

Alumwellies

Alumwell Nursery, Primley Avenue, WALSALL, WS2 9UP

Inspection date	16/10/2013
Previous inspection date	22/06/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	1	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	1	
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	1	

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The exceptional staff practice and carefully organised environment results in highly confident children who achieve excellent levels of independence for their age. The nursery is well planned and resourced. Toys and equipment are very easy for children to access and move around as they choose, so that they can investigate and explore.
- There is a strong focus on play and learning in the outdoor environment. All children explore the outdoor space with enthusiasm and excitement; this helps them to develop many new skills and supports their enjoyment and well-being effectively.
- Children are well safeguarded due to robust recruitment and vetting procedures and staff's understanding of their roles and responsibilities in effectively protecting the children in their care.
- Children are supported to move on to nursery and school as they are introduced sensitively to each transition and successfully develop the necessary skills to help them embrace new experiences with self-confidence.
- The drive for improvement is demonstrated through accurate and thorough self-evaluation, resulting in a successful improvement plan that supports all children's achievements over time.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities throughout the nursery in both indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the day.
- The inspector looked at documentation including children's records, learning and development information, staff records and a selection of policies and procedures.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents from recent written questionnaires sent out by the nursery and the parents' comments book.

Inspector

Patricia Dawes

Full Report

Information about the setting

Alumwellies was registered in 2010 and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated in a school in Walsall, West Midlands, and is managed by a governing body. The nursery serves the local area and has strong links with the school. It is accessible to all children. It operates from purpose-built premises and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs five members of child care staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 5. The nursery opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 29 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already effective use of non-verbal communication to further promote children's learning and development so that they continue to achieve to the highest level.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn and develop. They provide a rich, varied and imaginative educational programme, with precise assessment and planning for individual children. Staff communicate exceptionally well with parents at the start to gain as much information as they can to plan for children's individual interests. Staff are highly skilled at adjusting activities to ensure that every child receives a balanced and suitable learning experience. Staff know their key children extremely well. They record their achievements across the seven areas of learning, which gives them a clear summary of each child's progress. The progress check at age two is fully implemented and is used very well by staff to assess children's development and act on any areas if there are concerns. Parents can see a copy of their child's planning sheet and the learning goals and objectives of activities, which is displayed. They are actively invited to share information about their child's learning interests at home through use of the 'achievement tree' and to contribute regularly to their child's learning journal.

High priority is given by staff to developing children's communication and language skills. An example of this is the recently attended communication training, although staff have not had time to fully apply these new ideas and methods across the nursery to further communicate effectively with children either through speech or gesture. All children enjoy leading their play and consistently demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning with the skilful guidance of staff. For example, children enjoy discovering the musical instruments and role play props in the 'songs and shakers' box during circle time, using these to act out action rhymes and songs. They explore cornflour, amazed at the different textures of hard and runny. Staff are always nearby to offer support and they are competent in the way that they extend activities to enhance learning or leave children to develop their play experiences for themselves.

Staff members join children in their play throughout the day, readily conversing with them to stimulate children's interest and foster their developing language skills. Staff engage well with the children to encourage their interest and make learning fun, and use suggestions and questions to challenge their thinking. During activities staff effectively foster children's social skills, such as sharing and turn taking. Children are involved during daily routines, such as helping to tidy up and clear away resources ready for 'lunch club'. Staff actively promote children's self-esteem and independence through the use of a cafe-style approach to snack time. This benefits children and further promotes their readiness for school.

Staff work extremely well together to plan main activities. They are well deployed, relaxed and supportive of children and know them well. Staff regularly take small groups of children to a quiet area where they share in a particular activity and can more closely observe their engagement and assess their progress. Children engage in imaginative play in the role play area, which is currently set out as a home corner with familiar resources to help the new intake of children settle. Children happily use their imagination to draw and label their pictures of home and their families. They use a variety of innovative resources and games for encouraging number and shape recognition, such as the 'bangle bar' for colour grouping and counting or 'sound lotto' to learn good listening skills. They build tall towers carefully selecting blocks of different sizes to ensure it remains standing or empty and fill the different sized pipes deciding how the water will flow. As a result, children are making outstanding progress in their learning and development.

