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Prospectus

**OFSTED Registered \*GOOD\***

**“Staff establish warm and caring relationships with children. They nurture younger children and establish firm bonds with children who attend. Staff are enthusiastic and have good understanding of how children learn and develop. They know children well and plan effective experiences to support their next steps in learning. As a result, children make good progress”**

We are a well-established Children’s day nursery based in Whittlesey near Peterborough. When we first opened our doors in 1993 we wanted to provide families with the very best in childcare for children aged 3 months to 7 years and this why we created a bespoke nursery with lots of space to play and explore, large air-conditioned rooms filled with natural light, freshly prepared nutritious meals, a purpose built baby unit and spacious gardens and allotment area.

We are committed to providing the highest quality of care and education for all children in a warm and caring atmosphere where children are able to learn through play. We are reflective of current Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum guidance and legislation.

We work closely with you as parents to try and make the transition from home to nursery as smooth as possible for your child, providing professional fully flexible childcare to suit your individual requirements. We open 51 weeks of the year at 7.30am ready for a busy day of fun and new learning experiences and close our doors at 6.00pm. In between we provide healthy snacks, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, a two-course nutritious meal with a wide variety of fruit and vegetables and an afternoon tea at 4.00pm.

**Play is a child’s ‘Work’**

It is our aim at Alphabet Day Nursery to provide a clean, caring, safe and stimulating environment which will provide a happy and warm atmosphere where children can play and have fun enabling them to develop their physical, intellectual, emotional and social skills through play. A general but flexible routine is followed daily to give the children a sense of security and to enable them to relate with confidence to members of staff and their peers. We recognise the different needs of individual child development, our staff will ensure each child is cared for at a level appropriate to their own development, individual needs, cultural and religious beliefs.

We have policies in place to manage risks as well as Health & Safety, Fire Procedure, Food Safety Standards and First Aid. A full set of which are located in the entrance hall for parents to look at. We have a Secure Entry Intercom System where staff will release the door once your identity has been confirmed. We also carry out Risk Assessments which are closely monitored on a daily basis to ensure the best protection for all children in our care.

Going to nursery is a big step for any child, and we understand how hard this decision can be for parents, which is why we put a huge emphasis on our relationship with you and the settling of your child. Children learn from their parents first, you are the principal carer and know your child best. Our Nursery staff are committed to providing the best care for your child in partnership with you.

Many of our parents have continued to bring their subsequent children with us, which we feel is a good reflection on the excellent quality of care we provide and 20 years on we are proud that the children who were part of the nursery when we first opened are now returning with their own children

**Our Rooms**

**Rabbit Room - 0-2 Years**

The Rabbit room is home to our babies, the room is large yet cosy and filled with natural light. Slippers are worn by all staff to ensure the room is clean and safe for all babies to explore and move freely. There is a very happy relaxed routine in the baby room with plenty of activities and equipment carefully selected to suit this age range. We have a cosy book corner with comfy beanbags and cushions to encourage a homely cuddle and story time. We also have comfy rocking chairs for the staff to support babies with bottle feeding and sleep routines, or even just a lovely cuddle. Our baby room has its own sleep room which is perfect for a peaceful snooze, where babies have their own cots or sleep mats dependent on age.

The Rabbit room also has its own kitchen where bottles are prepared. It also has a dining table as we feel mealtimes are very important at this age encouraging some of those very first tastes! Our babies will sit around the table and enjoy a delicious meal with their friends.

Inside our babies learn through experiences like exploring fabrics, playing with musical instruments or treasury baskets with items such as pine cones or brushes, or playing in the sand pit, water or messy play. Singing sessions help develop sounds and the first stages of language.

Outdoors the babies have the opportunity to play in our secure garden, go for walks and mix with the ‘older’ children. The wet pour surface ensures the babies can play safely and explore the outside in all seasons, our babies love to ‘choo choo’ at the trains going past and wave to the horse in the neighbouring field.

Our babies have a key person who is responsible for working with you to learn your baby’s routine and individual needs. A daily diary keeps you informed of their day from start to end; this is recorded in a home to nursery book.  During your baby's first month we also create a 'Starting Point at Nursery' this is the beginning of their 'Learning Journey' showing how well they have settled and contains pictures with written observations.  In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) this will be where your baby's achievements, learning and progress are recorded throughout their time at Nursery.  We encourage you as parents to add your own comments so we can develop a partnership in caring for your child.  Good parenting together with high quality early learning, provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

**Hedgehog Room – 2– 3 Years**

Our Hedgehog room has a cosy secure atmosphere where our Toddlers can relax, explore, move freely, have fun and develop at their own pace with the support of our caring staff.

