



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY224711

DfES Number: 535806

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	17/01/2005
Inspector Name	Beryl Baggs

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Noahs Ark Weston
Setting Address	All Saints Centre, High Street Weston Bath BA1 4BX

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Noahs Ark (Weston)
------	--------------------

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Noahs Ark (Weston)
Address	High Street Weston Bath Avon BA1 4BX

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 Pre-school is a privately run pre-school which opened in 2002. It is situated in the converted loft of an old Victorian school, in the High Street, Weston, Bath. It is accessed from the path leading to All Saints Church. Children use the pre-school room and occasionally a small side room or large hall downstairs. A tarmac'd area is used for outside play.

The pre-school cares for up to 24 children aged three to under-five years. There are 25 children on roll of whom 16 three-year-olds and 8 four-year-olds receive nursery education grant. Two children have special educational needs and two children use English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday 09:30 to 12:00 and Wednesday 12:30 to 15:00 during school term times. Plans are being considered to open on Thursdays also 09:30 to 12:00. A Rainbow group for more able children meets during the sessions.

There are five staff of whom three hold a childcare or teaching qualification. The pre-school is supported by the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Noahs Ark Weston is of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Staff understand how children learn through play. Planning relates topics to the aspects of learning. Staff join in children's play and ask open questions to help children think. Good support is given to children with special educational needs. Staff have a calm approach to children's behaviour, developing positive solutions to issues. Children are involved in play at all times. Observations of children are used to develop further activities and shared with parents. Some challenges for children are missed. The signal for silence is not always effective.

Leadership and management is generally good. Regular staff meetings ensure all staff are involved in planning activities and well informed. Activities are evaluated and these are used to help plan future activities. The pre-school is rightly proud of the positive links with parents, the happy atmosphere in the pre-school and a staff team enthusiastic about work with young children. Keen to develop, they have identified some areas they wish to improve further, such as the limited equipment for outside physical play. Some staff have limited understanding of the Foundation Stage which will be improved by labelling activity boxes with the early learning goals.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Newsletters include topics but no link is made to the Foundation Stage, early learning goals or what children learn from everyday play activities. Parents share information about their child on initial visits to the pre-school and continue this daily on a verbal basis. They see children's development records three times each year. Newsletters have ideas for parents to develop children's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident in pre-school. They are curious about the world around them and eager to play.
- Children enjoy many opportunities to be freely creative in painting and collage work. They are inspired to paint by music.
- Children explore the world around them, for example, the rain and the wind, light reflecting from mirrors, and sand pouring through a wheel.
- Parents are given suggestions to extend their children's learning at home, such as how to use numbers and letters in the community on cars and doors.
- The staff team are keen to improve the education of the children and share a passion for work with early years children. Staff implement ideas for good practice of which they learn in discussions with other early years practitioners.

What needs to be improved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● opportunities for children to learn by encouraging them to write their name on their work, to use writing in role play, to compare numbers and to begin to understand addition and subtraction● opportunities for both staff and parents to improve their knowledge and understanding of what children learn through everyday activities, the early learning goals and the Foundation Stage● children's access to large physical play equipment, especially outside.

What has improved since the last inspection?
Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children are confident to separate from parents. They are curious about the world, for example, how rain is made. They trust the adults to help them and build good relationships with other children. They share and help each other. They go to the toilet, wash their hands and choose their activities independently. They learn how other people live and they talk about life outside the pre-school. Children behave generally well, but do not always listen and follow instructions.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children talk with confidence in group time and in their play. They describe what they have drawn. They learn the sounds of letters and identify objects and names with that initial sound. They use their names in pre-school and understand the importance of words as labels. They enjoy stories as individuals and in group time. Some children write recognisable letters and write their names clearly. They do not routinely write their name on their work or use writing in role play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children count well and recognise and sequence numerals successfully. They play games with dice, matching the number of dots to the spots to remove in a measles game. They weigh and compare heavy and light objects. They use shapes in threading and sewing. They learn about symmetry in painting and explore how shapes fit together in tessellations. Children do not have enough opportunities to compare numbers of objects or to begin simple calculation.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children explore a variety of materials; light reflecting from mirrors, how sand pours, the wind, the rain. They build with stickle bricks and Lego. They use everyday technology such as a telephone and remote controlled car. They learn about the changing seasons, the life cycle of frogs and how they have grown. They enjoy visits from people who help us and visit the local library and the church. They learn about celebrations such as Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas and Easter.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children move with confidence indoors and outside. They control themselves well, especially on the steep slope and steps to the outside play area. They roll hoops, throw, and catch with confidence. They enjoy an adventure course indoors. They learn about healthy living and how their bodies work. They use tools with growing assurance from pencil sharpeners and scissors to spades in the sand and paint brushes. Children do not have access to wheeled toys or climbing equipment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
<p>Children delight in painting and collage, mixing colours and exploring effects such as wax crayons under paint. They paint their reactions to music. Children sing enthusiastically, play and make instruments and hear stories told through music. They use their imagination in role play and small world toys, dressing up and inviting adults to tea. They react to experiences with broad smiles, sparkling eyes and squeals of delight.</p>	

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

- improve opportunities for children to learn by encouraging them to write their name on their work, to use writing in role play, to compare numbers and to begin to understand addition and subtraction
- develop opportunities for both staff and parents to improve their knowledge and understanding of what children learn through everyday activities, the early learning goals and the Foundation Stage
- improve children's access to large physical play equipment, especially outside.

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.