

The Ark Pre-School, Bromley Christian Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

The Ark Pre-School is a committee run group managed by the Bromley Christian Centre. It has been open since 1981 and operates from a hall and adjoining room situated on the ground floor of the Christian Centre premises that are located at the southern end of Bromley town centre. The group has use of the kitchen and associated facilities and there is an enclosed area for outdoor play.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group serves the local community and is open Monday to Friday during school term time from 9.15am to 12.30pm and from 12.45pm to 3pm on Thursdays.

There are currently 45 children from the age of two-and-a-half to five years on roll. The group supports children who have special educational needs and children for whom English is an additional language. The group is registered on the Early Years Register.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Four of the staff, including the manager, have appropriate early years qualifications. The manager is also working towards her foundation degree in Early Years. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled because the staff at the pre-school create a safe and secure environment, where children are valued and supported. Staff help the children to feel comfortable while they attend the setting. Warm, positive and trusting relationships enable children to feel safe and secure. Staff continually evaluate the activities and experiences that are on offer to the children, seeking to improve their learning opportunities and working towards the good outcomes for children. The pre-school has a capacity to maintain continuous improvement because all staff seek to improve their knowledge and understanding of children's early years through further education opportunities. The self-evaluation process is in its infancy, however, the manager is working with both the parents and the staff to improve the services that are on offer.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure the next steps are consistently completed for all of the children's written observations
- continue to work on the setting's self-evaluation process

- look at ways for children to further enhance their independence skills during snack time

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and how to protect children from harm and neglect. The pre-school's policies and procedures are regularly updated to reflect the changes in legislation. The staff carry out daily safety checklists and all risk assessments ensure the children are cared for in a safe environment. As a result, children are kept safe from harm and neglect. Children participate in regular fire drills; this ensures they are all fully aware of what to do in an emergency. All staff have up to date Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks carried out, and all staff and volunteers who use the surrounding offices and buildings of the church have full child protection training and are all fully CRB checked. This enhances the safety of the children.

Resources are deployed effectively to allow the children to self-select resources they wish to play with. The staff have rearranged the setting to maximise the play spaces for the children, which enhances their play experiences. The children participate in activities to celebrate different festivals and religions from around the world. The pre-school's ethos is Christian; however, they look at all different festivals and will involve the parents in these. The pre-school makes good use of the church and will hold their nativity play every year in there. As a result, children are able to learn about the world around them at an age appropriate level.

The pre-school is well led and managed. The pre-school manager has only been in post for three days but she successfully and energetically leads a very strong staff team. Staff's priority and dedication to ensure children's welfare and personal development ensures children are happy and settled. The self-evaluation is in its infancy; the manager's development plans identify the aims for the development of the service and highlight the pre-school's strengths and weaknesses. Parents contribute through questionnaires to the pre-school's self-evaluation, which means that their input is gathered to improve the services that the pre-school provides. The pre-school has made good progress since the last inspection and demonstrates good capacity to improve. For example, an application for funding and permission to create an outdoor area for the children has been made to maximise outdoor opportunities for children's learning.

Parents are warmly welcomed and have good opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and development within the pre-school. Further information is provided through regular newsletters and through the pre-school's website. Parents praise the staff in the pre-school and positively acknowledge the progress their children are making. The staff work well with outside agencies that provide support for children and with the local early years team. This ensures that the staff are kept up to date with their training needs and are able to pass this information on to the children through the activities they provide.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are cared for in a safe and welcoming environment. They grow in independence as they find their name at the start of the day and use the bathrooms on their own. Children adopt good hygiene routines when they wash their hands before snack time and after visiting the bathroom which helps protect them from the risk of cross-infection.

They respond well to the clear and consistent expectations of staff, learning to manage their own behaviour as they wait patiently in a line to take their turn on various activities. Children enjoy healthy options at snack time, helping themselves to various pieces of fruit. However, there are missed opportunities to enhance the children's growing independence skills during snack time as the staff prepare the fruit for them.

Staff plan for the children's developmental needs by ensuring learning intentions for the activities are clearly highlighted. All activities are evaluated to ensure they went well, and to see how the staff can improve upon the activity when they plan it again. Staff write detailed observations on the children. However, not all of the observations have the written next steps. Consequently, there are missed opportunities to use this information to progress the children's development.

Children enjoy the free flow between the two rooms and the outside area. This balance allows the children to be able to learn in all environments. Children enjoy learning how to use the pre-school's laptop and are adept in moving the cursor around the screen with the child-size mouse. Children are learning early word recognition through this, as words appear on the screen as well as being spoken by the programme to teach the children the words. Children are also learning early word recognition through the self-registration process they have when they arrive in the morning and at snack time.

Children participate in daily music and movement sessions, which they thoroughly enjoy. Children sing along with the staff and carry out the actions alongside the songs. These are done in small groups, which allows all children to get the most out of the session. The rest of the group participates in story time. Again, the children join in with words and the actions alongside the staff. This teaches the children about story telling and the structure of stories.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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