Toddlers are very curious and love investigating the world around them; in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) the main emphasis is learning through play. Activities are planned from the children’s interests; the room is well equipped with a good range of exciting and stimulating toys, games and activities including singing and dancing, creative activities, story time and sand and water to name a few.

Our children benefit from the support of their ‘Key Person’, their main role is to ensure your child feels settled, happy and safe. They take a careful note of your Child’s progress which they share with you and record in an online ‘Learning Journey’, this is a unique record of your child’s achievements,

Learning and progress in all the development areas of the EYFS. We encourage parents to upload their own comments, experiences and photographs so that we can also see children’s progress at home.

In all seasons our Toddlers go outside to explore the garden and get plenty of fresh air, playing on the slide or in the house, digging in the sandpit and socialising with different age groups. Our children wave as the trains rush past the station and when the horse comes to the fence they love to be picked up by staff to say Hello!

Our Toddlers enjoy a free-flow garden area where they are able to explore outside or inside as they please. Outside they find enjoyment in going on bug hunts and exploring the plants.

At nap time, our children snuggle down with a blanket on their own sleep mattress. Soothing music is played and children are comforted by our nurturing staff until they drift off into a peaceful sleep.

A thorough feedback is given at the end of your child’s session to see what they have been enjoying the most, meal times and nappy changes.

**Squirrel Room – Pre School**

Our squirrel room is where our children begin their pre-school journey ensuring they are ready when the time arrives for school life. In this room children follow a play-based curriculum which reflects the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements allowing them to learn at their own pace individually and with friends.

This room is very busy with the children choosing what they wish to do, from creating drawings, paintings and sticking in our Art Area to dressing up, building train tracks, playing in the home corner, reading books or using the computer. Children in this room also have free access to the garden with the doors open all day so they can go outside to play as and when they choose. The garden is packed full of wonderful things allowing them to continue play on a larger scale exploring the outside, playing in the sand pit or riding the bicycles. In our allotment area children are able to plant fruit and vegetables and watch them grow – experiencing the different textures and smells of soils, herbs and plants and probably most popular of all filling up the watering cans to give everything a good drink. Our children love watching the trains go past and giggle with joy when the horse pops his head over the fence from the field next door to say a quick hello!

Our children in the pre-school are given opportunity to explore school life by participating in a range of activities from ‘Register Time’ and ‘Circle Time’. These give them further knowledge on areas such as math’s, literacy and music. Pre-school also have opportunity to explore ‘Jolly Phonics’ through singing songs and finding our ‘Letter of the Week’!

Our children are given the opportunity to take part in a variety of activities designed to encourage them to develop in all ‘7 Areas of Learning’ in the EYFS. Opportunities will be made for children to make choices for themselves and to experience spontaneous unplanned activates such as snow or the arrival of a tractor. We help them to develop creative, social and personal skills through play to gain awareness in the world in which we live.

Our children benefit from the positive support and nurture of their key worker with whom they form a good adult and child relationship. Each key person creates a ‘Learning Journey’ folder in which observations and photographs are recorded to detail a child’s personal progress and development in all 7 areas of the EYFS. We encourage parents to add their own comments, experiences and photographs to the Learning Journey so that we can also see children’s progress at home. Partnership with parents is a vital component of the Early Years Foundation Stage and one which we strongly advocate and support.

**Holiday club (4-7 years)**

Children will have full use of the outdoor play area along with all of the Squirrel room’s fun and engaging. activities to keep them busy during their holiday.

**What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?**

This is the curriculum of learning on which we base our practice.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a comprehensive statutory framework that sets the standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five.

All providers are required to use the EYFS to ensure that whatever setting parents choose, they can be confident their child will receive a quality experience that supports their care, learning and development.

**What does this mean for me and my child?**

For all children learning begins at birth. The EYFS will help our practitioners provide appropriate play experiences to enable your child to develop in all areas. It will enable practitioners to recognise your child’s strengths and the areas where they may need more support in to develop new skills. For young children it is important that they are made to feel safe and secure in their surroundings, this is aided by having a ‘Key Person’ within the setting who gets to know you and your child well and builds a positive relationship with you both.

