

Alpha Steps Nursery

89 Vallentin Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 3JJ



Inspection date 10 January 2018
Previous inspection date 19 July 2017

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The management team does not fully ensure that staff are deployed effectively at all times. For example, at times when babies are unsettled there are not enough staff available to actively engage the other children in purposeful learning.
- Not all children attending the setting have the opportunity to access planned daily outdoor activities, as required.
- At times, staff do not effectively engage younger children in learning. Some group activities do not support younger children's engagement and involvement as well as they do for older children.
- The management team does not always ensure that identified actions are addressed in a timely manner.

It has the following strengths

- Staff support children effectively to learn how to manage their emotions and feelings. Children behave well and are encouraged to respect their friends and share toys with one another.
- Children are happy and feel secure. Staff work closely with parents when children first start and help them quickly settle. This helps support children's emotional and physical well-being.
- Staff develop positive partnerships with parents and work well with other professionals. This helps to provide and maintain a shared knowledge and understanding of each child's needs and support continuity in their learning well.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage the provider must:

	Due Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ improve staff deployment at busy periods of the day to meet each child's individual care and learning needs more consistently and effectively 	28/02/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure all children have daily access to planned outdoor activities, particularly babies, to provide an all-round learning environment that meets their individual needs. 	24/01/2018

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

- build further on staff knowledge and skills to help support younger children's engagement and involvement consistently, including when they join in planned activities with the older children
- ensure that self-evaluation is effective and identified actions are addressed in a timely manner.

Inspection activities

- The inspection was carried out following the risk assessment process.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager in the different rooms and evaluated the practice.
- The inspector had a tour of the premises. She observed children playing and interactions between the children and staff.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability of staff working in the provision and sampled other documentation, including policies and procedures to safeguard children's welfare.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and provider. She also spoke to staff members during the inspection. The inspector took account of the views of parents through discussion.

Inspector

Anja Eribake

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

The management team does not always ensure that the setting runs smoothly. Although the team maintains staff-to-child ratios and supervises children well, the deployment of staff is not always effective. This has an impact on children's overall learning experiences, especially babies. Staff do not always receive consistently effective coaching to help them improve their practice. For example, during group time in the morning, staff did not engage the younger children successfully. Safeguarding is effective. The management follows thorough recruitment processes to help ensure staff's suitability and continuously monitors their ongoing suitability. Induction enables staff to understand the procedures to follow if they have any safeguarding concerns. Management evaluates the provision, although it does not always address the actions in a timely manner.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

The quality of teaching varies due to the weakness in staff deployment. Staff are not always able to support the younger children with their learning as they try to meet their basic needs first. For example, babies who try to walk do not always have the resources and support available to practise their skills. Staff make regular observations of children's play and identify the next steps in learning. Children in the toddler and pre-school room use the exciting resources set up by staff to learn and explore. For example, pre-school children enjoy sticking pasta and straws on paper independently, using their imagination and developing their pencil grip. This helps develop their fine motor skills needed for writing. Staff are sensitive to the older children's learning needs and skilfully manage involvement during their play. They use different teaching styles, such as role modelling, demonstrating or asking questions, to help children achieve their next steps in learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Staff do not always use the environment effectively to meet the needs of all children. For example, not all children have regular access to planned outdoor activities. During the inspection, staff took the older children outside, but not the younger ones. This affects their all-round learning experiences, particularly those children who learn better outdoors. However, children learn good self-care skills, such as covering their mouth when coughing. Staff use mirrors to help children become aware of themselves. Children look at their face when wiping their nose, and learn to dispose of the tissues. Staff use mealtimes for children to develop an understanding of healthy lifestyles and social skills.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Overall, children make progress from their starting points and develop good social skills. However, the weaknesses in staff deployment and the quality of teaching do not help children to consistently make good progress in their learning. Pre-school children take turns when playing with the play dough and compare the different shapes and colours. Toddlers playfully count and sing number songs when playing with water. Babies enjoy making music, moving to the rhythm and clapping their hands. Children enjoy learning and are confident in exploring the environment and resources.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY376104
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	1120460
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 - 4
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	Alpha Steps Nursery School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535172
Date of previous inspection	19 July 2017
Telephone number	02085098838

Alpha Steps Nursery registered in 2008. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm, all year round. There are 10 members of staff, including the manager, who work directly with the children. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above.

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 2018

