

Alpha Steps Nursery

89 Vallentin Road, Walthamstow, LONDON, E17 3JJ



Inspection date

17 May 2016

Previous inspection date

26 September 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Inadequate	4
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Inadequate	4
Outcomes for children		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- Children are not adequately protected. Leaders do not have a secure knowledge or understanding of safeguarding procedures, including those to check the suitability of staff.
- Children are not kept safe because staff do not take effective action to minimise all hazards in the outdoor environment.
- Staff do not consistently keep an accurate record of the hours of children's attendance.
- Staff do not always adopt positive strategies when managing children's behaviour. As a result, children do not learn what behaviour is acceptable.
- Children enjoy some of the activities on offer. However, staff do not use information about what children know and can do already to plan and provide interesting and challenging experiences that meet the needs of children and help them to make progress in their learning.
- Leaders do not effectively monitor the quality of provision. As a result, weaknesses in the quality of teaching are not identified or addressed quickly enough.
- The process for self-evaluation is ineffective. Plans for improvement do not identify or address weaknesses in provision or identify how to bring about improvement.

It has the following strengths

- The learning environment for babies is calm with resources which young children enjoy. These include sensory areas and interactive toys which support their development.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due Date
■ improve safety by carrying out regular checks and acting upon them to minimise risks, in particular in the outdoor area	31/05/2016
■ put effective systems in place to make sure practitioners and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children (including those living or working on the premises) are suitable	31/05/2016
■ ensure there is an accurate daily record of the names of the children being cared for on the premises, and their hours of attendance	31/05/2016
■ use strategies for managing children's behaviour which are consistent and encourage and support children to behave in appropriate ways	31/05/2016

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

	Due Date
■ ensure that information gained from observations is used to plan and provide interesting and challenging experiences across all areas of learning so that children make good progress	14/06/2016
■ ensure systems to monitor the quality of provision are effective in identifying and addressing weaknesses so practice continually improves.	14/06/2016

Inspection activities

- The inspection was carried out following concerns raised about the provider's ability to meet requirements of registration and provide a quality provision for all children.
- The inspector observed children during their play.
- The inspector spoke with parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children and held a meeting with the provider and manager.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a range of records, policies and procedures and evidence of staff suitability.

Inspector

Pauline Nazarkardeh

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is inadequate

The provider does not demonstrate a suitable understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. There are inadequate procedures in place to check the suitability of all adults working with children. The provider does not ensure that all staff, some of whom who have unsupervised access to children, have completed disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks. Records of children's attendance do not accurately record arrival or departure times. This means that staff do not have an accurate picture of who is present in order to protect children in the event of an emergency. Systems to monitor of the quality of teaching are not used consistently well. For example, leaders have failed to take effective action to help staff to use information gained from observations and assessments to plan the next steps in children's learning. Leaders make some changes to practice when weaknesses are brought to their attention. For example, the arrangements for the care of babies have improved following the most recent investigation visit. However, leaders do not identify or take appropriate action to address all areas for improvement across the provision. Consequently, there are now further breaches of legal requirements. Leaders are at an early stage of working with an independent consultant to identify what needs to improve.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

The quality of teaching is poor. The provider has recently introduced a revised system for recording observations of what children can do and linking these to expected levels of development. However, this information is not used to plan meaningful and challenging activities, which are matched to children's abilities or help them to make progress. Staff know the languages children speak at home but activities to support language development are ineffective. On occasions, the level of background noise means that children cannot hear when staff are reading to them. As a result, children miss opportunities to develop their communication skills. Children make choices when using the outdoor play area and engage in a range of activities. They enjoy using equipment where they learn to balance using their hands and feet. This supports their health and wellbeing. However, staff do not routinely check the security of all outdoor areas.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

Staff fail to develop some children's understanding of what is appropriate behaviour. As a result, children are unclear about what is acceptable or safe. For example, when children hit or take toys from each other staff do not always intervene. They do not support children to understand why they should not hurt their friends. Most children listen to staff and follow simple instructions, for example, to help tidy toys away. However, staff sometimes contradict each other in the directions and guidance they give to children. This means there are occasions when children do not understand what is expected of them. Children enjoy suitable meals, which are prepared on the premises. These meet children's individual dietary needs. Parents are happy with the care provided and say that their children enjoy attending.

Outcomes for children are inadequate

Children do not make the progress they should because staff do not plan activities to meet their learning needs. For example, children who are more capable and some of the older children are not provided with sufficient challenge. As a result, they do not have the full range of skills they need to be ready for the move to school. Two-year-old children do not make as much progress as they could because some staff do not accurately identify their needs and organise activities to meet them.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY376104
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	1049295
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	66
Number of children on roll	50
Name of provider	Alpha Steps Nursery School Limited
Date of previous inspection	26 September 2013
Telephone number	02085212071

Alpha Steps Nursery registered in 2008. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm for 50 weeks of the year. They are in receipt of funding for free early education for two, three and four-year-old children. The nursery currently supports children with special education needs and disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There are 13 members of staff including the manager, who work directly with the children, 10 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120354.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at www.ofsted.gov.uk/user.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