The EYFS means that wherever your child is being cared for or educated between 0-5 years they will be following the same set of principles, they will be offered a ‘principled play based approach to learning and development’. **Young children learn best through play** and our Early Years Practitioners will be able to provide your child with appropriate play and learning experiences for their stage of development and help them develop new skills. The activities that are provided for your child will underpin the skills they need to develop in the following areas:

**Prime areas -**

* Communication and Language -  CL
* Personal Social & Emotional Development – PSED
* Physical Development – PD

**Specific areas -**

* Literacy – L
* Mathematics – M
* Understanding the World – UW
* Expressive Arts and Design – EA

**Opening and closing times.**

The nursery is open Monday to Friday 7.30 am till 6.00 pm. The nursery doors will be unlocked at 7.25am which will give you time to settle your child in, so that you are able to leave by 7.30am if needed. Please note you will not be able to leave before 7.30am due to insurance reasons this also applies for closing in the evening you must collect your child before 6.00pm.

We are open 51 weeks of the year, with one week off at Christmas and with the exceptions of bank holidays.

**Free and Flexible Early Learning and Childcare.**

The nursery accepts children eligible for the early learning and childcare funding from the term after their 3rd birthday. Each child is entitled up to 15 hours a week of free childcare over a minimum 3 days, for a minimum period of 38 weeks (term time only) or over 50 weeks; as long as the hours claimed do not exceed 570 hours per year in total. Any additional hours over the 15 hours will be charged at normal nursery rate.

We provide flexible hours to meet parental demand and according to spaces available. Funding can be claimed for a minimum of 2.5 hours to a maximum of 10 hours over 2 days or more. All day sessions are available as well as morning or afternoon sessions.

15 hours per week for 2 year olds is now available subject to personal criteria

Please ask Naomi for further details and how to apply.

**Settling in**

Once you have decided that Alphabet Day Nursery is right for you and your child, please organise a time suitable for you both to come in and familiarise yourselves with the nursery surroundings. This is usually through a meet and greet with child’s ‘Key Person’ and a settle session for an hour before starting. The nursery fully understands that one hour is not enough for some children so other options are also available to settle your child in. The settling in period is usually carried out a week before they are due to start their normal hours of attendance.

Each child is different, some settle quickly while others take a little longer. Settling also depends on how frequently your child attends nursery, those who attend for longer or more sessions generally settle more quickly. If your child has a comforter please bring it to nursery, clearly labelled with their name.

**Safety and Security**

Alphabet aims to provide the highest level of safety and security in the nursery environment. Entry is gained by ringing the bell on the intercom system; a member of staff will release the door only after they have confirmed your identity. Parents or their identified helpers are always welcome into the nursery at any time. However everyone else must make an appointment with the nursery proprietor or manager. Staff will only release children into the care of individuals named by the parents/carers. We have our own car park but please remember that it is busy especially at dropping off and collecting times and it is your responsibility to make sure that your child is properly supervised.

**Outdoor Activities**

We have an outdoor play area which is used to promote the six areas of ‘Learning and Development’ in a wide variety of experiences. We try to offer most learning opportunities which are available indoors in the outdoor area. We also play ring games and have singing sessions outside in the fresh air. In addition, the outdoor area extends children’s learning as it offers opportunities which are not available indoors.

We like to spend some time each day out of doors all year round and in all weathers, therefore we ask parents to send suitable outdoor footwear and coats every day for their child. In the summer it is important that we protect your child from the sun, please provide a sun hat and sun cream labelled with your child’s name.

**Please make sure every item is clearly marked with your child’s name.**

**Safeguarding & Promoting Welfare**

At Alphabet Day Nursery we are committed to the Safety and Welfare of all children in our care. We have named Designated Lead Practitioners (DLP) within the nursery that have specific training on safeguarding matters and will ensure this is of paramount importance in all aspects of our work. All staff are thoroughly vetted prior to starting work with the children and are kept up to date in ongoing training on Safeguarding. They understand their role and have a responsibility to the children. We have a statutory duty to ask you about any injuries your child may have when attending the nursery, to record any concerns we may have and if necessary pass these concerns to Social Services Child Protection Department. Please see our policies and procedures with important information and contact numbers should you have any concerns about a child’s safety or wellbeing.

**Our full Policy and Procedures are available to view when you visit.**

**Meal Times**

We love food – we believe good healthy food promotes healthy, happy children. All our food is prepared on-site in our kitchen which is kept to the highest food standards and holds a 5\* Food hygiene certificate awarded by Fenland District Council.

Meal times are happy and social part of the day at Alphabet Day Nursery, where both staff and children sit together at the table in a family atmosphere. We carefully plan a four-weekly seasonal menu, which is updated and reviewed regularly to ensure a good nutritional balance for all children, as well as honoring individual and family dietary requirements.