Equality of opportunity is a real strength and all children are welcome in the nursery. Positive images are displayed around the setting and major celebrations from a variety of faiths and cultures are celebrated in nursery. Staff are a valuable resource in this setting and they use their personal experiences to take time to find out and embrace other cultures and provide activities for children which reflect their home customs. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in the nursery. Utmost priority is given by staff and children to ensure they are able to access all resources and take an active role in activities. This helps them to feel totally included and ensures that they settle well. Staff have developed close working relationships with local schools and other provisions that children attend. They regularly share information and staff take them to visit the school they will be moving to. This ensures that the transition from nursery to school is a positive experience for the children.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children settle well into the nursery, which is bright, spacious and invitingly decorated so that they and their parents feel welcomed. The settling-in period is well organised. Staff conduct home visits to get to know children and their parents, observe children in their own environment, and parents share important information about their children's individual needs. Individual routines are displayed and staff ensure that these are carried out until children naturally settle into the nursery routine, aiding their transition. Positive engagement by the key person and spontaneous praise and encouragement from staff throughout the day help to develop children's confidence so they feel secure and try out new things. Staff are fully aware of the importance of the three prime areas of learning in developing children's self-assurance so they can make their own play choices and initiate their own learning. Children's behaviour is exemplary. They know how to move through the nursery and start to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children are very sociable and independently and confidently engage with staff and their peers. Children form very positive relationships with both adults and their peers, and work happily alongside each other as they learn to share and take turns. They are extremely polite and use 'please' and 'thank you' as part of their normal daily routine.

Children's health is well supported through attention to daily routines like nappy changing, while others are developing their own self-care skills as they independently access the toilet and wash their hands. Healthy eating has a high focus at this nursery where children enjoy very nutritious and healthy snacks daily. They have easy independent access to the water cooler to ensure they remain hydrated throughout the day. Lunch club for children is a social occasion as they sit together with staff around the table. They learn to wait until everyone has finished before leaving the table. This helps to prepare them for school readiness and promotes independence.

Children thoroughly enjoy spending time outdoors and the resources and activities provided to enhance their physical development and well-being are exceptional. They benefit greatly from the hands-on learning opportunities of the forest school. This provides children with opportunities to develop a greater understanding and awareness of the natural woodland environment and helps to develop their ability to recognise and manage risks. In the nursery they enjoy their own planting and growing area and use the 'muddy kitchen' which has been created by staff to provide them with an exciting and invigorating way of learning to keep healthy as they to enjoy digging and making mud pies, which they cook in the outdoor microwave. This helps them to develop large muscle skills and coordination. Children learn about their own safety as staff incorporate gentle reminders of how to use resources safely as they play. They know the rules for play, particularly outdoors, and staff reinforce these before children use the area.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are exceptionally well safeguarded. All staff are very aware of their roles and responsibilities in protecting the children in their care. They fully understand the signs and

symptoms to be aware of and know when and from whom to seek advice. Recruitment procedures are rigorous and robust. All staff are checked thoroughly before being employed and complete yearly declaration forms for both criminal records and health. Any concerns relating to staff conduct are immediately acted upon and assessed to ensure that all staff working with the children are of a high calibre and are totally suitable. All necessary information is displayed in the foyer on a very informative parents' notice board. Other procedures to further protect children, such as the media and e-safety policy, maintenance of daily records and seeking all necessary information at registration, are thoroughly carried out. Risk assessments are conducted and regularly reviewed. Accident records are monitored and the information is used to inform risk assessments. This ensures that high standards of health and safety are maintained. All of this means children's safety and welfare is fully safeguarded.

Performance management systems are in place, such as team meetings and annual appraisals. Induction procedures are in place to help and support new staff and students. Peer observations where staff practice is evaluated are carried out to identify strengths and areas for development, as well as training to be sourced. Regular staff meetings ensure practice is discussed, policies are shared and reviewed, and new targets are set. Management show they value their staff and encourage them to share their views and opinions openly in an environment of trust and respect. The nursery demonstrates a strong capacity for improvement and is proactive in ensuring all of the welfare requirements are met. There is a very strong commitment to ongoing training to enhance staff's knowledge and practice. Ongoing support is provided by outside professionals which actively contribute to children's learning and development.

Partnership with parents is exceptional. Parents are wholly valued and their views are sought and respected. Staff provide parents with useful information, such as behaviour management, and encourage them to share their ideas and thoughts for improvements for the nursery. Parents are extremely happy with the nursery and comments received are very positive. The manager and staff respond quickly and appropriately to any concerns from parents. They immediately implement changes to their procedures to ensure that children are effectively cared for in line with parents' wishes. Parents say that the nursery is an extension of home, that the provision of care is of the highest standard, staff are outstanding and children's development is consistently high. They say that children are excited and happy to attend, that staff are excellent and know the children very well and that they help children to start school with confidence and provide a fantastic foundation in their learning attitude and social skills. Excellent partnerships with other professionals involved with the children, such as speech and language therapists, help them to reach their development goals.

Leadership and management in the setting is inspired and dynamic, resulting in exceptional support for children to make the best possible progress in their learning and development. The management team are clearly able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery. Staff and parents are involved in the self-evaluation process and ideas for improvement are carefully considered and given the utmost priority. They are proactive in implementing the changes necessary to sustain improvement and consistently explore new and innovative ideas to fully integrate the nursery into the community. Above all children thoroughly enjoy the time they spend in this nursery and

the skills they learn help them to prepare them for school readiness and lay firm foundations for the future.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY420407
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	937233
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	29
Name of provider	Alumwell Nursery School Governing Body
Date of previous inspection	22/06/2011
Telephone number	01922 721264

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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