



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY220790

DfES Number: 584120

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 31/01/2005
Inspector Name Julie Youngman (TCCI)

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Noahs Ark Pre School
Setting Address Robertson Barracks
Swanton Morley
Dereham
Norfolk
NR20 4TX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Noah's Ark Pre School 1062209

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Noah's Ark Pre School
Address Robertson Barracks
Swanton Morley
Dereham
Norfolk
NR20 4TX

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 has been running for some years but only registered as a full daycare provider with Ofsted in 2002. It is managed by an elected committee and operates from four rooms in the Community Centre at Swanton Morley. The group serves both the military and the local civilian community. A maximum of 54 children may attend the setting at any one time.

The group are able to accept funding for three and four year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group are able to provide care for children who have special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group is open Monday to Friday 08.00 to 18.00 all year round.

Seven full and part-time staff work with the children. Most of them have an early years qualification and some are currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and they are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the Norfolk Early Years Support Network.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for Nursery Education at Noah's Ark Pre-school is acceptable and of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. They show confidence and good concentration in tackling the wide range of pre-school activities provided for them.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a clear understanding of the early learning goals and how children learn. They plan a range of stimulating activities to motivate and interest children, although short term planning is not thoroughly linked to all stepping stones through a medium term overview. Staff are well trained and continue to update their knowledge by attending relevant training courses. They support the learning of each individual child through good questioning, full explanations and clear instructions to move the learning on. The assessment system is good and shows a clear picture of each individual child's progress towards meeting the early learning goals.

Leadership and management of the setting are generally good. Managers self evaluate through regular revision of policies and plans. The committee are interested and involved in the running of the pre-school. Staff are appraised and have job descriptions. Weekly staff meetings are held to discuss the learning programme and assessments. The manager leads her team well and ensures good training opportunities are offered to them on a regular basis.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are happy with the work of the pre-school. The setting offers parents an "open door" policy; this enables parents to discuss their child's progress with their key worker on a daily basis if they wish. Some parents would prefer more formal arrangements such as written reports on the progress of their child. A good range of informative policies and procedures are supplied to parents when their children join the pre-school.

What is being done well?

- Children benefit from a wide range of first hand experiences with good interventions by all staff to support and develop the learning. For example, staff let children take the initiative in role play of cooking and eating dinner. They join the group and move the learning on through skilful questioning and good explanations when appropriate. Children communicate well when talking to adults and each other, for instance, when talking about healthy breakfasts.
- The good relationships in the pre-school enable children to be confident and happy in their learning. Children behave well and know how to treat each

other in pre-school.

- Children are able to study living things such as tadpoles changing into frogs and worms in the pre-school wormery.
- The pre-school manager deploys her team well and ensures they are well trained.
- Individual progress towards meeting the early learning goals is evaluated through good analytical assessments.
- Parents are happy with the work of the pre-school. They feel welcome in the setting and see the staff as approachable.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for children to learn initial sounds. Further development of writing and mark making activities and learning sound rhymes is needed to promote sound knowledge and letter formation
- more regular opportunities for children to recognise and recreate simple patterns
- the opportunities for children to sing number rhymes on a regular basis to promote counting skills
- medium term plans for each six week block to show how the six areas of learning will be covered.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Although there has been a complete change of management and staff at the pre-school since the last inspection, generally good progress has been made regarding the key issues that were raised.

The setting was asked to implement new assessment records and continue to evaluate assessment methods used, in order to maximise their effectiveness. Assessment methods are now practical and effective. The setting makes good use of Norfolk Early Learning Story, ensuring that they know each child well and know their progress as an individual.

The setting was asked to promote writing skills, including correct letter formation, when the children are ready for this. Staff were to be encouraged to interact appropriately and seek training or liaison with feeder schools if appropriate. The group have set up a writing table and ensure children are directly taught how to write their names and can demonstrate good skill in doing so.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Happy children express their needs and give their ideas and views with confidence. They show interest and concentration in their learning, for example, they concentrate well when drawing. They respond well to the high expectations of staff, sorting out small disagreements quickly. Children are beginning to learn that other people have different cultures and beliefs, that need to be treated with respect.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children engage easily in conversation with other children and all adults about farming and farm animals. They show interest in books and stories and make good attempts at making up their own farming stories. Children develop language for thinking through a wide range of stimulating activities. Children are interested in writing, they can recognise their own names and make good attempts at name writing. However, children do not have every opportunity to learn that letters link to sounds.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are able to count reliably to at least six. They show good understanding of the concept of weighing, for example by being able to balance accurately. They can use correct mathematical language to describe size and comparison, such as big, little, bigger than and smaller than. However children do not have regular opportunities to extend counting or to recognise and create simple patterns.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show knowledge of day to day events in their lives such as cooking, serving food and eating. They are eager to ask probing questions of staff about their activities and happy to have staff join in their role play. They are interested in studying living creatures such as worms and tadpoles and watching things grow, for example, checking on the growth progress of cress they have planted. Children are beginning to learn about the environment from visitors.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy the varied indoor and outdoor equipment and games such as the parachute, to move, crawl, climb, run and balance with enthusiasm. They show good awareness of space. Children use tools well in dough activities for cutting and rolling. They make good use of construction kits to build models, improving their coordination, but activities to encourage fine manipulative skills are not always chosen. Children talk about healthy eating.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy exploring different media and materials, such as sponge printing, making dough animals and drawing. They learn how to use tools and appropriate resources successfully through guidance from staff. Children use their imaginations well in role play, for example, when making a replica farm and acting out the cooking and eating of a meal. The range of familiar music and songs does not give children much scope for creative expression.

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

- give children more opportunities to learn initial sounds by further developing writing/mark making activities and teaching sound rhymes in order to promote sound knowledge and letter formation
- ensure children have more regular opportunities to recognise and recreate simple patterns
- encourage children to sing number rhymes on a regular basis to promote counting skills
- develop planning of the educational programme further to ensure each area of learning is regularly covered and sufficiently linked to the stepping stones.

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.