

Ark Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254587
Inspection date	25 June 2007
Inspector	Ann Keen
Setting Address	1 Vickers Street, Mapperley Park, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG3 4LD
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Registered person	Janet Kerry
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Ark Day Nursery opened in 1982. It operates from a converted detached Victorian house in the Mapperley Park area of Nottingham. The nursery serves a wide area and the intake of children represents a variety of cultural backgrounds and ethnic groups.

There are currently 44 children from birth to eight years on roll. This includes 13 funded three- and four-year-olds. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are two children for whom English is not their first language. Children attend both full and part-time sessions, after school care is also provided. Children are cared for in groups according to their age and ability. There are two enclosed outdoor areas.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 07:30 to 18:00, throughout the year closing only for bank holidays.

There are 12 staff working with the children. The majority of staff hold relevant childcare qualifications, with others working towards them. The nursery accesses additional training and support from the Nottingham City Council.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are generally protected against infection because staff follow good hygiene practices. Food is prepared on the premises and kitchen staff adhere to environmental health recommendations appropriately. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and drinking to avoid the spread of infection. Children have sufficient availability to drinking water at all times so they do not go thirsty. Children are provided with healthy eating options such as raisins and cheese for snacks and babies are able to follow their own routines well.

Suitable documentation supports the daily practices, such as policies regarding food safety and health and hygiene. Children are well protected because records are usually kept meticulously. Parents give permission to staff to administer medicines and normally the parents sign to confirm the dosage given. However, occasionally a parent has not signed for medicines given to children, potentially impacting on children's health. In case of injuries, children can be attended promptly by one of the staff with first-aid qualifications. Children are cared for in a well maintained environment, therefore promoting appropriate health care. Children are able to rest according to their needs and babies generally sleep in cots, according to their parents' wishes. Children have a suitable range of resources to support their physical development. Children's control of handling small items like paint brushes and writing implements is developing their manipulative skills well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in suitable accommodation with plenty of space to move around safely. The environment is welcoming and the nursery has closed circuit television to ensure children are closely monitored and safe. A high level of supervision promotes children's safety as staff monitor their activities. When children are sleeping they are constantly monitored and babies are checked every 10 minutes. The equipment and resources are at child height and accessible, developing their independence well and enabling them easy access to resources, reducing the risk of accidents. Children have access to a suitable range of resources and all equipment is fit for purpose. This ensures that children are well protected from hazards. Children are appropriately safeguarded from harm as the facilities are regularly checked and toys are checked as they are put out each day to ensure they are not broken or damaged. Fire precautions, such as smoke alarms, are in place and fire evacuation procedures are planned.

Children are well protected because staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues. There is a clear and comprehensive child protection policy and staff are knowledgeable about their roles. They are fully aware of the authorities to contact in case of concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled as they eagerly participate in the available activities. Younger children benefit from the interesting range of activities that support their development in line with 'Birth to three matters'. They make models of faces and people using different papers, for example, and enjoy investigating the sand. Children demonstrate enthusiasm, spending long periods of time at self-chosen tasks such making dens or looking at books. They form

secure bonds with staff and demonstrate a sense of belonging through getting used to regular routines. Children's care, learning and play is well supported through singing well-known songs such as 'The wheels on the bus'.

Babies receive good levels of support and encouragement which ensures they are secure and become confident to explore and investigate. They are encouraged, for example, to move one knee in front of the other to crawl. Babies demonstrate excitement at verbal contact with staff and are encouraged to react to the sounds from musical toys. Their language skills are developed well through staff questioning and encouraging them. Babies respond with laughs and smiles, helping them to form positive relationships.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use their knowledge of the Foundation Stage to provide a wide range of activities to help children learn. Plans show clear learning intentions so staff are aware about what they want children to learn and have high expectations for children. A good balance between adult and child-led activities enables children to achieve well. The teaching methods generally show a good understanding of how children learn and progress. Generally the levels of challenge hold children's interest and provide them with new experiences; children delight in welcoming adults to the 'museum' and showing them dinosaur bones, booking appointments and allocating a time for their session to visit. Staff know the children in their care well and assess their development accurately. Staff use their observations of children to record their progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. This enables staff to realise the next step in children's learning and to plan accordingly. However, they do not always use those assessments to plan how to group children so they gain the most benefit from the large group sessions, for example. Occasionally, this impacts on children's concentration and behaviour. Staff work hard to manage children's behaviour and develop strategies such as reward stamps and charts to promote good behaviour. Consequently staff create a pleasant and welcoming environment in which children flourish. Staff make effective use of time and resources so they provide an interesting and varied programme of activities on a daily basis. The accommodation is used well to ensure children have space to move, times for physical activity and quiet times so they are able to meet children's needs.

