



Noah's Ark Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY272287
Inspection date	03 May 2006
Inspector	Janet Butlin / Sally Hall
Setting Address	133 Babbacombe Road, Torquay, Devon, TQ1 3SR
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Registered person	Noah's Ark Childcare Centres
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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 Childcare Centre is a long established nursery which was taken over by new management in September 2003 and is part of the Noah's Ark childcare group. The nursery is situated in the centre of Babbacombe, in Torquay, and operates on two floors. There is an enclosed garden to the rear.

The nursery is open from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday all year round and is

registered to care for up to 44 children from birth to 8 years. After school care is offered for up to 4 children between the ages of 5 and 8 years. There are currently 39 children enrolled at the nursery, 9 of whom are in receipt of funding. Children with special needs are welcomed into the setting, as are children with English as an additional language.

The majority of the staff in the nursery are qualified and the setting is overseen by a development worker from Noah's Ark Childcare Services. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for appropriately in an emergency as the staff are qualified in first aid and there are suitable systems in place to record accidents and the administering of medication. However, they are cared for in a dirty environment and the facilities for their hand washing are poor. They are thwarted in their attempts to protect themselves from infection by washing their hands, as they do not have adequate access to soap and paper towels.

Children receive an adequate diet which contains fruit. Their access to drinks is limited as the water dispenser is frequently empty and children's attempts to quench their thirst are frustrated.

Children enjoy the fresh air each day, as long as the weather permits, by playing in the garden and going on walks. They develop climbing and balancing skills by negotiating equipment. However, the environment compromises their ability to develop an awareness of healthy practices.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children play in a setting which has sufficient space for them to play and to rest. They explore the secure, enclosed rear garden each day and access suitable toys and equipment to support their play. Children benefit from some very good quality resources, such as low level seating and playing areas, and toys and puzzles. Many of these are new and in good condition and they access most of their toys easily. However, the door of the play-house is broken and the children are at risk of trapping their fingers between broken pieces. When the children are all grouped together for meals, there are insufficient chairs to accommodate very young children and the chairs they are fed in are unsuitable.

Children are at risk from hazards in the setting. Their safety is compromised by trailing flexes and the way in which very young children can access potentially harmful items. They frequently walk about, or conceal themselves, with these items and the lack of supervision means that children are at risk of harm. Children are also

not protected from the proximity of hot foods when lunch is served. Children are familiar with safety evacuation procedures which helps to keep them safe, however, the fire safety equipment is not fixed and presents a hazard. Children's safety is further undermined as the stair gate preventing them from accessing the stairs to the lower floor is not secure.

Children are protected from abuse as the staff have a secure understanding of child protection procedure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children interact well with staff and settle quickly and happily in the setting. They benefit from the caring and soothing way that staff speak to them, and their daily rhythms are well understood by staff. Babies and very young children are becoming skilful communicators, and competent learners, as they explore and investigate resources. For example they feel textures, transport baskets and peer at themselves in low level mirrors. They communicate with staff and each other to share their discoveries. The staff are aware of the Birth to three matters framework and are working towards using it more specifically to plan for children's progress. Younger children are grouped alongside their older playmates and they enjoy the range of activities that are provided for them. They become a little restless when the older children are sitting and listening but, overall, the staff are sensitive to this and enable the children to move off to another activity whenever they want to.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a generally sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and as a consequence children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Clear plans show that a balanced curriculum is provided over the course of a term and regular, careful observations result in accurate identification of children's individual progress. Each child has a target for the next steps in their learning, however, it is not clear from the day to day planning, and how the activities are presented, how each child will be individually challenged and helped to progress. Children are keen to learn and eagerly listen to whole-group stories and respond well to the enthusiasm of the practitioners. They understand the codes of behaviour and are keen to help each other. They concentrate well and clear explanations from staff help children to focus and persist at their activities, for example, discussing and completing a collage from pre-cut shapes. However, there is little encouragement for them to develop and extend this learning by, for example, cutting the shapes out themselves. At the time of inspection the children were unable to benefit from the daily routine board, as it was torn and had no pictures. Children listen attentively to stories and are keen to contribute their ideas regarding the story. Some children recognise letter sounds and link them to their names. Writing materials are provided, but their use is not well supported by modelling or examples, and children do not attempt to name their work. Resources do not promote role-play sufficiently for children to be inspired to make notes in their play. Sound emphasis is given to children's mathematical development

