

The Treehouse Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY443320
Inspection date 31/07/2012
Inspector Hazel Meadows

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

The Tree House Nursery is one of six settings that are privately owned and managed by Alpha Nurseries Ltd. It registered in 2010 and re-registered in 2012 after a change to the company name. It operates from two designated rooms within The Tree House Children's Centre in Ipswich, Suffolk. A large, secure play area is used for outdoor activities. The nursery is open five days a week, from 8am to 6pm, all year round. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 39 children under eight years may attend the setting at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently 71 children on roll in this age group, some of whom receive funding for early education. The nursery can offer funded places for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It also offers occasional care to children aged up to eight years in the school holidays. The nursery supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 16 members of staff and one volunteer who work directly with the children. All staff hold relevant early years qualifications to at least level 2. One member of staff holds Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settle well at this welcoming nursery. They enjoy a broad variety of play and learning experiences and make good progress in their learning and development. Inclusive practice is very well promoted to meet children's individual needs. Positive and trusting partnerships are established with parents and others to aid continuity of care and encourage children's progress. All documentation and procedures are in place to promote children's welfare. Self-evaluation of practice sometimes lacks sufficient rigour but the leadership and management have the commitment to promote improvement and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve the rigour and effectiveness of ongoing self-evaluation to identify and address any areas for improvement
- increase children's opportunities for name recognition, mark making and developing writing skills through their play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded as staff are clear of their responsibilities. All staff have attended safeguarding training and have a secure awareness and understanding of child protection. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure staff's suitability to work with children, and all staff have Criminal Records Bureau clearance. The group has a written policy, plus local safeguarding contact details, to refer to should they have concerns about a child. Written risk assessments are undertaken and security has been reviewed. Staff are watchful of the children and very attentive to their safety.

The nursery promotes highly inclusive practice, with a positive attitude and approach towards diversity. Staff actively support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or children for whom English is an additional language. They work very closely with parents, liaising with other childcare or health professionals, if required, to ensure each child receives tailored support to reach their potential and fully engage in activities. Staff's good knowledge of child development and of the individual children enables them to identify any additional needs a child may have at an early stage. This positive approach is reflected in the resources and activities available. Committed and competent staff work cooperatively together to aid the smooth running of the setting. They are well deployed, ensuring all children are supported and well cared for. Monthly staff meetings, development plans, regular supervisions and annual appraisals promote improvement. However, ongoing self-evaluation is not always sufficiently rigorous to identify and address some areas requiring improvement.

Staff establish positive and trusting partnerships with parents, which is conducive to children's welfare, learning and continuity of care. Comments received from parents during the inspection are mostly positive. They state that their children settle well and enjoy the nursery, and that they find staff friendly and approachable. Parents receive daily verbal feedback about their child and some who have children aged under two years receive a daily diary. Parents evenings offer opportunities to see their children's 'Learning Journey' development records, although these are available at any time for parents to see and contribute to. Regular newsletters and notice boards keep parents updated with general information. Documentation is well maintained and parental consents are in place to promote children's welfare. The setting establishes close links with local schools and other settings the children attend to aid smooth transitions. The group has received some support from local authority advisory staff.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children happily come into the nursery and settle well. They develop trusting relationships with staff and clearly feel secure with them. Staff have a warm and caring approach and treat children with kindness and respect. They are attentive to children and encourage their conversation, giving them time to think and

respond. Children are developing confidence and freely approach staff and visitors to share their thoughts and ideas. Children's behaviour is generally good and staff are consistent, offering them clear explanations and reasonable boundaries to help them learn how to manage their own behaviour and keep themselves safe. A suitable range of play and learning experiences, covering all the areas of learning, are available at each session. Children can select additional resources from the low level shelving units. Staff have developed an effective method of monitoring children's individual progress towards the early learning goals using 'Learning Journey' development records. Most observations are linked to the areas of learning and supported with photographs or examples of children's work. Observations are utilised effectively to identify children's next steps in learning and to inform weekly planning, aiding their individual progression. Some children have made significant progress in their learning and development.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise, promoting a healthy lifestyle. They have free access to outside and relish playing in the newly opened outdoor area, which is still being developed. They learn about the world around them as they eagerly hunt for mini-beasts in a wood pile and excitedly examine slugs, grasshoppers and woodlice in magnifying containers. Children also help to care for a variety of fruits and vegetables in the nursery garden. Ride-on toys develop children's coordination skills and they persevere making sandcastles, which they are thrilled to show to staff. Children also have access to a very large natural area where they delight in the liberty of running and exploring freely in the open space containing shrubs and trees, long grass and wild flowers. Children learn more about their local community as they go on outings, practising road safety as they do so. Children and families from different cultures or who have English as an additional language are welcomed and valued. Parents are invited in to tell stories in their first language and to do cookery activities with the children, to broaden their awareness of diversity.

Children have access to a writing table where they can make marks on paper and draw. However, there are limited opportunities for children to write for a purpose in their play or to begin to recognise their names or other familiar text. The nursery provides an excellent variety of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks, promoting children's understanding of healthy eating. This is further enhanced as children sample the fresh fruit and vegetables they have helped to grow in the garden. Staff are vigilant regarding hygiene, for example, when nappy changing or preparing food, to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Children are learning good hygiene practice, such as hand washing, through regular routines, picture guides and reminders from staff.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met