



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

## **COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT**

**URN 133627**

**DfES Number: 584616**

### **INSPECTION DETAILS**

Inspection Date	21/02/2005
Inspector Name	Sarah Fletcher

### **SETTING DETAILS**

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	The Ark
Setting Address	The Orchard, Birds Lane Epwell Banbury Oxfordshire OX15 6LQ

### **REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS**

Name	Mrs Julia Neal
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## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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

The Ark Nursery has been open since September 1997 and is a privately owned nursery set in the rural village of Epwell near Banbury in Oxfordshire. The nursery caters for local children and those from the surrounding villages from a variety of backgrounds. The premises are housed in a purpose built building with a safe enclosed garden near to the proprietor's premises and they have use of her garden.

The nursery is open from Monday to Friday from 09.00 to 16.00 during term times, which is approximately 48 weeks of the year for children between the ages of 2 years and 8 years of age. The nursery can accommodate 16 children at any time. At present, there are 40 children on the register and 13 of these are in receipt of nursery education funding. There are no funded children identified as having special educational needs or with English as an additional language. There are five members of staff working with the children, three with relevant level 3 qualifications in child care and education, and one working towards a level 2 qualification.

### How good is the Day Care?

The Ark Nursery provides good quality care for children. Qualified staff manage the nursery effectively, their roles are well defined, and day-to-day organisation is good. The nursery is bright and attractive, with many examples of the children's artwork and photographs on display. The nursery provides a large stock of good quality toys, materials and play equipment, which are stored so that the children can easily reach them.

Staff make the welfare of the children their first concern. They make sure areas the children use are safe and risks and hazards reduced, although the staff toilet lock is accessible to children. Staff take steps to promote the children's health and wellbeing, and act in the children's best interests if they become ill. Staff offer children healthy and nutritious snacks and drinks, which conform to parents' wishes.

Staff plan and present interesting and challenging play activities for the children.

There is an effective balance between child led, and the more structured, adult led activities. The nursery offers opportunities for the children to learn about and to value diversity. The staff are skilled at managing children's behaviour, which is generally good.

Staff develop good relationships with parents, and work with them to achieve the best outcome for their children. Nursery information is readily available and parents are well informed about their child's achievements and progress. All the necessary records, policies and procedures are in place and shared with the appropriate parent, although the behaviour management policy lacks minor detail.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Not applicable.

#### **What is being done well?**

- The staff develop warm and trusting relationships with the children. They spend time playing with them, talking to them, and listening carefully to what they have to say. They praise the children's achievements, and speak of them in positive terms, which supports their developing sense of self-worth. They enjoy each others company and the children are happy, confident, and settled.
- The nursery is well equipped, with a range of good quality toys and play materials. Staff keep the stock well maintained, and present it attractively. The storage systems used allow the children to choose what they would like to play with. The range of play equipment is extensive, and meets the needs of all the children who attend.
- The staff are skilled at managing children's behaviour. They develop warm and trusting relationships with the children, and they know them well. This allows them to deal with any instances of poor behaviour sensitively, and with regard for the child's age and understanding. They focus strongly on the more positive aspects, and praise the children for their achievements and when they behave well. The staff team works well together, and their cheerful and cooperative approach provides a good role model.
- Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the group if they wish to. The staff value their input, and understand the importance of working in partnership with parents. They work together to get the best outcome for the children, sharing their achievements and progress through open channels of communication.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the children's safety, so the staff toilet door lock is inaccessible at all times
- the documentation for behaviour management, include 'bullying' and name designated person responsible for behaviour management.

**PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)**

There are no complaints to report.

**Outcome of the inspection**

Good

**CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

**WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**

**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
6	Ensure staff toilet door lock is made inaccessible to children at all times.
14	Improve documentation for behaviour management, include procedures for dealing with 'bullying' and name designated person responsible for behaviour management.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The Ark Nursery provides high quality nursery education overall which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Children make very good progress in all areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff provide daily activities to promote children's personal independence and build children's self esteem by giving them appropriate responsibilities. Staff are good role models and manage children's behaviour sensitively and effectively. Staff are very effective in their use of questioning and dialogue to encourage and extend children's thinking.

