

Noah's Ark Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253124
Inspection date	11 September 2007
Inspector	Ann Keen
Setting Address	Church Hill, Kimberley, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG16 2HY
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Registered person	Noah's Ark Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Noah's Ark Playgroup was registered in 1992. It is run by a committee of parents and operates from the Holy Trinity Church Hall situated in the urban area of Kimberley. There is access to an outside play area. Children attend from both the local area and the surrounding towns and villages.

The playgroup is open during term time only. They operate Monday to Friday between 09:15 and 11:45. The setting also operates a lunch club everyday between 11:45 and 13:15 for up to 10 children. They currently have 40 children on the register including 21 funded three and four-year-olds. The playgroup currently has no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and supports children who speak English as an additional language.

Seven staff members work with the children, one on a full-time basis and the others part-time. Four staff have National Vocational Qualification Level 3 childcare qualifications. One member of staff is in the process of studying for a National Vocational Qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning to have a healthy lifestyle. They show a suitable awareness of the reasons for washing their hands and do so unprompted after painting. Children are well protected from illness as, for example, the staff do not accept children with contagious diseases. Children stay healthy as staff follow current and appropriate guidelines, policies and procedures. They are protected against infection well because they are learning good hygiene practices such as washing their hands after going to the toilet and before eating. Accidents are suitably recorded ensuring children are safeguarded.

Children are learning about healthy eating and they enjoy suitable snacks consisting of fruit, toast and cereals. In addition, they have independent and regular access to water so they do not go thirsty. Children eat according to their parents' wishes because staff ask about dietary needs and note allergies. Parents provide their own children's meal for the lunch club and the playgroup helps to support this by suggesting suitable, healthy foods.

The outside is used for a range of physical activities so children have suitable opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They develop co-ordination and control through learning a range of skills, for example, pedalling wheeled toys and controlling hoops. Children play together happily with the sand and play dough developing sound manipulative skills. They are able to rest and be active according to their needs. Under threes are becoming aware of others and their own needs, supported appropriately by the staff. Children's emotional well-being is good.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for in a secure environment. The outside area is adequately fenced and children are well supervised so they are safe. Proper precautions have been taken to prevent accidents and risks to children are reduced as the premises are well maintained and regularly checked. Fire safety procedures are in place and staff undertake evacuation practices with the children at regular intervals. The kitchen is gated and children are not normally allowed in there so they are well protected from danger. Children are kept safe because the toys and equipment are kept free from damage. Informal risk assessments are undertaken daily.

Children are generally safeguarded from child protection issues as the staff have an awareness of procedures. They know signs to look for and who to contact if worried about a child. However, all staff are not so sure about the level of their own responsibility.

Children are welcomed to a spacious, light and airy hall ensuring they have plenty of room to move around and enjoy their play. Displays around the room contribute to making it cheerful and child friendly. They have a wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate resources. The under threes are helped suitably to understand boundaries to ensure their safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and relaxed as a consequence of good relationships with staff. They enjoy their time at the playgroup and are making good progress in their leisure and personal

development. Children are building confidence and self-esteem as the staff pay attention to them, constantly helping them and staff are attentive to children's preferences. Children are gently helped to learn to take turns and realise the social skills required to be part of a group. Children enter in the mornings willingly and settle quickly into the routines. Children's care and play is well supported through a variety of play opportunities like creating play dough shapes, playing with cars and creating imaginative games in the home corner. Children are learning to use their initiative well and they are occupied at all times as they know they can help themselves to activities. The under threes are learning to be skilful communicators through staff's helpful guidance. Children enjoy their time at the playgroup because the toys and equipment are suitable for different ages providing variety and interest.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning are good. Staff promote children's learning well and provide a broad and balanced range of interesting activities for them. They plan children's learning effectively in line with the six areas of learning. They record children's achievement along the stepping stones regularly. Generally they provide for children's stages of development. However, at times especially in group sessions the organisation is not always matched to the children's development. For example, at story times children are sometimes put in groups with a wide age or ability range. This results in the stories not being matched to the children's level of understanding or children do not get as much out of the session as possible. Nevertheless, staff arrange for the older children to work in sessions specifically designed for them. Learning outcomes are planned for these times so staff are focused on what they want children to learn. Consequently, staff generally provide challenge for these children. Children benefit from the wide range of resources available, providing them with good opportunities to explore, experiment and play. Staff give children sufficient time to consolidate their learning and finish their individual games and activities so they can, for example, stay inside when others go outside. Staff are clear in their expectations for good behaviour and provide consistent support to help children understand boundaries and expectations.