and they are encouraged to count objects, and match shapes regularly. However, simple calculation is not a routine part of supported free play. Children make models from a variety of materials, and talk enthusiastically about trips they have been on and the modes of transport they have used. The process of creation is enjoyed by children who apply paint in satisfying quantity and watch the colours flow and blend. They are also tuneful singers. They develop their small muscles effectively by using tools such as scissors, pincers and glue sticks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children concentrate for substantial amounts of time at their chosen tasks and show care and concern for one another. They also show concern for the rabbit and ask after his welfare when they notice he is missing. Children are polite and well behaved and respond well to the staff's appropriate strategies. They follow agreed codes of behaviour and some help to tidy away resources. Children learn about cultural diversity through themed activities and by playing with resources that promote their curiosity and interest. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children's individual needs are known and respected, although nappy changing procedures for older children do not routinely respect dignity. Sound attention is given to respecting children's home languages and children with special needs receive thoughtful support.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes. Their parents are kept well informed of their daily activities and there is a satisfactory system for the sharing of information regarding the setting. Parents are welcome to view their assessment records at any time. Specially planned evening meetings further support parents' understanding of their child's progress through the Foundation Stage.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children are cared for in a setting where all persons caring for them are suitable to do so. They benefit from the caring and sensitive attention they receive from staff. Efficient systems are in place to record the attendance of children. The management has made significant improvements to the nursery education side of the provision, however, insufficient attention has been given to maintaining the standards of hygiene and safety, and this has had a detrimental effect on the care of the children. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Staff show a genuine interest and enthusiasm for their work with children and all regulatory documentation is in place. However, systems are not in place to ensure the environment is maintained to a suitable standard.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The management uses local expertise and supportive agencies effectively to assist in evaluating and identifying areas for improvement. The systems in place to support

children's learning are appropriate and helpful. Internal monitoring systems are informal but sound.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery were recommended to improve children's access to resources that promote equality of opportunity and the support available to children with special educational needs, as well as the overall needs of all children. The group have addressed these recommendations by obtaining resources and accessing training and advice. They were also requested to increase the rigour of ongoing risk assessments to protect children from hazards. This has not been effectively addressed, to the detriment of children's safety

The quality of the nursery education at the last inspection was judged to be inadequate. The setting were given actions to improve. These required the setting to improve the planning and assessment and ensure staff use appropriate behaviour management strategies. They were also required to improve the quality of teaching by making better use of time, resources, grouping and strategies, to provide sufficient challenge for children.

The number of children attending at the time of inspection made it easier for staff to give appropriate attention to the older children within a broad age group, and planning and assessment is now clear and shows that there are targets for individual children's progress. Ensuring that these targets are clearly linked to the daily planning, and implemented in practice, thereby giving increased attention to providing worthwhile challenge for children, remains an area for development. Appropriate behaviour management strategies are employed and staff are confident in their use. This has had a positive impact on the experiences of children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received no complaints.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve standards of cleanliness within the nursery with particular attention to the kitchen and toilets
- improve safety within the nursery to minimise risks to children and ensure they are easily supervised at all times
- improve organisation to ensure levels of staffing are sufficient to meet the requirements for hygiene and safety
- improve hand washing facilities to ensure children can access toilet paper, soap and hand towels at all times

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- ensure that the targets for the children are implemented more specifically in the day to day activities, which should provide them with sufficient challenge, and help them to move on to the next steps in their learning
- provide more opportunities for children to make marks for a purpose, for example naming their work, and improve opportunities for them to develop health and bodily awareness

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