

Childrens Ark Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY308246
Inspection date 30/09/2008
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Setting address The Old Coach House, Papworth Hall, Ermine Street South,
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Telephone number 01480 831200
Email
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Children's Ark Day Nursery was established in 2000 and was taken over by the current owners in 2005. The nursery operates from a converted coach house in the grounds of Papworth Hall, Papworth Everard, Cambridgeshire. The premises is mostly on one level and is easily accessible. There is an enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 39 children aged between six weeks and five years of age may attend at any one time. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 65 children on roll who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); 17 of these receive early years education funding. A small number of children attend who have English as an additional language.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 07.15 to 18.00 all year round with the exception of some bank holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions and generally come from the local area and surrounding villages.

The setting employs 13 staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Four members of staff are working towards higher qualifications. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and the Federation of Small Businesses.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are safe and secure at all times and enjoy learning in this warm and friendly nursery. Good partnerships with parents and carers help to ensure that the needs of all children are met. A stable and well qualified staff team know the children well and work together effectively to support children as they play and learn. Their knowledge and understanding of how children develop and learn means that all children make good progress and have the confidence to actively explore and experiment. Although staff discuss children's individual development needs informally, which ensures children achieve well, planning and assessment is not yet flexible enough to meet children's changing needs and interest. Not all staff working with babies and younger children have a secure understanding of appropriate expectations of behaviour.

The self-evaluation system is still evolving, but secures the opinions and ideas of both staff and parents in order to successfully identify most areas for improvement. As a result the nursery offers a responsive service that successfully promotes children's welfare and development and demonstrates a clear commitment to ongoing progression.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- increase staff knowledge and understanding of the expectations of appropriate behaviour, particularly for babies and younger children
- increase the range and frequency of activities that enable babies to experience and explore natural materials
- continue to develop a flexible approach to planning, observation and assessment that responds quickly to all children's learning and development needs.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

All required policies and procedures are effectively implemented by staff who understand, for example, about child protection and how to implement accident and emergency procedures. Risk assessments are comprehensive and robust, ensuring children play in a clean, safe and healthy environment. All staff have qualifications suitable for their role and the management team actively promote and support professional development, enabling staff to achieve higher qualifications. As a result children progress well in all areas of their learning and development.

The owners of the nursery strive to improve the provision, for example, recommendations from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Through the self-evaluation process they prioritise areas for future development, such as increasing children's learning opportunities in the garden and have begun to redevelop the planning in order to meet the requirements of the EYFS, although this has not yet had time to impact positively on ensuring activities continue to meet children's changing developmental and learning needs.

The partnership with parents and carers is a strength of the setting; parents speak warmly about the care and attention their children receive and say they develop sound relationships with their children's key workers. They receive good quality information about the care their children receive as well as their educational progress. In addition they have opportunities to meet and socialise with staff and each other in a range of planned events, such as fun days and fund raisers. This means children feel secure and settle well into the nursery. There is good liaison with other providers, enabling them to share information about children's care and development.

Inclusion is promoted successfully as staff encourage and role model the use of sign language to aid communication. This enhances children's ability to express their ideas and wishes, even when they lack the verbal language skills to do so, for instance, a young child confidently makes the sign for 'hamster' as they watch the nursery pet play. Children from diverse cultures and lifestyles feel at home and valued in a friendly environment that shows many images that reflect their lives and family backgrounds.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are fully safeguarded due to vigilant staff who supervise and support them in their activities. All staff attend essential training, such as child protection and first aid, which enables them to keep children safe and well. Children have frequent exercise outdoors in the attractive garden and go for walks in the nearby hospital grounds, where they explore the natural world. Although the nursery is hampered by the need for all the children to share the garden, staff use their initiative very well to enable children to experience free flow indoor-outdoor play as often as possible throughout the day.

Children express their imagination and creativity with a wide range of easily accessible resources, such as dressing up clothes or collage materials. They count with confidence in practical situations, such as finding the right number of spoons for dessert and show good problem solving skills as they decide how to build a tower with different sized bricks. They are self-reliant and spontaneously tidy away after themselves or, for example, mop up water they have spilled. Older children have many opportunities to explore materials, such as sand and water and enjoy making 'cakes' with oats and water. Children in the baby room have treasure baskets and sometimes explore, for instance, reusable materials, but generally have fewer opportunities to stimulate their senses with natural materials, which limits their learning of the world around them.

Children benefit from a clean and healthy environment; they learn to wash their hands and sit down to eat at freshly cleaned tables. They learn to care for themselves as they put on wellies for outdoor play, or take off their coats as they arrive. Meals are healthy and nutritious and take into account children's dietary needs as well as their likes and dislikes. Food is representative of the cultures and backgrounds of the children, with tasty dishes such as lasagne, shepherd's pie and curry. Mealtimes for older children are very well organised with children seated in small family groups. Staff eat with them, engaging them in conversation; as a result mealtimes are relaxed and friendly, offering children a chance to savour their food and develop good table manners.

Children in all areas of the nursery benefit from warm and secure relationships with staff. Babies sit on adults' laps and enjoy affectionate cuddles, for instance, as they listen to music and sing songs, whilst older children confidently snuggle up to an adult to share a story. Staff interact sensitively with babies, for example, asking them if they would like their nappy changed and waiting until they have finished an activity. When bottle feeding, staff gently hold the babies and give them their full attention. At times, though, staff show a limited understanding of what is developmentally appropriate behaviour for babies, for example, they require them to sit for unnecessary periods of time when waiting for their meals or snacks and use instruction, such as 'sit nicely' rather than engage children with positive distraction. In addition, activities and resources do not always take into account the interests and developmental needs of older or more able children in the baby room, which sometimes results in them becoming bored and distracted.

Staff make frequent observations on the children and use a variety of methods to assess what children can do. Parents are involved in deciding on children's starting points and this enables key workers to begin to plan activities that generally reflect children's individual interests. Although new systems for planning and assessment

are being developed they are not yet flexible enough to enable staff to always be responsive to children's changing needs and interests.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Good
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Good
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Good
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Good
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Good
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Good

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection that required the provider to take action.

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.