



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 122408

DfES Number: 548231

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 23/02/2005
Inspector Name Gillian Cubitt

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Noah's Ark Pre-School
Setting Address Caterham Community Church
Coulston Road
Caterham
Surrey
CR3 5NF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Noah's Ark Pre-School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Noah's Ark Pre-School
Address Caterham Community Church
Coulston Road
Caterham
Surrey
CR3 5NF

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Noah's Ark Preschool has been registered since 1987. It operates from the hall and rooms of Caterham Community Church which is situated on Caterham-on-the-Hill. The provision mainly serves children from the local community. The pre-school is open four mornings each weekday from 09:30 to 12:15. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 32 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 20 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs, and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight members of staff. Four of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, and the manager holds the Certificate in Education. Other staff have many years' experience.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Noah's Ark Pre-school offers good quality nursery education where children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and creative development. They are making generally good progress in the other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. All staff work together to provide children with a stimulating environment where they are encouraged to learn from real life situations. Staff's knowledge of the stepping stones is developing and they are involved in planning to ensure that all six areas of learning are covered. Through an effective key worker system staff know the children well and they build warm relationships. Children are happy and enjoy the variety of quality resources available. Staff assess children and make worthwhile observations on their achievements. Staff however are not linking in their assessments to inform future planning to ensure each child's needs are met. This impacts on the daily programme for physical development which does not fully stretch some children. Staff are good role models and have high expectations of children's behaviour. They have systems in place to support children with special educational needs.

The leadership and management are generally good. The manager is very supportive of staff and promotes good team working. She prepares all the documentation and long term plans which ensures the smooth running of the provision. She arranges regular meetings and provides staff with a system of appraisal. The manager is currently evaluating and updating the curriculum and systems for evaluating children's progress.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive good information about the pre-school and about the foundation stage. Parents receive regular reports and have individual consultations on children's progress. Parents are made to feel welcome and a part of the nursery.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal and social skills are well nurtured. They are taught to care for each other and share their toys.
- Children's communication skills are developing well, especially in the role play area. Staff also employ effective methods to question children, to make them think and speak about what they are doing.
- Staff introduce mathematics in an enthusiastic way. Children remember shapes by names such as Cynthia circle and Ozzie oblong.
- Children enjoy singing. They have a wide repertoire and sing beautifully with the accompaniment of other staff and the guitar.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's understanding of the stepping stones to ensure that their observations on children's progress are effectively linked into the programme for future planning
- organisation of the programme of physical play, so that children benefit and extend their learning when engaged in their gross physical skills.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There has been very good progress since the last inspection. There were two key issues and they have both been addressed. The first was to develop the small outdoor garden area so that children can make use of it to extend their learning. This has now been paved and wall murals decorate the area. Here, children extend their creative skills through messy play and develop their interest in nature. Staff were also asked to provide more opportunities for children to recognise what happens to their bodies when they are active. An action plan has been implemented and activities are included on topics about 'my body'. Staff also make children aware of their bodies during active free play.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and eager to go to preschool. They talk about their home and other experiences at circle times. Children are allowed to complete their work and their concentration skills are developing. Children eat fruit daily and are made aware of their personal needs when going to the toilet and washing hands. Children make firm friendships. They are taught to care for each other and that each child is special.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's vocabulary is developing through group discussions and topics. Children enjoy stories about shapes and these are personified by staff to make them memorable to the children. Children talk freely about their home and family and what they like doing at pre-school. Children learn to recognise their names through self-registration and they see many examples of the written word around the room. Children have plenty of opportunities to write and draw in role play and planned activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children have a good knowledge of shapes and remember shapes through effective teaching methods. Children count confidently and recognise numbers that are important to them. Children count spontaneously, they go round the room counting each other during their free play. Children have set activities to look at addition and subtraction, although subtraction is not sufficiently reinforced during every day activities such as snack times.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are made aware of time when talking about their experiences at playschool and at home. Children investigate using their senses when playing with various mediums such as clay, sand and water. They also enjoy cooking activities. Information and technology is introduced in the form of programmable toys and staff are developing their skills with teaching on the computer. Children go on local walks but do not follow this through by making and looking at maps where they live.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently and in a variety of ways. Children show good co-ordination skills when dancing, jumping, running and balancing. They have good resources such as cutters and scissors to develop their small manipulative skills. Children are developing an understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to keep healthy. The repeated daily routine of the physical development programme does not benefit all children.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use their senses to explore and describe experiences, such as tasting and smelling food, and feeling different textures, such as clay and plastercine. Children enjoy music and sing beautifully accompanied by the guitar. Children express themselves well in role play and immerse themselves into cleaning and organising the home. Children have plenty of opportunities to draw and create pictures in various mediums.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- develop staff's understanding of the stepping stones to ensure that their observations on children's progress are effectively linked into the programme for future planning
- improve the organisation of the children's programme of physical development, so that all children benefit from their time on the climbing frame.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.