



Noahs Ark Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY219490
Inspection date	12 January 2006
Inspector	Samantha Smith

Setting Address	Mill Hill Drive, Billericay, Essex, CM12 0SL
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Telephone number	01277 637433
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Registered person	Noahs Ark Preschool
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Sessional care
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ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Noah's Ark Pre-School has been registered since 2003. It operates from a demountable building in the grounds of a primary school in Billericay. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 63 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 37 funded 3 year olds and 11 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a small number of children who have special needs and

who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:45 and 13:00 until 15:30. The group also run a lunch club.

Eight part time staff work with the children. Seven staff hold Early years qualifications to level 2 and 3. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The daily routines ensure children understand the need for good personal hygiene. Children know they have to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They understand that hand washing keeps them clean.

Children's health continues to be promoted through the good hygiene routines the staff follow. This includes cleaning the tables in preparation for snack and mealtimes and ensuring the toys are cleaned regularly. Although most children do not wear nappies, there are a few that do, there are procedures in place to ensure when changing children they are protected the children from the spread of infection. For example a changing mat is used and cleaned down after every use.

There is an effective sickness policy in place which is shared with the parents and informs them of the exclusion period for infectious illness's. Parents give prior written consents to administer medication this ensures children receive the correct dosage according to their needs. There is a first aid box stored in the kitchen area and most staff hold a current first aid certificate. This means that they can give appropriate care if there is an accident.

Children receive a range of healthy snacks including raisins, fruit and porridge, encouraging them to develop healthy eating practices. They are learning the importance of a diet as they engage in conversation with staff and each other about likes and dislikes. Drinks are freely available.

Information regarding diet and likes and dislikes is displayed in the kitchen area, this ensures that children's individual dietary needs are met.

Children engage in a good range of physical activity that helps keep them healthy, such as balancing, climbing and gardening. They move confidently and show enthusiasm as they explore movement during a story session. Equipment that promotes fine manipulative skills is provided although this does always present sufficient challenge for the older and more able children.

There are some children under 3 years attending the provision and though staff are aware and enrolled on a course for the 'Birth to three matters framework'

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a suitably organised environment, well maintained and welcoming. Security is very good ensuring that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised and preventing unwanted visitors gaining access.

Staff organise the indoor space effectively, allowing children to move around safely, freely and independently. Children play with a sufficient range of safe toys and equipment that are cleaned regularly and well maintained. Staff encourage the children to assume some responsibility for themselves as they encourage them to tidy up when they have finished playing.

Health and safety procedure in place are effective and ensures that children are kept safe. For example risk assessments are carried out regularly, the fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed and practiced twice a term. Records are kept of these. There are good procedures in place for the safe arrival and departure of children and for taking children on outings.

Staff's sound knowledge of child protection promotes children's welfare within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happy and eager to participate in activities. They are well settled and know the routine. They know that on arrival they enter the circle and join in show and tell activities, listen for their names in roll call and change into their indoor shoes.

Children have good relationships with staff as they join in activities with them. New children are well supported by staff and as a result they quickly settle. Staff familiarise themselves with children's favourite toys and they prepare these before the children start.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Staff that have sufficient knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn take the lead, as a result not all staff are confident or equipped with the skill to challenge children and or provide activities to meet their individual needs.

Children are familiar with their daily routine and they move around the room freely making choices from activities set out. Although activities are not always presented in a way to encourage participation and hold their interest. As a result children sometimes leave activities or activities set out are untouched.

Children are confident in their environment. Some opportunities provided are successful in helping children to increase their independence such as accessing books and creating their own stories and also as they change into their indoor shoes and assist themselves when they dress and undress when they visit the toilet. At other times promoting children's self-help skills is less successful. For example children do not get involved in preparation for snack time, they are not given a choice of the fruit they would like to eat and they are not given the choice of equipment to use when involved in cutting and sticking and play dough activities.

Children speak confidently to peers and adults. They talk openly during show and tell about themselves and their families. They express their ideas and experiences well using good vocabulary. Children enjoy books and handle them carefully. They spend time sharing books with adults and peers and can relate to well-known stories by looking at pictures. Children are regularly involved in mark making opportunities although these are not always purposeful and there are limited examples of letters and words through labelling.

Children are interested in numbers and counting. They are beginning to represent numbers in various ways as they count the number of children attending and they are beginning to recognise them as they use the attendance chart to display this on the wall. Opportunities to use counting in everyday situations such counting the cups and sorting the colours of the cups for snack times are missed.

Children use their imagination to express their ideas in a variety of ways. They act out well-known scenarios and stories during role-play as they participate in the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. They enjoy opportunities to use their senses and explore a varied range of materials both natural and manufactured, such as touching and tasting and exploring natural materials.

Opportunities for children to use everyday technology is limited. For example, there is a computer available in the room but this is not accessible to children on a daily basis. Children have sufficient opportunities to practice their large physical skills as they use the climbing, the ride along equipment out side and visit the local park. However there are limited opportunities for children to practise their fine motor skills as resources such as scissors, pens and pencils are not freely accessible.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a range of activities and resources that promote positive images and diversity. Children have access to a wide range of resources that encourage them to learn about others. Such as role play equipment, dolls and books.

Children with additional needs are welcomed into the setting and there are systems in place for identifying and supporting them. They benefit from the adaptations and provisions put in place and there is a named person who is responsible and familiar with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Children are well-behaved and respond well to staff requests. They thrive from the

praise and encouragement they receive from staff and they understand the rules of the setting as they learn about right from wrong, through the boundaries set by staff. For example they provide gentle reminders to share with peers and to join in 'tidy up time'.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are welcomed into the setting, they participate in activities and take part in parents evenings once a year. The setting provides new parents with a prospectus detailing information about the provision. Parents are given information about their children's learning regarding the early learning goals and activity plans are displayed on the parents notice board.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. This is because children are encouraged to explore their own and other people's culture as well as the wider world. They participate in activities such as making Japanese dolls, taste Chinese foods, interact with guide dogs and visit elderly peoples homes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and content in the setting. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children attending.

The general layout of the room is sufficient to support children's play, though the storage of toys does not allow for children to build on their independence because they cannot freely help themselves to toys and resources. Children are familiar with their routine and staff are generally responsive to them, although the lack of challenge some activities presents does not provide for all children's individual needs.

All mandatory records are in place, confidential and well maintained. This guarantees the safe effective management of the setting in order to promote children's welfare. There are sufficient systems in place for the recruitment and induction of staff.

Leadership and management is satisfactory the supervisor ensures that Staff training needs are identified through the effective appraisal they have in place and staff are encouraged to attend training in different areas of childcare to strengthen the provision, for example Food and Hygiene and the 'Birth to three matters'.

Staff share ideas and knowledge gained on training courses as they attend regular team meetings. Planning involves all staff and assessment of activities takes place and is used to inform future plans.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection in 2005 the provider agreed to update the Child Protection policy to includes allegations made against a member of staff. The policy has now been updated to include this. Showing a commitment to protecting the well-being of the children.

The provider was also asked to extend planning to include further activities for children's creative development, outdoor play opportunities and to extend learning opportunities at snack time. Planning now includes activities for creative development and outdoor play. Snack times are purposeful and have clear learning opportunities.

The provision continues to further develop these areas. This shows a commitment to providing for children's learning needs.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since April 2004.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the organisation of activities so that children get the full benefits from the opportunities provided.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review and extend the range of toys and resources to ensure they provide sufficient challenge and meet the development needs of all children
- review and improve daily routines to allow children to increase on self help skills
- improve staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage to enable to fully support children's learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk