

Noah's Arkley

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY348243

Inspection date 20 September 2007

Inspector Kay Williams

Setting Address Rowley Lane Maccabi Recreational Trust, Rowley lane, Arkley, Barnet,
EN5 3HW

Telephone number 020 89589676

E-mail juliahdavis@tiscali.co.uk

Registered person Julia Hazel Davis

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Noah's Arkley is a privately owned nursery. It originally opened in 1980 and move to the current premises in 2007. It operates from a sports social club which is situated in Arkley which is located within the London borough of Barnet. A maximum of 46 Children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:30 until 13:15 during term time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 25 children aged two to under five years on roll. Of these, two children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs 10 members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally well cared for in a hygienically clean environment. They are learning about the importance of good personal hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands after they have been to the toilet and before they eat their snack. However, they all share one towel for drying their hands on, therefore increasing the risk of cross infection. Nappy changing routines are clean and hygienic, staff routinely wear disposable gloves and clean the changing mat between uses. Children who become ill are well cared for and excluded from attending the setting until they have fully recovered.

Children's health and well being is enhanced as they have daily opportunities to exercise in the fresh air. They learn to develop and strengthen their muscles as they climb slides, ride bikes and take nature walks around the large playing fields that surround the building.

Children are well nourished as they enjoy a healthy midmorning snack of fresh fruit, with a choice of water or milk to drink, however, they are not offered independent access to water throughout the session. The staff have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and this is reflected in the lunch which they provide for the few children who choose to stay. They are offered wholemeal tuna sandwiches, fresh vegetables, fruit and a yoghurt.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are made to feel welcome in an environment which has been set out with them in mind. Their security is strengthened as they are greeted warmly by staff who make them feel welcomed and help them to settle into the daily routine. The premises is bright and spacious and staff work hard to transform this shared premises into a child centred environment. Activities and resources are effectively grouped and children are able to choose where they wish to play. Equipment and resources are clean and in good repair and are appropriate to the age of children attending.

Children's safety is given appropriate priority. Visitors are monitored on and off of the premises. The setting also employs a security guard to patrol the premises. However, there are other users on the premises who often pass through the main play room during the nursery operating times and it is not always easy to identify the staff from the other adults. Staff routinely risk assess the premises and therefore children are less likely to be exposed to potential hazards. For example children's arrival and departure is carefully monitored by a member of staff who greets them at the door and takes the register immediately as they arrive.

Children's welfare is further assured as effective procedures ensure that there is always a member of staff present who holds a current first aid qualification and the first aid kit is easily accessible. Accidents are recorded appropriately, medication is administered safely and fire evacuations are practised regularly.

Children are safeguarded as the setting has effective procedures for responding to child protection. Staff are aware of their duty to protect children in their care and are aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and neglect. In addition there is a separate procedure to follow should any allegations be made against them. Appropriate checks on all staff and other premises users have been completed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle quickly and enjoy their time spent at the nursery. They have fun as they engage in a wide range of age appropriate activities. In general staff have sufficient knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework and are therefore able to provide children with a stimulating variety of activities. Staff assess children's development through observations and transfer the evaluations to the children's developmental records, However they have yet to develop consistency in this practice as not all of the children's records are up to date.

Children are becoming competent learners as they make decisions about where to play and what to play with. The free play slot in the daily routine works well, providing children with a good period of uninterrupted play. Whole group activities such as story time and singing and dancing are less effective as not all children's interest is sustained. While some children enjoy singing and acting out the movements to 'hop little bunnies' other children became restless or wander away from the group. Children enjoy a varied range of creative art activities including gluing glitter and sequins to shiny discs or making a 'sparkly' collage. They have fun as they handle tactile materials such as sand and shaving foam. They learn to make sense of their world around them as they play with their peers in the role play area, dressing up, preparing pretend food or visiting the hairdressing corner. There are good opportunities for children to enhance their mark making skills and they are developing competence in their emergent writing skills as they use note pads and clip boards in the 'office area'. Children's physical development is well fostered both inside and out.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff make good use of spontaneous opportunities to promote children's learning. For example a small group of children enjoyed listening to the story of 'Goldilocks and the three bears'. The adult utilised the theme to talk about 'stranger danger' and personal safety with the children who in turn talked about always holding hands when they crossed the road. While staff provide an age appropriate curriculum which the children enjoy they are not always secure in the knowledge of how children learn best and consequently some learning opportunities are missed, especially during snack time and whole group activities. Children's progress is recorded, however, this is not always carried out consistently by all staff. Staff interact well with the children at their chosen activity and effectively questions their play in order to promote their learning. For example children are gaining confidence in colour recognition as staff ask them to consider the colours that they use as they paint a picture. This learning is then extended as they go on to describe the colours as they mix them together. Children know that white and red make 'pink'.

