

The Ark Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	22/01/2010
Inspector	Susan Rogers

Setting address	St Martins Centre, Ellerbeck, Stoneydelph, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B77 4JA
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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).

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Description of the setting

The Ark Nursery opened in 1992 and is run by a committee. It operates from a church centre situated on a housing estate on the outskirts of Tamworth. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. All children attending the nursery share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday term time only from 09.15am until 3.30pm. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The setting is on the first floor of the building which is accessed by using a stair lift or stairs.

A maximum of 20 children aged two to five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 42 children on roll in the early years age range. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are five members of staff including the manager employed at the setting, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The cohesive staff team work effectively together to create a stimulating environment where children are supported, feel settled, safe and secure. Children make good progress in their development and learning as their progress is observed and assessed. There are effective working partnerships with other agencies and parents to provide a consistent approach to children's learning and development. The setting has made exceptionally good progress since the last inspection and there is an effective process for self-evaluation, which includes the input of all members of staff and recognises areas for further development and growth.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles to plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child
- promote the good health of the children, take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection (this refers to the storage of children's toothbrushes).

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The safeguarding of children is effective as the child protection procedures are comprehensive and staff confidently implement these in order to promote children's welfare and safety.

A comprehensive induction process ensures that parents are made aware of the procedures and appreciate the obligations of the setting. The recruitment of staff is thorough with clearances of staff being well-documented and available for inspection with all staff employed at the setting having a level three qualification in child care and education. The risk assessments are thorough and evaluate the risks of both indoor activities and general outings. Daily risk assessments are completed which carefully monitors any change in the environment, thereby protecting children's welfare and safety. Children's understanding of keeping themselves safe is promoted through staff explanations and vigilant monitoring as they sensitively remind children to clear away their toys so that they can play safely. Practitioners are effectively deployed to ensure that children are well supervised and supported at all times.

Each child is respected as an individual as their family background, parental preferences and differing needs are valued by the staff team. Practitioners work well in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to develop a consistent approach in meeting children's needs. Parents are openly welcomed into the setting and their suggestions and comments are valued. Staff are skilled at interacting with parents and information shared on a daily basis regarding their children's progress ensures any gaps in attainment can be identified and acted upon as appropriate. Partnerships with parents are successfully implemented and consequently parents are encouraged to continue with their child's education in the home setting. The effective settling in arrangements sustains children's continuity of care. Purposeful links are fostered with schools and other professionals to meet children's individual needs and to support transitions as children move from their early years setting to school. This contributes towards the support provided to enable each child to achieve, develop social skills and enjoy their early education experiences.

Staff are well supported in their work by both the management committee and the manager through access to a range of training opportunities. Staff are regularly consulted in respect of the development of the setting consequently they work well together and share new ideas. The manager and the staff have a clear vision for the future development of the setting. They use the self evaluation process to evaluate the impact of prospective changes and inform an overall review of their daily practice. The carefully planned use of the accommodation is used effectively to support children's learning and development as children safely and independently select activities from the well maintained and accessible resources. Children's awareness of diversity and the needs of others is raised through explanations activities and resources.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning, as staff have a sound knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children approach activities with gusto as they select from a variety of play opportunities that are regularly rotated. They are confident and communicate easily with each other and staff. There are many opportunities for them to develop their linguistic skills through frequent conversations and stimulating group reading sessions. They are learning to access books of their choice and learning to understand the concept of reading a book through interpreting visual prompts during group story time. They learn how to make marks and that these can have a meaning using a variety of resources that include pencils, paint, shaving foam and play dough. Children are aware of the order of numbers, using number for a purpose and using their knowledge of mathematical language to problem solve. They are aware of aspects of the outside world as they exuberantly explore the outdoor play area often working collaboratively as they collect leaves in a wheelbarrow. They use large construction blocks to make a pretend 'digger' and two children work out that they can move a seesaw together using a skipping rope. They have clearly formed effective friendships and relationships with each other recognizing that their play opportunities are enhanced when they include each other. They are learning how to develop their physical skills as they use tools and small equipment whilst using sand and appreciate that two people are stronger when carrying heavier resources. They independently access drinks of water throughout the day and put on their own coats and hats for outdoor play. Their individual development needs are well understood by staff through the key worker system and as a result there is an appropriate differentiation of activities so that more able children have sufficient challenge and all children are appropriately supported.

Children's achievements that follow the individual areas of learning are well documented, however, the process by which this information is used to plan for individual children's development and progress has just been implemented and is not yet fully effective. The key worker system promotes children's feelings of safety and ensures that the key worker is able to use detailed information about their designated children to put together informative end of year reports. Children behave well as they respond positively to the positive role models offered by staff who display consistency and fairness in encouraging children to share, take turns and follow the boundaries within the familiar routines and expectations.

Information regarding children's background is discussed with parents and carers prior to the placement commencing in order to build a clear picture of each child's needs and skills. Parents speak very highly of the setting stating that their child's development has improved and children have developed friendships with other children at the setting. Good use is made of local community resources that include the library, children's centres and the local shops which encourages children's awareness of the roles adults take in society. Regular access to the outdoors encourages children to appreciate the changing seasons. During the recent snowfall children enjoyed making snowmen and investigated the melting properties of snow and ice. Children understand the need to keep safe and take

responsibility for the setting as they tidy away their resources and toys. Children are beginning to understand about staying safe as they regularly practise evacuation procedures. They learn about stranger danger and are helped by supportive and caring practitioners to feel secure and safe in their environment. Most of the routines encourage children to learn about hygiene and protecting themselves from illness and infection, however, the storage of children's toothbrushes compromises their well being. A variety of freshly cooked meals and snacks that introduce new tastes support children's understanding of healthy living as they enthusiastically tuck in to nutritious and well-balanced meals. Children learn about their own community and the wider world as they celebrate a variety of festivals and access a range of resources which portray positive images helping their understanding of diversity.

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

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