

Inspection of Little Alphabet

319 London Road, Portsmouth, City Of Portsmouth PO2 9HQ

Inspection date: 12 April 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy, safe and secure. They arrive eager to explore and are warmly greeted by welcoming staff. Children beam in delight as they see their friends arrive. They share excited glances and quickly engage in play together. Children show enthusiasm, curiosity, and confidence. They benefit from an ambitious curriculum that provides them with varied experiences. For example, children enjoy filling and emptying small pots with soil. They spend time scooping and pouring, as well as exploring the texture of the soil. Children show high levels of concentration and demonstrate a can-do attitude as they persevere to scoop the soil using different tools.

Children are confident to explore independently as they make their own games. For example, children giggle and squeal in excitement as they roll small balls back and forth to one another. This play is skilfully extended as staff add resources to create low-level ramps and model rolling the balls up and down. This captures children's attention further and develops their hand-eye coordination skills. Children play harmoniously together. They value positive interactions from staff, who are always quick to celebrate children's achievements with them.

Children's individual routines are thoughtfully considered. For example, children benefit from consistent sleep and mealtime routines shared from home. This supports their emotional well-being.

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

- The manager plans a well-thought-out curriculum that includes a variety of experiences that incorporate all areas of the early years foundation stage. There is a focus on developing children's early life skills. This is well communicated with staff, and together they plan and sequence learning for individual children to support them to make their own progress.
- Management and staff work together very well. Staff's well-being is a priority. They comment that they feel supported and valued. The manager is reflective and takes on board feedback from others. She also has good knowledge of how to liaise with other professionals and has effective systems in place to provide early support to children who have additional needs.
- Children are well prepared for the next stages of their education. They are individually supported to make seamless transitions. For example, staff support the children's move to their sister setting. They take children on visits and share detailed information to help them feel comfortable and settle quickly.
- Staff understand the importance of developing children's communication and language skills. They speak clearly, narrate children's play and introduce children to new words, such as 'scoop', 'crunchy' and 'sprinkle'. However, staff do not

always recognise when children need more time to process and respond to questions. This inhibits children's early communication and language development.

- Staff take time to get to know their key children well. Children who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are well settled and make good progress. However, some communications with parents who speak EAL are less effective. For example, staff do not consistently follow up requests to parents for information about the languages children speak and their level of understanding in their first language. This means that, at times, staff are unable to fully support children's understanding of key times, such as daily routines, as soon as they begin attending.
- Children gain good physical skills. They benefit from daily access to a secure outdoor area where they can safely run, climb, and learn to balance, such as on stepping stones. In addition to this, staff understand the importance of small-muscle development. For example, they provide opportunities for children to push, squeeze and roll dough. Children also enjoy manipulating puzzle pieces, taking time to twist and turn each piece until it fits. This helps to develop their hand and finger muscles in preparation for early writing.
- Staff reinforce positive behaviour and have high expectations of the children. Staff are sensitive when giving gentle reminders, such as to use 'kind hands'. They are respectful of children when completing personal tasks. For example, they ask permission before wiping children's noses or before changing their nappies. This ensures that children feel valued.
- Parents speak highly of the nursery and staff. They report their children are happy and are 'excited to run in' each day. Parents describe staff as 'going above and beyond' to support their children as well as themselves. Parents comment on how their children make good progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. The manager has effective procedures in place to monitor staff's knowledge of safeguarding. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of what to do if they have a concern about a child, including how to report to local safeguarding partners. They are aware of the procedure to take in the event of an allegation against a staff member. The manager has robust safer recruitment processes in place, ensuring the suitability of staff who work with children. Children are well supervised, including at mealtimes. All staff understand risk assessment. They effectively identify and minimise risk to ensure safety of the environment and activities undertaken.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff recognise when children need more time to explore and develop ideas for themselves to enhance their language and communication skills even further
- strengthen information sharing systems with parents to help ensure that support for children who speak English as an additional language is more effective from the outset.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY451629
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10280263
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	0 to 2
Total number of places	21
Number of children on roll	27
Name of registered person	Anderson & Brett Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP528662
Telephone number	02392 177020
Date of previous inspection	29 September 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Alphabet nursery registered in 2012. It is located in the North End area of Portsmouth in Hampshire. It operates Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year, closing for one week over the Christmas period. The nursery employs seven members of staff. Of these, six have appropriate early years qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Natalie Moir

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The manager carried out a joint observation of a planned activity with the inspector.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views of the provision with the inspector.

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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