The younger children are happy making marks on paper and the older or more able children are starting to form recognisable letters clearly, providing a good basis for future writing activities. They paint enthusiastically and enjoy experimenting with the paint on their hands watching the patterns that they make and feeling the texture of the paint. Children are involved and enjoy the varied activities and as a result they are confident and well motivated to learn. Children are encouraged to self-select activities and are then supported by staff as they are needed. Children have high levels of self-esteem with a good sense of belonging. Relationships are good and children are well behaved, complying to acceptable standards of behaviour. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The social aspect of children's learning is particularly strong. This results in an atmosphere which impacts positively on children's learning.

Activities are planned so children learn mathematical skills, for example, to recognise shapes, sing number songs, learn positional language and weigh teddy bears. However, children are not encouraged to use mathematics sufficiently in everyday activities so they learn that mathematics is all around them and use it themselves spontaneously. Children confidently make their own constructions using commercially produced materials, supporting their imaginations well. Children's manipulative skills are supported by controlling small 'tools' such as pens, pencils and glue sticks. They engage in activities that help them to express their ideas and develop their creative skills like making shakers. Children enthuse at recording their own voices as part of learning about sounds. Children enjoy using the computer which contributes to their

overall learning and develops their co-ordination effectively. Children happily look at books with individual members of staff and listen to the story.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are aware of the wider society through the celebration of festivals and knowledge of events such as Ramadan. Children who do not have English as their first language are recognised and supported. The staff are aware that some children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and take appropriate action. Children are learning to play along side each other well and under threes are developing good social skills. Children are learning to understand responsible behaviour, helped by the staff to appreciate what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Children are treated kindly and with care so they learn to feel valued and self assured. The children have good sense of belonging and they clearly feel confident and happy whilst in the care of the staff at the playgroup.

Children are cared for by staff who work well in partnership with parents and carers to support the children's well-being and care effectively. They give the parents a welcome pack so they are well informed about the playgroup. Parents are able to phone to ensure children are settled. To provide continuity of care, the staff find out about allergies and dietary needs and discuss the children's day with their parents. The documentation supports the children's care well, for example, there is a clear complaints procedure in place and parents can contact the regulator should they need to make contact.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children's education is well supported as there is a good exchange of information with the parents. Staff provide suitable information about the provision for nursery education and offer good opportunities for the parents to discuss their children's progress. They make suggestions of ways that parents can help support their children's learning at home ensuring they all work together for the benefit of the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment and the space is generally well organised to enable them to experience a good range of play opportunities. Children's care is enhanced by the staff's interest to improve their own knowledge through attending a range of courses to support children's development. The necessary records and information are in place helping to ensure children are safe so parents can be contacted in an emergency, medicine can be administered and accidents are noted. Registers are suitably maintained which helps to safeguard children.

Their health, safety, well-being, enjoyment and achievement are promoted by good organisation. The documentation supports the practice effectively. Suitable policies are in place to enhance children's health, well-being and safety such as a equal of opportunity, healthy and safety, child protection and behaviour management. Overall children's needs are met. Children's safety is safeguarded through suitable knowledge of first aid and a current certificate so the staff can protect children in case of accidents.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. It supports the children's achievement well. Children are supported by appropriately trained, experienced staff. Children's learning is well supported through the playgroup's ability to assess its own strengths and weaknesses.

They have regular staff meetings and identify their own future developments. Staff are informally monitored and the playgroup is developing systems to appraise staff more formally so improving the education for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last integrated inspection the provider was asked to extend the play opportunities to provide challenge. Staff have worked hard on meeting the needs of individual children. The older or more able children have specific activities to provide challenge for them. Staff are starting to target specific children to meet their individual needs and they have worked hard to ensure the younger children are well integrated into the setting.

The second recommendation required the provider to implement a procedure for contacting an adult if a child becomes ill whilst in the playgroup. Systems are now in place to ensure this is done so children are safeguarded.

At the last inspection the staff were required to devise strategies to improve the partnership between parents to exchange information about the Foundation Stage and children's development. Parents are now invited to an appointment to discuss their children's progress. They are able to see their children's records at this time and share their own knowledge and observations of their children at home. As a result, staff and parents are working together more closely for the benefit of their children's education.

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 by 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 staff are able to implement the child protection policies and procedures in the absence of the designated member of staff.

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 mathematical language is used in everyday activities
- ensure group times are always suited to the age and stage of development of the children, particularly with regard to story sessions.

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