



# Noah's Ark Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY272338
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 May 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Glynis Pratchett
<b>Setting Address</b>	13-15 Brunswick Road, Plymouth, Devon, PL4 0NP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 601888
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Noah's Ark Childcare Centres
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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](http://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?

Noah's Ark Childcare Centre is a Neighbourhood Nursery and one of four nurseries run by the Noah's Ark company. It opened in 2004 and operates from a converted house. The ground floor comprises two large activity rooms, a cot room and a prep room for the babies. On the first floor, there are four activity rooms. A lift is installed so that there is disabled access to all areas of the building. It is situated on the edge of Cattedown and in very close proximity to Plymouth city centre. The outdoor area is

secure and contains a range of play equipment for the children to use. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 throughout the year. It also provides after school care and holiday play schemes for children up to the age of 12 years.

A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 57 children aged from birth to under 8 years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery can support children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 12 staff. Eight of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Four staff are working towards a qualification.

The nursery receives support from the Plymouth Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to their good health. They have regular outdoor play throughout the day and lots of fresh air. Children develop their physical skills by taking part in activities such as riding bikes, pushing and pulling trolleys, and using the slide. Children are aware of the need to keep warm when they go outside by putting on their coats. The younger children join in the activities enthusiastically because staff understand their developmental needs.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment. They are learning the importance of good hygiene routines as they wash their hands after using the toilet and messy play, and before eating. Good procedures, such as staff consistently wearing disposable gloves for nappy changing, ensure younger children's hygiene needs are well met. Staff strive to prevent the spread of infection, however, the current system for storing children's individual toothbrushes and toothpaste does not meet good hygiene requirements. Children's health needs are well met as staff are diligent in recording any medication given.

Children are beginning to understand the importance of a healthy diet. Regular nutritious snacks are served in substantial quantities. These include fresh fruit, sultanas and cheese and a choice of milk and water. Children make choices about what they eat and drink. At lunch time, children benefit from excellent, home cooked meals that are prepared daily using fresh ingredients. The three weekly menu ensures children enjoy a balanced diet. Children recognise the cook, who always receives a highly vocal and exuberant response from them. The children's dietary needs are well met and catered for as all the staff are very aware of any allergies or special requirements.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in well maintained premises. Their risk of accidental injury is minimised in the setting because of good safety and security precautions, such as a visual intercom system and stair gates. Children's safety is well promoted by staff who are aware of their responsibilities to carry out regular fire drills and complete risk assessments when taking children out. Children move freely around the setting using different rooms on different levels and appropriate adult supervision ensures they are safely developing independence and safe practice. Procedures and policies are in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted.

Children use high quality toys and equipment that are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Resources are well organised and children can safely access them for themselves and they also help to tidy them away. The rooms are welcoming to children because of the furniture at child-height that encourages independent access, children enjoy choosing resources from the good range of toys and equipment.

Children are well protected because staff have a clear understanding of what to do if they have any concerns about a child and the procedures to follow. Children are kept safe when they arrive and depart or when they are collected from school as there are sound procedures in place and staff are well deployed.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery. They are happy and confident because staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and a developing understanding of the Birth to three matters framework. They receive good individual support because the group sizes are small and the key worker system ensures that each child's needs are met effectively. The planning of activities takes account of the age and ability of each child. For example, the two to three-year-old group explore different themes and take part in a variety of role-play and creative activities.

The youngest children and babies settle well and make good progress because staff recognise their individual needs and are sensitive to their particular routines and care patterns. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in a diverse range of exploratory and sensory experiences. For example, they explore the qualities of paint, wet sand and water play, natural materials and feathers. Staff effectively support children while they explore their environment. The youngest children are encouraged to seek out resources for themselves, ensuring they feel secure and confident in the setting.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children happily participate in a wide range of well planned activities. They access a good range of well chosen resources which support their learning across all areas of their development. All children are eager to learn and participate in activities. Staff

encourage the less confident to express themselves at their own level. Children listen intently to stories and can recount favourites. They make excellent use of books and enjoy choosing and recounting aloud the contents of stories, while others receive individual support to listen to a chosen story. Children routinely access imaginative and creative play. Daily planned sessions in the messy room allow children to freely experience an imaginative range of creative activities, for example, they manipulate green mashed potato. During water play, children learn about changing shapes as they drop water-filled balloons into red, soapy water, they further extend this activity into imaginative role play. Children consolidate their learning during painting by practising learnt techniques, such as 'butterfly printing'. Children use mark making equipment to develop their hand-eye co-ordination and they practise writing their names.

