

Noah's Ark Playcentre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY341664
Inspection date	27 April 2007
Inspector	Alison Margaret Walker
Setting Address	26 Reginald Street, Chapeltown, Leeds, LS7 3HL
Telephone number	0113 2627000
E-mail	
Registered person	Noahs Ark Playcentre
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Noah's Ark Playcentre was registered in 2006 and offers both full day care and out of school day care. The setting operates from four rooms in a converted brick-building in the Chapeltown area of Leeds. A maximum of 30 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year, apart from bank holidays. There are currently 18 children on roll aged between seven months and three years. The setting employs 10 members of staff. Of these, three hold a level 2 childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

The children benefit from the diet they receive as meals and snacks are healthy and nutritious, for example, spaghetti Bolognese and fresh fruit. The nursery employs a cook and meals are freshly prepared on the premises. However, children do not have independent access to drinks and are not given drinks with their meals. All staff are fully aware of individual dietary requirements and preferences, which are discussed in full with parents and recorded. The children have good appetites and enjoy their food. Children enjoy exercise and develop a

positive approach to this through regular opportunities for exercise and fresh air, such as playing on the adjacent field and walking to the park. They also use the community room on the first floor for physical play. Procedures for first aid are satisfactory. There are first aid kits available throughout the centre and two members of staff have a valid first aid certificate. Basic written policies are in place regarding sickness, accidents and administration of medication.

Inadequate hygiene practices are in place. The staff do take some positive steps to promote the good health of children; for example, there is liquid soap and paper towels available. The nappy changing mats are kept clean and in good condition. However, children do not always wash their hands before meals and staff use same cloth to wipe tables, floors and walls. Sleep times for the two- to three-year-olds are inflexible and do not meet children's individual needs; for example, after lunch children are expected to have a sleep whether they are ready for one or not. Some children are put to sleep together in a row on a large quilt, the quilt cover is only washed every couple of days and the children are not covered with sheets or blankets. As a result, this practice does not protect the children from infection or provide them with a comfortable sleeping arrangement. Sleep routines for babies are flexible and cater for their individual needs. This is because the supervisor is experienced, organised and competently implements the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

The environment is warm and welcoming. Parents and children are warmly welcomed on arrival and children's work and photographs are displayed on the walls in the playrooms. Children benefit from some safety measures, for example, through the use of socket covers and safety gates. Fire equipment is in place; however, fire drills have not been carried out since the centre opened. As a result, this poses a risk to the children's safety and the overarching standard is not being met. The children are supervised at all times, are unable to leave the premises unattended and are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted. The system for managing access to the premises is satisfactory; for example, unauthorised persons are unable to gain entry and there is a record of visitors.

There is a satisfactory range of toys, furniture and equipment available, which meet the needs of all children attending, such as cots and high chairs. However, there are limited natural materials for children to play with, such as heuristic play. All of the resources are in good condition and are regularly checked. The staff have an adequate knowledge of child protection procedures. They have an awareness of their responsibilities towards the children in their care. A policy is in place and this includes allegations against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

The children are settled and have positive relationships with others and adults. There are clear plans available in the baby room which clearly link to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Not all the staff working with younger children have attended 'Birth to three matters' training, in particular those working with the one- to three-year-olds. There is no planning for this age group, just a written routine. This has an impact on the children's care, learning and play; as a result, most children's individual needs are not met. Basic children's profiles are in place but these are not easily accessible to parents as they are stored on a very high shelf.

Young children receive plenty of individual attention and cuddles, for example, while being bottle fed, looking at books and playing with textured bricks. The staff are always within reach and talk to the children in a sensitive manner whilst playing with them. Children are developing an interest in books. They handle them carefully and seek out adults to read to them. Play resources are accessible and the children select these with confidence. For example, they access bricks, dolls and prams independently. However, messy, creative and sensory activities are very limited, which has an impact on the children's overall development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff have a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour, which is reflected in the setting's behaviour policy. They help children understand what is expected of them; for example, they are calm and clear regarding boundaries. The staff use positive techniques effectively, such as praise and encouragement. They encourage the children to be kind and caring. As a result, they are learning to share, take turns, cooperate at tidy up time and use manners.

The children are developing a positive attitude to others and some understanding about the wider world and community. The children have access to a satisfactory range of resources which show positive images, such as dolls, jigsaws, books and small world play figures.

The parents receive verbal information about the provision and there is a parents' noticeboard. Parents have good opportunities to share what they know about their child through regular discussions with staff. They are informed about their child's achievements and progress, for example, through profiles.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The environment is generally well organised; staff know their roles and responsibilities and implement routines to give children an adequate range of experiences. Staffing ratios are satisfactory; however, the person in charge and room supervisors do not have a level 3 qualification. This has a detrimental impact on the care of the children and is a breach of the overarching standards. Recruitment procedures are poor; this is because the centre owner does not recruit a suitably qualified manager or staff. The owner has no proof of staff qualifications or evidence of their experience. The owner classes herself as the manager, although she does not have a childcare qualification.

Staff are obtained through word of mouth; all staff undergo an induction and their employment is subject to a three month probationary period. Vetting procedures are in place, for example, ensuring that adults caring for the children are suitable to do so. The staff are deployed effectively ensuring children receive the attention they require.

All the required documentation is in place, easily accessible and stored securely, such as children's personal details. An effective system is in place to record the staff's, children's and visitors' attendance and this is accurate and up to date. The owner knows to inform the regulator of significant events, such as a manager leaving without giving notice. Overall the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration Ofsted received concerns in relation to National Standard 2: Organisation. Ofsted has carried out an inspection of this provision during which they were inspected against all 14 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop and implement an action plan that sets out how supervisors will achieve a level 3 qualification
- plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children aged two to three years, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs. For example, messy, creative and sensory activities
- improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under three years, for example, by using the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- ensure fire drills are carried out periodically
- improve procedures for the use of the children's bedding, hand washing and the cleaning of surfaces to prevent the spread of infection
- ensure fresh drinking water is available to children at all times.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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