

# Noahs Ark's

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY270659
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Samantha Smith
<b>Setting Address</b>	146 Mayes Road, London, N22 6SY
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<b>Registered person</b>	Efclea Skouros
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 Nursery is privately owned. It opened in 2003 and operates from four play rooms in a ground floor building. It is situated in Wood Green, close to the high street shopping centre. A maximum of 46 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 08:00 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year.

There are currently 60 children aged from birth to under five years on roll of these 13 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 18 staff including the cook, cleaner and admin worker. Over half the staff hold an appropriate early years qualification and some are working towards gaining a higher qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean environment where excellent hygiene practices are maintained. Their health is very well promoted as they learn to manage their own personal needs through well-established routines such as washing their hands after using the toilet before eating, washing their faces and after lunch. This is further supported through displays in the bathroom.

Children's health and well-being continues to be promoted through the effective procedures followed by staff, for example disposable gloves and aprons are worn when changing nappies and tabards are worn when serving food. Staff in the baby room do not wear outdoor shoes. All staff are qualified in emergency first aid, enabling them to care for children appropriately in an emergency situation. The provider gives high regard to continually promoting children's health through the effective hygiene practices, consequently she is currently reviewing the storage of the nappy changing units in the classrooms.

Children are very well nourished and their dietary needs well met through the excellent provision of meals and snacks. Meals are prepared and cooked on the premises using mostly fresh ingredients and all meals provided are vegetarian although parents have the option to provide meat dishes for their children which are stored and reheated appropriately. Menus are displayed weekly. Meal times are sociable; staff sit together with children and engage in general conversation with them. Excellent provision is made for babies and young children, for example babies that are weaning have their food blended down or some parents provide their own baby food. In addition babies are held or made comfortable by staff while being bottle-fed and food and milk intake is carefully monitored and recorded and this information is shared with parents.

Children are developing skills in managing their own bodies and enjoy lots of opportunities to practise these. Activities such as parachute games and musical movement sessions support their control and co-ordination. Children take part in a range of outdoor activities as they use of the small garden, visit the park and other places of interest. Young children are encouraged to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very secure in the well maintained environment where the code entry system and CCTV cameras help to ensure that children are well protected from unknown visitors. The premises are welcoming to children and parents, with displays of information and attractive pictorial images. Play areas are bright, spacious and effectively laid out with clearly designated play areas such as the book corner, creative area and role play.

Children's safety and comfort are supported by a good range of child-sized furniture and play equipment that are maintained to a high standard. They are cleaned and checked regularly in order that they remain in good condition. Resources are stored at child level, allowing them to independently select what they want to play with, fostering their independence and confidence. This is further supported as they are encouraged to tidy away after playing. This enables them to be involved in keeping their play space free from potential risks such as tripping hazards.

The setting is effective in protecting children's safety and welfare through the excellent practices they have in place. Staff implement effective strategies to keep children safe such as; designated

health and safety person is in place that has responsibility for completing a risk assessment of the premises and ensuring any necessary action is taken to minimise potential dangers or hazards. The premises are secure and staff monitor the main front door through the use of an intercom. The attendance of adults is recorded by an electronic clocking system and children arrival and departure times are recorded by staff, giving an accurate record of everybody in the building. Appropriate fire safety precautions are in place, this includes having the fire evacuation procedure displayed at all exits and regular practising of the evacuation procedure with the children. Children's safety is further supported by the effective policies, including, a collection policy, a lost child policy, uncollected child procedure and outing procedures.

Children are well safeguarded through the staff's comprehensive knowledge and understanding of their role in protecting children. Parents are made aware of the setting's responsibility through the child protection policy that is reflective of current guidance.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident in the setting. They enthusiastically take part in the wide range of stimulating and mostly challenging activities. They show a clear sense of belonging as they hang their coats on pegs with their names on and there are photographs of them engaged in various activities displayed around the setting. Staff use lots of praise and encouragement which contributes towards children developing positive self-esteem. They have formed warm, caring relationships with the children and they listen to them and value what they have to say.

Young children settle well because the setting has good arrangements for them to make visits with their parents prior to their placement. This is continued as children make the transition from room to room. Keyworkers provide supportive contact and develop caring relationships with children to support their emotional and specific needs. As a consequence, children's sense of security and well-being is increased and they become confident to explore the environment and engage in activities that support their play, learning and development.

Babies and young children access a variety of sensory toys and equipment. They play with different activity centres that provide visual, tactile and auditory stimulation. Staff sit on the floor with young children helping them to explore various toys. Children are developing good hand-eye co-ordination and small motor skills as they play with shape sorters and take part in exploratory activities such as discovering play dough. Young children enjoy circle times where they enjoy opportunities to look at pictures in books.

There are generally good opportunities for children to promote their independence and develop self help skills such as; choosing books and toys they wish to play with and putting on their coats and hats when preparing for outdoor play. However, there are a number of missed opportunities for children to further develop these skills during everyday routines such as helping themselves at snack and meal times as this is not done consistently.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children are generally making good progress towards achieving the early learning goals. They benefit from an environment where staff are enthusiastic and use a variety of methods of teaching and questioning techniques to extend children's thinking and learning, for example, through the use of positive interaction

and open-ended questions. All staff have completed training in the Foundation Stage and demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of this. As a result activities provided support children's learning needs and present sufficient challenge for most children. Though in reflection at times staff take too much control over activities, either giving too much direction or restricting the choices children can make when engaged in creative play.

Plans show clear learning objectives, demonstrating clear aims and objectives. Processes for monitoring and evaluating children's progress and achievements are robust and mostly effective. Staff observe children at play and record their progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Information gathered is used to plan the next steps of learning.

