager is absent, such as when she was on maternity leave. They discuss children's progress with staff regularly so that they can identify any gaps in learning across the nursery. The manager utilises additional funding that the nursery receives effectively. For instance, she provides specific resources relevant to children's individual needs. As a result of this, the most vulnerable children make good progress at the nursery.
- Staff plan a range of challenging activities for older children. The children respond positively to these. For instance, they persevere as they find eight toy dinosaurs to place with the corresponding number tile. However, staff in the baby room do not challenge and support the most able babies in their learning as effectively. Sometimes, these babies wander between activities and staff do not encourage them to engage fully. This means that babies are not always able to make the most of the learning opportunities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training to ensure that their knowledge is kept up to date. The manager has established a strong relationship with the local authority. She shares relevant information with them to ensure that children are kept safe. Staff are aware of the possible signs of wider safeguarding issues, such as female genital mutilation. They know how to raise their concerns regarding children's welfare. They are confident in the process to follow should their concerns not be taken seriously, such as if they had concerns regarding a colleague. The manager holds regular supervision meetings with staff and she ensures that staff continue to remain suitable for their roles.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop staff's ability to provide the youngest children with appropriate levels of challenge and support so that all children across the nursery have opportunities to make the best possible progress in their learning and development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY489596
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10219448
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	41
Number of children on roll	81
Name of registered person	Alpha Bears Day Care Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900837
Telephone number	07903717935
Date of previous inspection	17 August 2016

Information about this early years setting

Alpha Bears Day Care Nursery registered in 2015. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, with the exception of bank holidays, one week in August and one week over the Christmas period. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jenny Hardy

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector, manager and deputy manager undertook a learning walk. They discussed the way that the curriculum was arranged and the impact this has on children's learning and development.
- The manager and inspector jointly observed staff's interactions with children. They discussed the impact of these interactions on children's learning and development.
- The inspector spoke to parents of children who attend the nursery. She took their views into consideration.
- The inspector interacted with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector viewed a small sample of the required documentation, including staff suitability documents and insurance documents.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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