Children develop their concentration in activities such as building a wall with bricks and painting. They wait patiently to pour their drink at snack time and to choose their snack. Children work well together and confidently initiate and extend their play. They are learning to be independent as they wash their hands and help to put on their shoes and coats for outdoor play. Children are well supported in their learning by the good organisation and use of the different rooms and resources.

Staff carefully plan the weekly activities ensuring there is a balance between adult and child-led activities; this allows children to learn at their own pace. Staff are effective at observing and recording children's achievements, these are used to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. This ensures they are making good progress in all the areas of learning. However, when children newly arrive into the pre-school group, staff do not ask parents to share their views about their child's current achievements and interests. This means staff are unable to effectively plan for children's learning.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are valued in the nursery. The small groups and good staff support encourage children to develop a positive sense of self and others. Children are very well behaved and respond appropriately to the group rules. They share resources and play well together. Staff use lots of praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour and to encourage learning. Younger children have a developing sense of belonging as staff greet and say goodbye to them and their parents. Staff provide further emotional support as they are cuddle babies and comfort them.

Children have access to a range of books, resources and activities that promote their understanding of diversity. Varied and informed wall displays further promote positive attitudes to others. Children have many opportunities to learn about themselves and the world around them through planned activities. They have equal access to activities whatever their gender, ethnicity, religion or ability. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

A good partnership with parents contributes to children's well-being. Staff effectively share information about children's care and welfare needs with parents, ensuring

they know how their children are progressing and developing. Children usually progress through the nursery and staff have a developing and changing understanding of their needs and interests.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the good quality leadership and management and effective organisation of the day care.

The premises are well organised over two floors and have a lift, which offers disability access. The first floor rooms are used flexibly to cater for different groups of children. These rooms have specific designated functions, for example, one is used for messy play and another has the book corner and musical instruments. Babies have an attractive and spacious room which is used flexibly for play and eating.

There are good staffing levels and staff are deployed effectively to ensure good support for the children. All staff either have or are working towards a relevant childcare qualification and training is positively encouraged. For example, staff are currently training in the Birth to three matters framework ensuring everyone fully understands the developing needs of young children. There is an effective induction programme for new staff and trainees, and all legally required policies and procedures work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare.

The leadership and management is good. The manager and deputy are effective in monitoring the provision. The nursery is well supported by the group area manager and the managing director who promote their vision for the setting by providing clear direction and support for the staff. Regular meetings with staff ensure everyone understands the way forward in terms of reflecting, planning and improving their practice. The nursery has recently started a quality assurance scheme to help them further improve the provision. The good quality of the provision ensures that it meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The previous care inspection recommended that the setting ensures that contingency arrangements for staffing are operational and that resources promoted positive images of disability. The contingency arrangements for staffing have been formalised with a written plan of the procedures to follow if staffing levels are inadequate. Good staffing levels are now maintained and staff effectively follow the procedures. Some resources have been purchased that promote positive images of disability. The management has identified additional resources they plan to order.

The result of these changes has been a further improvement in children's care and development.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection in September 2004, Ofsted has received one complaint relating to Standard 7: Health, Standard 8: Food and Drink and Standard 12: Working in partnership with Parents and Carers. Concerns were raised that nappy changing was not conducted in a way to prevent infection or in accordance with the child's individual needs. Concerns were also raised about parental instructions for children's special dietary needs not being followed and that parents were denied the opportunity to discuss the outcome of the provider's investigation.

The provider was asked to investigate the concerns and report back to Ofsted. The provider reported back and provided details of their investigation, including copies of correspondence. Ofsted assessed this information in relation to the National Standards to which the concerns related.

From the details provided, Ofsted is satisfied that the National Standards are being maintained and the provider continues to be suitable for registration.

## **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 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):

- make sure that cross-contamination is prevented by the correct storage of individual toothbrushes and toothpaste.

#### **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):

- ensure staff are fully aware of children's attainment on entry to the funded provision through close liaison with parents.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)