Staff plan ample opportunities for children to mark make and to access books on a daily basis. Staff provide number problems for children through the use of games, songs and rhymes, though miss further opportunities during snack time. Staff provide opportunities for children to explore, investigate and learn about the natural world. Staff are developing planning systems to assist children's learning towards the early learning goals, they have an effective system in place for recording children's daily achievements. Systems support children with special educational needs and children for whom English is an additional language.

Leadership and management are very good. A strong staff team is in place, who are committed to providing a caring, well-planned environment where children learn through a wide range of activities. Systems are in place to support continuing professional development.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. This contributes well to the children's learning. Staff inform parents about the activities and routines through verbal exchanges and regular correspondence.

### What is being done well?

- Children are happy, secure and curious, they are articulate and interact well with staff, they engage easily in conversation expressing personal preferences and making independent choices. Staff work hard to build children's confidence and develop their self-esteem.
- Staff provide very good activities to foster children's literacy skills for example, writing for a variety of purposes relevant to play. Children clearly enjoy books and there are many opportunities to increase children's knowledge and understanding of how to access information.
- Staff encourage good behaviour through example and attitude. Children are aware of the boundaries and expectations, this reflects in the response of the children to adult requests and in the way the children interact with each other.
- Staff provide children with very good opportunities, through effective

planning, to develop and extend their physical skills indoors and outdoors, they have access to a range of equipment and resources, which they use with enthusiasm and growing confidence.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the further development of natural opportunities for children to show an awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction during snack time.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. An action plan has been developed to ensure that there are opportunities for children to show an awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction, and to keep manageable records of children's attainment and progress towards the early learning goals.

Both areas show very good progress. Children's records are accurate with regular observations made and recorded, which staff use in planning individual children's development within the curriculum plans. There has been a marked increase in opportunities for children's awareness of number operations, during song time and stories and rhymes, although further natural opportunities are missed, such as at snack time.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Staff give high priority to developing children's self-esteem, building their confidence in a relaxed and caring atmosphere where the children feel secure. Staff encourage good behaviour through example and attitude. Children are aware of the boundaries and expectations, they are polite, courteous and show consideration for each other and adults. Children have good access to resources and are encouraged to choose for themselves.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are developing well through a varied range of activities and experiences, they are articulate speakers who engage easily in conversation. Staff provide very good opportunities for writing for purposes relevant to play. Staff use questioning and dialogue to extend children's thinking. Children have daily opportunities to identify their name and recognise letter sounds. Staff provide a range of suitable books, which the children enjoy.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show a developing understanding of numbers; staff reinforce counting skills and number recognition in everyday activities. Children develop an understanding of number operations through games, songs and rhymes, although staff miss further opportunities with groups of children at snack time. Staff use comparative and positional language to increase children's knowledge. Practical activities provide opportunities for children to develop their problem solving skills.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Through planned topics, simple experiments and activities such as planting and growing seeds, staff develop children's curiosity and understanding of living things. Children have opportunities to question why things happen and how things work and have access to programmable toys to increase their skill and understanding. Staff make opportunities for children to explore the local environment and visitors from the community further increase knowledge, for example, the fire brigade's visit.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children demonstrate a clear understanding of their bodies; they understand the importance of remaining healthy and preventing themselves from harm. The provision and planned use of appropriate resources and activities, indoors and outdoors, extends and consolidates children's physical skills in a way they enjoy on a daily basis. Children are developing increasing control and co-ordination in the way they move around the indoor and outdoor areas.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children participate enthusiastically in imaginative play and stories; they enjoy adult-led songs and rhymes. They are encouraged to express their imagination through a range of planned activities including design, music and role-play. Children are confident and capable with tools, learning new techniques and reinforcing skills on a daily basis. The displays show evidence of the wide range of materials children experience and use.	

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

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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**

*There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:*

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to the following:
- the further development of natural opportunities for children to show an awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction during snack time.

*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.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*