

Angels at Play

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY282852

Inspection date

29/03/2011

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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

Angels at Play is one of three nurseries run by Little Angels Nurseries Limited registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. The nursery opened in 2004 and operates from a purpose built building situated on the outskirts of Ware, Hertfordshire centre. A maximum of 114 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 138 children on roll, of whom 41 are in receipt of early education funding.

The nursery is open five days a week from 7.30am until 6.30pm all year round, excluding Easter and Christmas holidays. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children come from the local community and surrounding area. The setting is also registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery employs 33 members of staff. Of these, 20 hold appropriate early years qualifications with one working towards further early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

An extremely well-developed knowledge of each child enables staff to promote children's welfare and learning effectively. Children are safe and secure and really enjoy learning about the world around them. Partnerships with parents, the local school and other professionals are excellent and vital in making sure that the needs of all children are met, along with any additional support needs. This means that children progress exceptionally well, given their age, ability and starting points. Thorough self-evaluation and ongoing reflective practice by the manager and her staff means that priorities for development are identified and acted on, resulting in a provision that responds effectively to user needs and makes continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing a systematic approach to working in partnership with parents and carers when sharing records with all feeder primary schools.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding issues in order to protect children's welfare. Most staff have attended training and clearly understand how to make a referral if they have a child protection concern. There are a broad range of policies and procedures in place which effectively support the manager and her staff. These include those which help to identify any child at risk of harm and liaising with the appropriate agencies. Children are further safeguarded by robust recruitment and vetting procedures, which include the induction of all new staff and supports the continuing professional development of existing staff. Clear written risk assessments and daily safety checks of the premises are regularly undertaken to ensure that potential hazards to children are minimised. Furniture, equipment and resources are of high quality, they are suitable for the ages of children attending fully supporting their learning and development. Outcomes are clearly linked to the excellent use of resources and the successful deployment of staff throughout the setting. The well-maintained environment is conducive to learning. The setting consistently strives to ensure that resources and the environment are fully sustainable.

The manager and her staff team ensure that they constantly promote equality of opportunity. They are extremely effective in ensuring that all children are well integrated and that steps are taken to close any identified gaps in their achievements. Staff have an excellent knowledge of each child's background and needs and have effective systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is no bias in practice in relation to gender, race or disability and as a result they are successful in helping children to learn about and understand the world in which they live. Superb partnership working takes place to ensure each child receives high levels of support at an early stage. Children make smooth transitions into main stream school because staff take the time to develop valuable working relationships with staff at feeder primary schools. This has been identified by the management team as an area for continuous development. There is a consistent approach to working and being part of their local community with the setting making the most of local resources and organisations.

The manager and her staff have an extremely positive relationship with all groups of parents and carers. Parents report that, 'the staff are wonderful and the care is superb, staff are friendly and very approachable'. They are really pleased with the nursery and have recommended it to others, and know about their children's development through parents' evenings. Parents say 'staff go out of their way for families and children at this nursery', 'I love them they are brilliant', 'very happy with the nursery, it feels like a family'. Parents and carers are totally involved in decision-making on key matters affecting the setting through well-established and inclusive systems, including feedback forms and verbal contributions which are included in self-evaluation. Children are confident to contribute their views and opinions. Parents and carers are very well informed about all aspects of their children's achievements and well-being. Staff provide personalized guidance and information about the way that parents can effectively support their child's learning

and development outside of the setting. Parents are positively encouraged to share learning which happens at home.

Self-evaluation systems reflect a rigorous monitoring and an analysis of what the setting does well and what it needs to do to implement future improvement. As a result the actions taken by the manager are well targeted and have a valuable impact in bringing about continued improvement. The manager is effective in communicating ambition and inspiring her highly motivated, long-standing staff team to consistently promote outcomes for children.

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

The excellent organisation of the educational programme ensures that children are provided with a wide range of innovative, imaginative experiences which, meet their needs exceedingly well. The information gained through observations is used extremely effectively to guide individual planning. Staff are extremely committed to the development of consistent shared thinking by providing encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions to support and extend children's learning. Children are enthusiastic to attend and clearly embed the skills they need for future learning. They play a lively role in their learning, sharing ideas and responding to challenges with gusto. In addition the management team demonstrate their understanding of the huge benefits to young children when they are consistently enabled to learn through free-flow play and investigation. There are secure plans in place to support children's learning across all six areas. Relationships are very strong at all levels, and children demonstrate an obvious respect for each other's differences as they play together.

Babies crawl around freely as they explore their environment, they look out into the garden with curiosity and interest and begin to pull themselves to standing. This is enabled by staff who ensure that they are provided with sufficient space for them to move, roll, stretch and explore. Staff use plenty intonation as they communicate with very young children sparking their imagination and participation in activities. Babies demonstrate that they feel safe and secure within healthy relationships with staff as they show feelings of pleasure, excitement or frustration. For example, they become excited as staff successfully encourage them to explore everyday objects such as wooden spoons, whisks and saucepans. Staff provide excellent levels of support as they encourage even very young children to gain independent skills, for example, drinking from feeder cups without the lid. Children distinguish between the different marks they make as they begin to form recognisable letters. They proudly tell the inspector that they have written the first letter of their name. They further demonstrate their interest in the written word as without hesitation they ask a member of staff how to spell a particular word. Children link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet as they spell out their name and learn how to write and make the shape of the letters. In addition they enjoy using the computer to spell out their name, pressing the buttons and finding out how to make the letters appear on the screen or negotiating programs which reinforce or build on previous learning. Babies and

children use a variety of communication skills such as signing, babbling and the spoken word to make contact and to let people know what they need and how they feel. Children demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the world, for example, whilst drinking a cup of milk they confidently tell staff that milk comes from a cow. Children explore capacity and volume as they have fun playing with water, filling and emptying different-sized containers. They problem solve as they work out how to pour water through a transparent pipe ensuring it goes back into the water container.

Children show that they are developing an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are able to follow simple instructions and show a clear understanding of how to transport and store equipment safely. For example, as they carefully help staff to tidy away before lunch time. In addition they demonstrate an exceptional understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines. This is supported effectively through the use of visual aids. Children develop a superb understanding of healthy eating as they are enabled to make choices from the carefully planned and nutritious menu. They are encouraged to take part in an extensive range of physical activities, both indoors and out. This enhances their understanding about the significance of regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Children display a strong sense of security and that they feel safe within the setting. They have ownership of their health and well-being and demonstrate they are well informed about healthy living. Babies and very young children are extremely content and settled because their individual health, physical and dietary needs are met to an exceptional standard.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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

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