Children take part in a varied and interesting range of activities which retain their concentration. Furniture and equipment is arranged to encourage all to contribute and enable easy access to resources which are stored at low-level. Staff obtain information about each child on entry to the provision; this is used as a starting point to build upon and to help the children progress through the stepping stones.

Children are confident speakers, using words effectively and a range of vocabulary to convey their experiences both real and imaginary. The book corner is warm, welcoming and inviting for children and they are confident and enjoy looking at books with either their friends or the staff. There is a good level of visual stimulus with regard to the written words and numbers throughout the setting. Children are developing writing skills as they become confident mark makers and some children can write their names as they label their art work and pictures.

Children are developing a sound understanding of mathematical concepts as they use these in different contexts, for example, when playing with the water children were able to identify between full, half full and empty. Some children count reliably up to ten and beyond. Though there are missed opportunities for children to explore mathematical concepts such as problem solving through practical activities like setting the table for lunch and snacks and mixing paints for creative activities.

Children have good opportunities to find out about and care for their natural environment and living things as they take part in planting and growing activities and help to care for the pet goldfishes. They have opportunities to learn about and use information technology, as they the computer and other electronic games and equipment. Children are developing a sense of place within their local community and early awareness of the wider community through activities and resources that represent diversity and as they celebrated cultural festivals together such as Chinese New Year and St Patrick's Day.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals and are warmly welcomed into the setting. They benefit from the excellent procedures in place to support them as they settle at the nursery and separate from their parents and carers. They receive good individual care because their needs and circumstances are well known to the staff. They are fully included in the life of the nursery and feel a great sense of belonging. They are encouraged to respect themselves and others as they learn about their local community and the wider world through a range of books and resources which reflect positive images of diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Strategies to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effective. The systems in place ensure children are always fully included, able to participate and feel a sense of belonging. The setting promotes the importance of ensuring inclusion consequently, children's needs are met in a variety of ways and staff show a real commitment to this. There is a named staff member for Special Educational Needs (SEN) who has completed training to ensure the practice remains relevant and up to date to support both children and parents. Children behave well and staff use lots of positive praise and encouragement to acknowledge their achievements. As a result, this boosts confidence and promotes children's self-esteem. The setting has a clear behaviour management policy in place, which is implemented in practice.

Children benefit from the close working partnership between their parents and staff which contributes towards maintaining their well-being, development and progress. Information from parents regarding their child's likes, dislikes and routine provides a good starting point in identifying individual needs. Parents receive a detailed written prospectus about the setting and the key worker system ensures information is continually exchanged and shared. Notice boards provide information regarding activities and ongoing events. A folder containing policies and procedures and the setting's certificate of registration is displayed in the lobby. New parents of babies are provided with daily written information.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who are in receipt of funded nursery education is satisfactory. In addition to the notice board, parents have some opportunities to be involved in the children's learning through talking with staff about topics and activities their children do at nursery. Information about the Foundation Stage, the six areas of learning and the aims of the curriculum is provided for parents in the prospectus when their child's placement at nursery begins. However, this is not discussed in detail and they are not updated about their child's progress throughout, resulting in parents not being fully informed and involved in their child's learning. Parents express their satisfaction with the setting and feel that their children are making good progress, although many are not clear about the steps their children are making or what their next steps are.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The setting is family run and the provider gives high priority to the care and welfare of children. Robust systems exist for the recruitment, vetting and induction of all staff. The staff team work well together, creating a caring environment for children in all areas of the nursery. They are effectively deployed throughout and appropriate cover is available if needed. Training is organised to meet individual needs as well as the needs of the group and to maintain and improve the provision. Qualified and experienced staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of children's developmental needs. All staff working with funded children are using the Curriculum Guidance and staff working with the younger children are using the 'Birth to three matters' framework when planning for the needs of children.

Registers recording children's attendance are kept and clearly demonstrates the arrival and departure times of the children and staff, ensuring children's safety and well-being whilst at the setting. Policies and procedures are effectively implemented to provide positive outcomes for children and give clear guidelines for staff and parents. All the documentation necessary to meet regulations, safeguard children and promote their health and well-being is well maintained and stored confidentially.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. The manager, deputy and staff are enthusiastic, highly motivated, committed and professional in their approach to providing children with positive early years play experiences and learning. They have a very good understanding of the importance of early childhood development and they work hard to consistently provide good care for all children. Staff have clearly identified roles and responsibilities such as health and safety and behaviour management and they carry out their roles effectively. Staff induction and appraisals ensure that new and existing staff feel fully supported and valued in their role and there are good opportunities for staff to attend training. Staff have an excellent awareness of the policies and procedures which are in place. Consequently, children are cared for by knowledgeable, experienced staff and they benefit from excellent continuity of care.

Overall children's needs are met

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was asked to; develop staff knowledge and understanding to implement the special needs statement and maintain up to date written documentation of; risk assessments of the premises with time scaled actions taken to minimise identified risks and review as necessary; procedures to follow should an allegation of abuse be made against a member of staff.

The setting have taken positive steps to ensure that all staff have a sound knowledge of the policies in place. The named member of staff has completed the relevant training and is implemented effectively. An up to date risk assessment is completed regularly, which clearly details any actions to be taken along with time scales. The child protection policy has been updated to include allegations against a member of staff. Therefore children's safety, health and individual needs are well met.

### **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 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):

- review the organisation of snack and meal times to support children's growing independence by allowing them to make choices about what they want to eat; how much they want to eat and serve themselves.

### **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 all activities provide sufficient challenge for children of all ages and abilities to allow children to develop to their full potential
- provide parents and carers with more detailed information about the Foundation Stage and the progress their children are making to allow them to become more involved in their child's 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)