

Noahs Ark Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sarah Johnson

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Noah's Ark Pre-School opened in 1985 and is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of the some of the children who attend the pre-school. It operates from two rooms in St John's Church Hall, situated in the North East area of Ipswich, Suffolk. The premises has a small ramp leading to the entrance doors and there are accessible toilets available. A secure enclosed outdoor area is used for outdoor activities. A maximum of 36 children in the early years age group may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open during school term times. Sessions operate each weekday morning from 9.00am to 11.30am, with afternoon sessions on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 12.30pm to 3.00pm. A lunch club session is also offered from 11.30am to 12.30pm each weekday.

The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. There are currently 83 children on roll, all of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) years. Children live in the local area, and some are also cared for by a registered childminder and attend another local nursery. The setting has strategies in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and is currently supporting a number of children who are learning English as an additional language.

There are 12 members of staff and one volunteer. All staff, including the manager, hold early years qualifications to at least level 2. The manager has recently achieved Early Years Professional Status (EYPS). The setting provides funded early education for three and four year olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are provided with very good levels of care and make positive progress in all areas of their learning and development. They are confident, independent and enjoy their time spent at the pre-school. Highly effective partnerships with parents and carers, as well as good links with other EYFS settings, are significant in making sure that the needs of all children are met, along with any additional support needs. The cohesive staff team is led effectively by a motivated manager. Together they value the process of self-evaluation and demonstrate a very good capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation of the indoor and outdoor space to ensure children are supported to learn how to move about safely without endangering themselves or others.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded from harm and neglect by staff who have attended safeguarding training and have good understanding of child protection issues. Their practice is underpinned by a well written safeguarding policy which includes a comprehensive procedure for referring any concerns to the relevant outside agencies. Robust recruitment procedures, including enhanced checks through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), are completed to ensure that children are cared for by suitable, experienced and well qualified staff. Children experience very good levels of direct support and attention because the manager organises the deployment of staff, students and volunteers effectively. For example, clear staff rotas, with daily responsibilities clearly defined, are displayed for ongoing reference. The premises is kept safe and secure as a result of the thorough risk assessments which are carried out each day and children are safeguarded further as there are well considered arrangements in place to monitor any visitors to the premises.

Regular self-evaluation and reflective practice takes place through weekly team meetings. As result, staff often trial and adapt routines and practices to bring about sustained improvements to the provision. Staff are eager to maintain their good practice and regularly participate in ongoing professional development training. All staff have good opportunities to contribute their views to the self-evaluation process, ensuring the key strengths and areas for improvement are realistically identified across the setting. The staff are receptive to support provided by advisors from the local authority. For example, working closely with an Inclusion Officer, the setting successfully accesses funding for specialist resources and equipment to support the individual needs of children with disabilities.

The staff are strongly committed to working in close partnership with parents and carers, placing emphasis on gathering their feedback on the effectiveness of strategies such as home visits and open days. Parents are provided with a superb range of written and verbal information, ensuring they are able to fully understand and compliment the setting's procedures and expectations. Each child's 'learning journey' developmental record is readily available for their parents to read, offering them meaningful accounts of the activities that their children have enjoyed and inspiring their understanding of their children's progress. Strong emphasis is placed on daily discussions with parents, ensuring each child's key person continues to gather relevant information to enable them to provide for children's changing needs. The setting has established good links with the other EYFS settings that children attend, ensuring children experience further consistency in their care, learning and development. The manager is dedicated to ensuring the setting is inclusive, promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that staff understand how to tackle and challenge any issues with prejudice and discrimination.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children make very good progress in their learning and development, well supported by staff who get to know them well and enjoy interacting with them in their play. An effective key person system ensures that staff and children develop close relationships, helping children to feel safe and confident in the knowledge that there is someone close by to support them if needed. For much of the session, children are able to make choices about what they want to do from the selection of resources set out by the staff. Staff carefully prepare and plan the environment in order to provide a good balance of experiences across all areas of learning and development. There is very good provision for daily access to the outside learning environment, where children have space to run around and groups of boys have freedom to engage in appropriate rough and tumble games together. There are a good range of sensory experiences available for children through art and craft activities and discovery trays filled with shaving foam, custard, cooked spaghetti and jelly. Children particularly enjoy accessing the interactive computer, during which they complete simple mathematical problems and learn to use the keyboard with increasing skill.

The staff demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the EYFS and how children learn and develop. All staff are involved in observing children's development and interests and they ensure key observations are recorded in each child's 'Learning Journey', along with meaningful photographs of the children at play. The assessments are used well in the planning process to identify learning priorities and to plan relevant learning experiences for each child. Support for children who are learning English as an additional language is good as the staff clearly value linguistic diversity. Consequently, children begin to develop confidence in using their home language in the setting and feel valued as staff are able to respond to them with key words that they recognise.

Staff help children to develop an awareness of their own safety as they introduce road safety signs which encourage children to watch for the traffic in their role play and frequently remind children to use their 'walking feet' when moving around inside. However, children frequently run at speed whilst on route to the toilets or the outdoor area, resulting in the potential for them to bump into each other or the equipment they are using. This is mainly because the layout of some parts of the environment have not been fully reviewed to discourage children from running. Children enjoy sociable snacks times when they choose when they wish to join others to share healthy snacks such as melba toasts, bagels, grapes, raisins and banana pieces. Staff use this time to engage children in relaxed conversation and encourage them to independently pour their own drinks and to develop a sense of responsibility by mopping up any small spillages for themselves. Children also confidently manage their own hand washing routines, prompted by the child friendly posters by the sink and they learn about the importance of brushing their teeth when a dental hygienist visits the setting.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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