

Sarah's Ark

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | EY294449 |
| Inspection date | 20/07/2009 |
| Inspector | Susan Janet Lee |

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| Setting address | Hollands Farmhouse, Wigan Road, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 5UD |
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| 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

Sarah's Ark nursery was registered in 2004. The nursery operates from a detached property in Leyland, Lancashire, and is run by a limited company. The provision employs eight staff, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification.

The children have access to six playrooms, bathroom facilities and an outdoor play area. Access to the property is gained at the front of the premises on the ground-floor level. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 07.30 until 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year.

The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 31 children at any one time. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 36 children on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for nursery education.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Effective policies and procedures ensure the safety and the welfare of the children who attend the nursery. Staff work to provide an inclusive environment for the children and their parents and carers. Good arrangements are in place to keep parents informed about their children's daily routines and developmental progress. Systems regarding self-evaluation help to identify the setting's strengths and areas for further development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review nappy changing procedures in the toddler room to ensure children's privacy and dignity is afforded
- review the organisation of the environment to ensure it is not cluttered
- extend the range of large outdoor play equipment to provide more challenge for the older children
- review the organisation of areas of provision for children aged two to three years to help them make progress in the six areas of learning
- ensure parents sign the record of medication to acknowledge medication administered.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The effective vetting procedure helps to protect children. Staff have regard for children's well-being as they attend training to further develop their childcare practices. Written policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

Most required documentation is in place. However, parents do not always sign the medication record to acknowledge medication administered to their children.

The nursery has suitable arrangements in place to monitor the service it provides. Parents are involved in the evaluation process as they complete questionnaires to share their views. The setting demonstrates a capacity to maintain continuous improvement; action plans are in place and these are reviewed on regular basis. Recommendations from the last inspection have been mostly addressed. Menus have been suitably improved and are now generally balanced and nutritious. A wider range of play materials and resources are now made available in most playrooms to support children's learning and allow for a greater degree of choice. Planning and assessment have been developed to help staff plan activities to meet children's needs. Staff now use appropriate teaching methods to help children to problem solve and visual aids are on display to support children's growing awareness of numbers. Information is now available to parents in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage. The records of children's attendance now include all the required information. Future plans are appropriately targeted to bring about further improvement to the setting and outcomes for children.

The premises are welcoming and homely. Staff are approachable, which helps to create an atmosphere that enables a two-way flow of information between staff and parents. Staff share good working relationships with parents, who are greeted warmly on arrival. They take time to talk to parents about their child's weekend at home. Parents are provided with a wealth of information about the setting and regular newsletters keep them informed about forthcoming events. The children's key person works closely with parents to help settle their children. Parents are kept well informed about their children's achievements and progress and they are actively involved in their children's learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Effective systems are in place in relation to planning and assessment. The children are cared for in playrooms according to their age and stage of development. The small group rooms and effective key person system ensure the children are cared for by consistent and familiar adults. Resources are made available at child height, enabling the children to freely choose what they want to play with. This helps them to initiate their own ideas and develop choice and independence. However, organisation of resources in the toddler room does not leave much scope for freedom of movement or well spread activities. Staff deploy themselves well to support the children in their play and learning and they spend time playing and talking to the children. Staff share warm relationships with the children, who are happy and secure in their care.

Staff follow the youngest children's individual daily routines to help provide a secure and familiar environment. Babies respond to what they see, hear and touch. They have access to a range of resources that are colourful, tactile and that make noises to help them explore using their senses. The babies explore metal containers. They bang them together and see their reflection in the stainless steel. They play peek-a-boo with staff and hide their faces. Staff nurture babies'

attempts to communicate. They listen when the children babble and respond in gentle tones to reinforce early speech patterns.

The toddlers enjoy play with a range of age-appropriate activities. They explore sand and water and are able to name some animals. The children enjoy making collage pictures. They are able to express their own thoughts and ideas using a range of creative materials. Staff value the children's creativity. Older children are able to choose whether they play indoors or outdoors. They use language well to explain what they are doing and to add narrative to their play. The children play outdoors. They make a castle using a large tyre, logs and a sheet of material. The children decide on a name for their castle and call it the 'windy castle'. One child writes the name of the castle on the blackboard and is able to form recognisable letters. The children enjoy imaginative play in the castle and add a story line to their game.

The setting promotes an environment of equality and respect. The children develop a sense of belonging and they feel comfortable. The children have access to a range of toys that promote positive images of our diverse society. They celebrate their own and other festivals to help them develop an awareness of other people's cultures and traditions. The children show curiosity and interest in finding out about objects and materials and they show care and concern for other living things. They have grown herbs, lavender, potatoes and sunflowers in the garden and have watered them to help them grow. The children also enjoy helping to look after the nursery's pet rabbit.

There is a range of outdoor play equipment available to help the children develop skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. However, there is limited large outdoor play equipment available to provide challenge for the older children. The children enjoy being active as they play outdoors. The outdoor play area has recently been improved with funding. The children have a planting area, a digging area and a tunnel under a hill. The chip bark area is used for large physical play and the safety surface area is used to bring the indoor curriculum outdoors. The children enjoy walking, running, jumping and balancing; they crawl through the tunnel and run up and down the hill.

Staff implement suitable strategies to help promote children's social, physical and economic well-being. They exercise hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross-infection. The premises are appropriately maintained and are safe and secure. However, some areas are cluttered. The youngest children benefit from lots of positive interaction during personal care routines, such as nappy changing. However, such procedures do not always afford children's privacy and dignity.

The children receive praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements, helping them to feel valued and to develop a sense of pride in their own achievements. For example, staff admire children's collage pictures and talk to them about their creations and they praise the children for trying to hit the ball with a bat. Staff have a secure understanding of child protection matters and procedures, ensuring children's welfare is effectively safeguarded.

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

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| 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? | 3 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement. | 3 |

Leadership and management

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| 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? | 2 |
| How well are children safeguarded? | 2 |

Quality and standards

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| 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? | 3 |
| How well are children helped to stay safe? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to be healthy? | 3 |
| How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve? | 3 |
| How well are children helped to make a positive contribution? | 3 |
| How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being? | 3 |

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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