

Noah's Ark Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY397478
Inspection date 10/03/2010
Inspector Anne-Marie Moyse

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Noah's Ark Childcare Centre is privately owned and managed. It is part of a chain of nurseries owned and operated by Noah's Ark Childcare Centres Limited. It opened in 2009 and operates from a single storey building in the grounds of Pomphlett Primary School in Plymstock near Plymouth. A secure area is used for outdoor play activities. The setting is open each weekday from 7.30am until 6.00pm all year round. A maximum of 55 children aged from birth to eight years may attend the setting at any one time. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Currently the setting have 53 children on roll in the early years age range, and 29 children aged between five and 11 years attending after school.

The manager is qualified to degree level and is currently gaining her Early Years Professional Status. The setting employs 10 members of staff, of whom eight hold appropriate early years qualifications and two who are working towards a relevant qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery employ a good team of staff who demonstrate a very sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage principles and hold a range of skills which complement each other. They plan and implement a broad range of activities, which reflect children's interests, and promotes all areas of learning. Strong links formed with the parents ensure that there are effective systems for information sharing. As a result staff know and support children's individual routines and needs very effectively. Comprehensive systems are employed by the setting to monitor and evaluate the early year provision successfully, and enables the setting to demonstrate a high level of commitment to maintaining continuous development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that all staff have a consistent understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the child protection procedures
- review the arrangements and balance of adult led activities to ensure that all children are engaged in their learning and development according to their age and stage of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff team work extremely well together and are very confident and capable in their roles within the setting. They are very friendly and welcoming to everyone and are establishing good relationships with the children and the parents. All staff are appropriately vetted and hold suitable skills to work with children, with children's safety and security being a very high priority. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place and staff are rigorous in checking all environments before children access these. All staff have a clear understanding of the child protection procedures to follow and reporting these to their line manager. However, some staff are less confident in following up their own concerns independently, if required. Children access a very enabling environment, with high quality toys and resources being freely accessible to all. Resources and procedures promote equality and reflect the wider world. The baby room is very well resourced with an excellent range of stimulating and interesting resources for babies to explore. All children, including the babies, make good use of the outside area for play and fresh air on a daily basis. Staff are very well deployed and interact well with the children, promoting children's learning and development during their play. However, during the adult led group activities some children, especially the younger children, are not fully engaged in the activity and do not benefit from it as well as they could.

Good information is given to parents and there are positive partnerships developing with the parents. This contributes to the staff having an excellent understanding of each child's individual needs and routines. The staff work closely with the parents to help children settle-in, and value their comments. Parents are very fulsome in their praise for the staff and feel confident and reassured that their children are very well cared for. The nursery have established close links with the adjoining school, where many children will move onto, however links with other settings have yet to be established. The management team are very effective at identifying areas for improvements and have a very positive attitude in striving for excellence.

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

Children are developing good relationships with the staff and each other; they are polite and very well behaved. They move confidently around the provision, choosing what to play with and developing their independence and imagination. Staff remind children how to stay safe and encourage the children to play responsibly with the toys to prevent accidents. Children are developing their awareness of safety procedures as they are regularly involved in the evacuation drills.

Effective systems are in place to establish what children know and can do on entry to the setting, with frequent observations and assessments made by staff to continue this evaluation. Planning is influenced by the identified 'next steps' for

each child, and consistent key working groups ensure that children's development is efficiently monitored and promoted. Staff plan a wide variety of sensory activities for the babies, in which they frequently explore new textures, tastes and smells, such as cooked pasta and custard. Children's responses are recorded in individual learning files, which are embellished with attractive photographs of children at play. These are shared with parents and maintain a clear record of children's learning and development.

Children's physical development is very well promoted, with children regularly playing in the outdoor area in whole group activities. Older children enjoy racing and developing their co-ordination and skills using a variety of small and large equipment. All babies are taken outside daily and according to their development level use a range of resources. Safety mats are used for the non-mobile babies where they play with stacking blocks or balls in the fresh air. Toddlers play with various ride-ons or pull themselves up to standing and use the aids to practise their walking. The older children go into the school and use their hall and equipment for extending their physical skills. Children enjoy the challenge of balancing along beams and climbing onto the horse, jumping off confidently, with appropriate support from staff. Other children enjoy a game throwing bean bags through hoops and developing their control and sense of direction. Children's health is further promoted by the setting ensuring children have a good balance of active and rest. Babies individual sleep patterns are respected and older children all have a short rest after their lunch. The children have an option of having a wholesome hot meal or bringing packed lunches. Children are very independent in taking drinks when they are thirsty. The environment promotes older children's independence in toileting and their personal care. However, there are some inconsistencies in ensuring that all children wash their hands after toileting.

Children enjoy exploring their environment and choosing what to play with. Although children measure, count and sort objects into different groups during activities, at times their problem solving and numeracy skills are not always fostered. Children are not always encouraged to calculate and solve number problems in daily routines or spontaneous situations. Their imagination is well promoted as they find or ask for additional resources to support their ideas. They like to play in the tent, creating a den where they investigate how to use the calculator and the magic writing board. Children cut and design their own creations using the various craft material on offer. Some children lay down their own pretend river made of tissue paper and add resources such as boats or pretend to splash around in the water, laughing and giggling with their friends and staff.

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	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

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