

Noah's Ark Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Marilyn Joy

Setting address

Kings Church Centre, 414 Coxford Road, Southampton,
Hampshire, SO16 5LL

Telephone number

07733146429

Email

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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Noah's Ark Pre-School opened in 1982 and operates from three rooms within a Church hall. It is situated in the Lordswood area of Southampton and includes an outdoor area. The pre-school is open each week day from 9.30am until 12.30pm during term times only.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children aged from two years nine months to the end of the early years age group may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 27 children in the early years age group on roll. The pre-school provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs five members of staff, all of whom, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the welcoming and extremely well resourced environment where their health, safety and individual needs are effectively supported. Extremely positive relationships with parents provide secure foundations from which children gain confidence and, overall, make good progress in their learning. Some partnership working is established with other agencies and settings children attend. Thorough monitoring and evaluation processes in most areas enables the pre-school to maintain good standards and sustain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop arrangements for identifying children's next steps in each area of learning, monitoring progression in these areas and sharing relevant information with other settings they attend in order to develop continuity in their learning
- continue to review the effectiveness of planned activities and daily routines in order to fully extend children's learning, such as, independence and problem solving skills.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is safeguarded because comprehensive policies and procedures underpin the smooth operation of the pre-school and are reflected in daily practice. Staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues and know what to do if they have concerns about a child in their care. Effective risk assessments help staff to maintain the safety and security of the environment and keep children safe. Staff are fully aware of emergency procedures and how to evacuate the premises, although the frequency of practises does mean that it takes some time for all children to experience the fire drill. Robust recruitment and employment procedures ensure staff are suitably qualified and experienced for their role. Well organised documentation meets regulatory requirements and ensures staff have the information they need to help them meet children's individual needs.

The pre-school offers an exciting and well resourced environment which supports their learning in all areas. Excellent displays of children's work and photographs demonstrate children's enjoyment and the creative opportunities they experience. Most recommendations raised at the last inspection have been fully met and, as a result, arrangements for children's health and safety are improved and documentation is kept confidential. Systems for planning activities and assessing children's progress have been improved in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage and staff are continuing to refine the methods they use, although, sometimes opportunities to fully extend children's learning during routine activities are missed. Children benefit from the extremely positive approach towards developing the pre-school. Staff make good use of the support they receive from early years advisors to improve their practice and have identified key areas they want to develop, such as, the outdoor provision and cultural and language resources.

Strong partnerships are developed with parents. Effective channels of communication ensure parents are well informed about the service provided, the care their children receive and the progress they make. Parents are involved in the daily operation of the pre-school. Their views are sought and they are invited to contribute ideas towards children's learning. Particular care is taken to ensure children and parents with English as an additional language feel part of the pre-school community. Parents comment on how satisfied they are, the approachability of staff and the good settling in routines when they first join the pre-school.

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

Children arrive confidently and are well supported by staff who are prepared for their arrival. A good range of resources are set out in the small room so that children can easily decide what they want to do and settle down to play. Some immediately choose the writing area where they can experiment with mark making and drawing, while others choose to work out how to join construction pieces

together with screws and nuts or create pictures with the small wood working kits. Physical, social and communication skills are easily promoted as they play cooperatively and interact with staff and each other. Relaxed conversations, clear speech and visual clues help all abilities and children learning English as an additional language develop confidence in speaking and understanding. They benefit from the praise and encouragement they receive and the boost to their self-esteem. Clear boundaries help children understand what is expected and, as a consequence, they behave well.

The pre-school uses three rooms and the outdoor area so is able to offer different choices and experiences. The large hall and outdoor area provide ample space for children to develop skills in using a wide range of physical equipment whatever the weather. Children competently manoeuvre bikes around, practice climbing and sliding and learn to throw and catch. The provision of additional resources such as writing tools, books and role play resources means that spaces are beginning to be used imaginatively and holistically to promote learning. Regular visitors to the pre-school promote a sense of community and enhance their learning.

Children experience a broad range of planned and self chosen activities throughout the morning. Resources are effectively rotated to ensure variety and easily accessible shelving means children make choices for themselves. Posters and labelling help them become familiar with words and letters and books are a popular choice for independent enjoyment or for sharing with others. Creativity is particularly well supported through pretend play and the range of different media and materials available. Staff are ready to support and guide children but they also help each other, for example, a child reminds another that they need to use glue first before adding glitter to their models. Routines are consistently reinforced and, as a result, children remember for themselves that they need to wear aprons for water play and painting.

Planning follows children's interests, rhythms of the year and their next steps for learning. Clear and measurable observations are used to assess their stage of development, although, planning, next steps and observations are not always clearly linked so that progression is easily tracked. Planned and routine activities are not always thoroughly evaluated which means some opportunities are missed to fully extend children's learning. For example, at snack time independence and problem solving are not routinely extended because children do not always work out if they have enough cups and plates for everyone, prepare the fruit or pour their own drinks. Friday Friends runs weekly and is specifically organised to focus on extending activities and helping to prepare children for the transition to school.

Children's good health is promoted well through the range of physical activities, fresh air, appropriate hygiene routines and nutritious snacks. Staff have a secure knowledge of individual health, dietary and cultural requirements and take care to ensure these are followed. Children feel extremely safe in their environment and demonstrate a clear sense of belonging as they eagerly seek the support of staff or enthusiastically share what they have created. They find out about keeping themselves safe as they learn how to use different equipment and tools. Road safety is incorporated into the Autumn walk alongside finding out about the natural world, collecting leaves and feeding the seagulls. Overall, the happy atmosphere of

the pre-school promotes extremely positive outcomes for children.

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	3
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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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