Children have good opportunities to spontaneously develop their emergent writing skills. They are learning that written text carries meaning as they ask an adult to write their name on their painting. The self registration system encourages children to recognise their own name as they take their name card and post it into the tin. Children enjoy using books independently and staff are keen to foster this enthusiasm as they spend lots of time reading to the children in small groups. Whole group story time is less successful as not all of the children's interest is sustained. Children are confident communicators who enjoy talking and sharing ideas with staff. They talk about their age and know how old they will be on their next birthday. Children are developing an awareness of mathematical concepts through a variety of activities. They use mathematical language to describe size as they build 'tall' and 'short' towers out of the interlocking pegs. Children are learning to count accurately as they insert candles in to model

birthday cakes. Children play well together. They are co-operative and all participate willingly at 'tidy up time'. They are learning to take turns and share fairly as they wait for their turn at the painting easel and line up happily to take a go on the balancing beam. Children enjoy a variety of opportunities to develop their physical skills. They are developing a good sense of space as they create a circle big enough to accommodate the 'parachute game'. Their fine physical skills are strengthened as they learn to use tools with increasing control. There are daily opportunities for children to climb and balance using the beam and the slide which are set up inside. There are reasonable opportunities for children to develop their understanding of technology and the programmable shape sorter is very popular.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy because staff effectively meet their individual needs. The 'all about me' booklet that parents complete before the children start provides staff with good written reference material and are therefore able to use this to effectively support the children's individual needs. New children settle quickly under the gentle nurture of the staff. Their sense of belonging is strengthened as they bring their own bag and are therefore able to easily access personal items such as a comforter. Children are learning to appreciate cultural and social diversity as posters and pictures which are displayed throughout the hall offer positive visual images. Children have a strong sense of personal identity as the curriculum is planned around their own religious beliefs. They are gradually developing an awareness of other cultures and the setting is working towards extending this area of the curriculum. Consequently children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively fostered.

Children with special needs are positively valued. The setting is highly committed to inclusion for all children and is often chosen by parents for this reason. The manager has developed a good working relationship with the local authority and all parties work well together in order to ensure that children can participate in most activities. Resources are adapted to suit children's individual needs and staff have attended additional training such as 'Makaton' sign language to further support children's development.

Children are generally well behaved. Staff are kind and gently spoken and children respond well to them. They play cooperatively and resolve disagreements with the support of adult intervention. For example children are learning how to share as adults encourage them to divide the construction toys fairly. Children enjoy the praise they receive from the staff, other children 'clap' to congratulate a child who successfully built a very tall tower with the interlocking pegs.

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the positive relationships that staff have forged with parents. Parents provide detailed information regarding their children and this effectively supports staff in getting to know the children well and continuing to support their individual needs. These clear lines of communication means that parents are regularly informed about their children's progress. Informal discussions and written reports effectively support this. Parents are offered good written information regarding the setting via regular news letters and written displays on the notice board. Policies and procedures are readily available and parents are requested to sign to confirm that they understand them. They are encouraged to help out in the setting as often as they can. Parents attending express satisfaction with the service they receive.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for in an environment which is generally well organised. Staff are still getting used to the new premises and are endeavouring to establish effective ways of making best use of the available space. Children settle quickly into a routine which offers good balance of free play and structured group times. They enjoy their time spent in the setting and overall, they engage in a successful range of worthwhile activities. Staff are effectively deployed in the most part although this deployment is less effective during circle time.

Children's records are well documented and all required policies and procedures are carefully collated and up to date with current guidance.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The staff team work well together and are committed to the continued development of their knowledge regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum. Regular meetings and daily feedback ensure that staff are clear about what they are doing. The key worker system serves to establish good relationships between the staff and the children. However, it is less effective when compiling children's developmental assessment as practice is not always consistent.

The nursery meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to offer more opportunities for children to develop their independence, reorganise the space and make group time more challenging. Children are now more able to act independently, for example choosing their own resources and learning to put on their own coats. The new premises means that children benefit from additional space. Group time sessions still require further development in order to engage and challenge all of the children.

Further more the setting agreed to plan how staff would extend children's learning through discussion and that they would maintain records of children's progress and achievements. Staff now successfully extend children's learning through appropriate thought provoking questions and discussion. A system has been developed to monitor children's progress, although this has yet to be consistently practised.

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.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- review whole group activities such as story and singing time in order to improve children's learning by sustaining their interest
- re-organise the snack time routine to make sure that children are not kept waiting too long and that learning opportunities such as pouring their own drinks are fully explored
- ensure that staff consistently record children's progress, so that they are confident in their knowledge of what children can do and are able to plan activities to promote children individual learning

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):

- continue to enhance staffs knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum in order to ensure that children's learning opportunities are extended throughout all routines and activities
- continue to develop the system for recording children's development so that observations are made more regularly and that assessment covers all six areas of learning.

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