When your children are in our care we truly believe it is important they eat good wholesome meals. Our healthy eating policy reflects the School Food Trust, Eat Better - Start Better Campaign which is why our menus offer a good variety of foods encouraging children to try new foods with different flavours, textures and tastes. The children grow their own fruit and vegetables in our allotment area helping them to learn and understand the field to plate process.

Our Baby Room has a dedicated milk kitchenette area where we can store and prepare bottles. When your child is ready to start weaning our nursery cook is able to prepare freshly made baby dishes specially designed for baby’s first tastes.

Breakfast 7.30am-8.30am

Snack Time 10.00am – 10.30 am

Lunch Time 11.45am

Afternoon Tea – 3.45pm

We operate a ‘rolling snack’ system which means that children can come to the snack table when they are ready and do not have to interrupt their play in order to eat.

Water is available throughout the day and both milk and water are served with Afternoon Tea and Snacks.

**Staff Information**

Alphabet Day Nursery is led by our Manager, Naomi Griffiths, who has a level 3 qualification and has worked in childcare for almost ten years, experiencing a range of different settings and age groups. Our Deputy Manager Stacey Whitered holds a degree in Childcare Learning and Development; she also manages the Baby Room. Most of our staff are qualified to Level 3, we also have some Level 2 practitioners. We also have a good mix of mums among the staff team. It's a mix that creates a warm, family environment. All our staff are DBS checked and qualified in Pediatric First Aid.

We feel it is important that our staff's knowledge and understanding is continually updated and all our staff regularly attend a variety of training courses to achieve this

**Clothing & Laundry**

Whilst we provide painting aprons and bibs, we do ask that you bring a spare set of clothes for your child. All clothing should be clearly labelled, including shoes. We do ask that you provide either slippers or indoor shoes that your child can keep at nursery. Seasonal clothing such as hats or wellies should be brought to nursery as required. Pegs are provided for each child’s bag.

Each child is provided with their own set of sheets and blankets that are laundered weekly. We have a policy of not using duvets, pillows or cot bumpers.

**Illness Policy**

In the event of your child being ill or having an accident at nursery, we will telephone parents or named contacts.

Medication will only be given if prescribed and the child has already been taking the medicine for at least 24 hours before returning to nursery. This is administered under strict controls, and is kept safely away from children.

Please ask for a copy of our full exclusion policy regarding sickness.

**Nursery Policies**

A full set of our Nursery policies is located in the first entrance for parents to look at. If you would like to take these policies to read please speak to a member of staff.

**Registering Your Child**

Once you have decided that Alphabet Day Nursery is right for you and your child please fill in the registration form and return it to the nursery. You will be given conformation of a starting date and arrangements can be made for settling in visits for your child. There is a £25 registration fee to confirm the space for your child.

**Keeping Costs Down

FREE Childcare**

Claim up to 15 hours free childcare per week for all 3 & 4 years olds.
15 hours per week for 2 year olds is now available subject to personal criteria

**Tax Credits**

Inland Revenue tax credits will pay a percentage of your childcare costs providing you are eligible.

**Voucher Payments**

We accept all voucher schemes operated by employers which can reduce your national insurance payments.

**Terms & Conditions**

A registration fee of £25 is required to secure your child’s place. This is non-refundable.

Fees are payable monthly in advance by the first day in the month. Payment can be made via bank transfer, cheque or cash. Late payments will be charged a late fee of £30

Absences - It is important that you notify the Nursery if your child is to be absent. There are no reductions in Nursery fees if your child is absent, you are charged for session booked rather than session attended.

We do not charge for any days when the Nursery is closed this includes Bank Holidays and the week between Christmas and New Year.

We offer a 10% discount for your second child for full time children only.

A nursery place may be forfeited in the event of unpaid fees. We require one month’s paid notice, which must be given in writing by the first of the month should you no longer require the place.

Extra sessions are charged at the relevant rate and will be invoiced. We require one month’s notice for changes made to your regular sessions.

Late Collections – We support working families and understand the difficulties of balancing work and family commitments. We do not charge for occasional late collection of children and appreciate that at times delays can be unavoidable. However, late collection does cause significant disruption and increased staff costs, therefore repeated late collection will be charged.

We reserve the right to charge for late collection of children at a rate of £5.00 for the first 10 minutes and then £5.00 for every 5 minutes or part thereof after that. Any penalty charges incurred for late collection will be invoiced.

And finally...

We look forward to you joining us!