

Noahs Ark Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY220790
Inspection date 23/03/2009
Inspector Tessa Margaret Betts

Setting address Robertson Barracks, Swanton Morley, Dereham, Norfolk,
NR20 4TX
Telephone number 01362 627975
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 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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Noah's Ark Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children attending the pre-school. It opened in 1995 and registered to provide full day care in 2002. It operates from four rooms in the Community Centre at Robertson Barracks, Swanton Morley. It is situated near to the village of Swanton Morley which is near to the town of Dereham in Norfolk. A maximum of 54 children from 18 months to eight years may attend the provision at any one time. The Pre-School is open each weekday in term time from 09.00 until 14.45 with sessions from 09.00 until 11.45 and 12.00 until 14.45. A holiday club is also provided during some school holidays.

There are currently 46 children on roll within the early years age range. The pre-school serves both the military and the local civilian community. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The Pre-School employs five staff, of whom three are appropriately qualified and experienced with the two remaining staff currently undertaking an NVQ Level 3 qualification. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Noah's Ark Pre-School provides a sound learning environment where children are motivated to make suitable progress in their learning and development. Under the committed leadership of the new manager staff are well-led. Improved working practices demonstrate their commitment and capacity to develop further. Children's welfare is promoted well showing a positive attitude to the inclusion of all children. Parents are generally well-informed and encouraged to make an active contribution. Secure links have been established with the local school to smooth the transition as children embark on the next step in their education.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the assessment arrangements to securely identify learning priorities for each individual child
- develop and monitor a self-evaluation model in order to identify strengths and weaknesses to improve the quality of the provision
- consider how you can liaise with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure progression and continuity of children's care and learning.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure records are easily accessible and available for

08/04/2009

inspection at all times. This refers to the accessibility of the complaints record. (Documentation)

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare, learning and development is significantly improved through the sound leadership of the new manager, her staff and the supportive committee. The manager brings a sense of passion and purpose to the role, and a strong commitment to securing further improvement. She is beginning to effect change as she identifies and prioritises areas for improving the outcomes for children. She is realistic in her approach to implementing change and has worked hard to establish a stable staff group which she successfully motivates. Whilst this provision was awarded the Norfolk Quality Assurance kite mark in early 2008, systems are not yet fully in place to monitor all aspects of practise so that this quality grading is secured for the forthcoming year. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities so that they are suitably deployed throughout the sessions. Records are generally well-maintained; however, the complaints record was not easily accessible and available for inspection when initially requested. Staff are highly committed to safeguarding children's welfare. They are confident in their understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and have clear, well-presented written guidance documents to support an effective referral should a concern arise.

Children benefit from the enthusiasm of the staff who are experienced childcare practitioners and who work together well. Regular staff meetings, appraisals and in-house training sessions contribute to identifying and addressing areas for staff development. Many areas identified for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed. Staff ensure children remain healthy, that they are deployed effectively and that their knowledge and skills improved through relevant training lead to improving the quality of this provision. Partnerships with parents are generally effective and staff work hard to recognise and acknowledge the pressures on all family members in this army environment where one parent is often away for long periods. Whilst some valuable links have been made to share information this, has not yet been extended to cover other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage where some children attend during the week. As a result, some children are not experiencing continuity across all aspects of their welfare, learning and development. Inclusion is promoted well as staff take time to gather information about the children's home background and are able to demonstrate through discussion how activities and routines are adapted to accommodate the needs of all children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's learning and development is positively promoted through the warm and supportive relationships enjoyed with key adults. The environment is well-organised and inviting, encouraging children to become active learners. Staff are on hand to support their chosen play and extend their experiences through the good use of open-ended questioning. Most activities are accessible to the children,

either laid out in advance or stored in low-level storage units. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities both indoors and out to support their learning in all areas of their development. Children's independence is growing as they find their name cards on arrival, take off their coats and change their shoes. They are confident communicators as they instigate spontaneous conversation in large group activities or in small groups within routine activities such as snack time.

Children have many opportunities to mark make on different levels with some more able children writing recognisable letters. A well-stocked book area encourages children to take an active interest in written print, as they share a moment looking at the pictures with a friend. Children are developing an understanding of problem solving and numeracy as they routinely count the numbers of children present in circle time, complete number puzzles and count the pieces of fruit on their plate for snack. More able children are challenged appropriately. When a child comments that two geometrical shapes are the same, they are challenged to consider whether they are the same or different. With support from staff, they explore the number of sides on a hexagon and pentagon and discover that although they look similar they are different. This encourages them to think critically.

Children are developing a sense of their own community and that of others. They are included in local events such as the Summer Carnival, enjoy trips out and through planned activities understand about other cultures and customs around the world. Continuous outdoor play provision is available and well-used to support their physical development. Information is gathered by staff to understand each child's starting points; this is then used to plan for each child's learning experiences. Whilst observations and assessments are being made, the methods used do not yet securely identify the impact of children's learning to fully support their next steps. Parents have access to the children's developmental records and are encouraged to make a contribution.

Children's welfare is well-promoted. Health information gathered from parents is acted on by staff. All staff hold current first aid certificates and have a well-stocked first aid kit to respond to minor accidents. Children are developing a positive attitude towards healthy eating. Children enthusiastically sit down to a variety of fresh fruit at snack time. Staff promote discussion to support children's understanding of why these foods are good for us. Whilst regular drinks are offered, children are able to independently help themselves to fresh drinking water on demand. Children adopt good hygiene practices through routine activities. Staff carry handwash gel and use this regularly to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. Whilst robust risk assessments ensure children remain safe at all times, children are learning to keep themselves safe. They help to keep the play environment safe as they contribute to tidy up time. Fire drills are held to ensure children become familiar with what action to take in such an event. Children's behaviour is good. Clear and consistent messages given by staff help children to learn acceptable behaviour and the effect of their behaviour on others. Minor incidents are quickly and appropriately addressed at the time. Those presenting more challenging behaviour respond well to reward systems to reinforce acceptable behaviour.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is 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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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 B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met