Children speak with confidence and converse freely with staff and their peers during their play, helping to develop their self-esteem and communication skills. They successfully develop the art of conversation as they take turns to speak and respond to simple instructions. Games such as, 'Simon Says' contribute effectively towards developing children's listening skills as they concentrate to respond appropriately. Children are developing their independence well and can confidently choose activities for themselves. They learn to recognise their names on their pegs and at the lunch table, helping the early stages of reading. Children show a keen interest in making marks on paper to represent meaning and older children are learning to form recognisable letters correctly. Children happily look at books on their own and talk about the pictures. A good variety of activities are planned so children learn to recognise shapes and they see shapes displayed around the room all the time. Whilst playing games like dominoes, children effectively learn to match a number of objects together. They are also developing mathematical skills effectively in recognising the shapes of pictures to match together. Plans to develop children's physical skills are suitable. When they are unable to go outside due to bad weather, children play games and move to tapes, enjoying moving through the 'jungle'. Children confidently make their own constructions using commercially produced materials, supporting their imaginations well. Children enjoy using the computer which contributes to their overall learning and develops their co-ordination effectively. Children's manipulative skills are supported

well by controlling small 'tools' such as pens, pencils and paint brushes. Children frequently engage in activities that help them to express their ideas and develop their creative skills. They are introduced to activities through themes and produce a good variety of creative work, for example, on fossils and dinosaur bones. Children eagerly investigate materials such as pasta when mixed with water and enjoy watching the effect it has when put through a sieve.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected and valued by staff who know them well, so children's self-esteem is well promoted. All children are included in activities and staff are committed to providing for the individual needs of children who attend the nursery. Children benefit from activities and resources which help them to value diversity and promote a positive view of the wider world. Children celebrate a variety of festivals such as May Day and Chinese New Year. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The staff are aware that some children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and take appropriate action. They work with the local authority staff and outside agencies to provide appropriate care. Children benefit from the positive partnership with parents regarding their care, as they have their routines respected. Parents receive a good variety of information about the setting, for example, daily menus are clearly displayed. Plans are displayed on the walls and parents receive diaries giving them useful information about their children's day.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. The nursery has an open day when parents are able to talk to staff about their children's progress. They can discuss their children with their keyworker, involving parents in their children's learning. Parents receive good quality information about the educational provision, which includes the Foundation Stage. Plans are displayed so parents are well-informed about their children's day, the themes and activities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by effective and efficient organisation. Recruitment and induction procedures ensure that staff have relevant experience and skills to create a caring atmosphere for children. Staff regularly attend training to support their professional development, enabling them to provide good quality care to the children. The required adult to child ratios fully meet requirements and effective staff deployment contributes to children's good health, safety and enjoyment. Staff are aware of the need to have the legally required documentation in place. Generally policies and procedures are kept well and support the practice effectively so children's well-being, care and learning benefit. These include a fire evacuation policy, health and safety, child protection and equal opportunities. Record keeping is generally accurate, for example, a visitor's book is maintained and records of accidents and incidents are kept. The indoor space is well-organised to allow children to experience a good variety of activities and provide for their individual requirements. Staff are fully involved with the children at all times so children receive suitable attention and support. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. It supports the children's achievement well so they make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children's learning is well supported through the nursery's ability to assess its own strengths and weaknesses providing continual improvement. The nursery have regular staff meetings and identify their own future developments. They have robust systems in place to monitor and

evaluate the provision, including support from the local authority. Consequently children benefit from continual improvement in provision. Children's achievement is assured as the nursery is committed to the improvement of education for all children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, there were two recommendations. The nursery was required to provide regular opportunities for the children to play outside and improve the organisation of sleep times. Children are now able to play outside twice a day and sleeping arrangements are well organised in the toddler room. The nursery was required to maintain a suitable temperature in the after-school room. This is now maintained well.

At the last education inspection the nursery was required to improve their skills of developing mathematics and early literacy in free play sessions. The staff question children and extend their learning well, for example, by talking about the shapes around and counting pieces of paper as they stick them on. They chat to children asking them questions, which helps them with their language.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure all parents sign a record of medicines administered to children.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- use assessments to plan for all children's individual needs with regard to group times and managing behaviour.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk