

Noah's Ark Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	108444
Inspection date	11/03/2011
Inspector	Glenda Pownall

Setting address	Cookham Dean Village Hall, Cookham Dean, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 9NZ
Telephone number	01628 485708
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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

Noah's Ark Pre-school is a parent committee run pre-school and opened in 1975. It operates from Cookham Dean village Hall, near Maidenhead. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.00am to 1.00pm term time only. The nursery is registered for 24 children on the Early Years Register. There are currently 21 children aged from two to five years on roll. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four.

The nursery employs five staff. The manager and three staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and this includes one member of staff who holds Early Years Professional Status. There is one member of staff working towards a childcare qualification. A member of staff speaks Russian.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre-school provides a warm and caring environment where children are happy and settled because staff know their individual care needs well. Overall, children make good progress in their learning and development because staff have good knowledge of children's individual needs. There is a breach of requirement with regard to documentation and aspects of the observation and assessment system require attention. The capacity for the pre-school to improve outcomes for children is good due to an effective self-evaluation process that accurately identifies areas for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- maintain a record of the risk assessment clearly stating when it was carried out, by whom, date of review and any action taken following a review or incident (Documentation) 25/03/2011

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

- request information from parents when children first start about what children can do and the way they learn at home and use this information as the starting point for learning and encourage parents to contribute towards the observation and assessment process

- review the evaluation of small group activities to ensure that the evaluations highlight children's individual achievements or their need for further support and ensure all staff are familiar with the identified next steps in learning for all children they support.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for and learn in a nurturing environment because the management team has a good understanding of its role and responsibilities. Almost all required documentation to support the efficient running of the pre-school is in place. The checklist ticked by staff each day ensures children are cared for in a safe environment but it does not meet the requirement for a record of the risk assessment undertaken. It does not record who completed it or any action taken following a review, such as changes to the assessment of electric sockets or the telephone wire. However, it does not affect children's safety, as staff are very vigilant of children and encourage them to think about their own safety. Children practise the fire drill regularly and this ensures they know what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation. All staff attend child protection training and have a secure knowledge of what to do if concerned a child is at risk. There are robust vetting and recruitment procedures in place, which ensure that only adults who are suitably checked work with children. This safeguards children.

There is a strong focus on improving practice in order to improve outcomes for children and the whole staff team is involved in the self-evaluation process. Areas for development identified at the last inspection have been improved upon. For example, an outside area has been created and children have access to this throughout the session to practice and develop their physical skills. Management value the support of the local authority and positive steps have been taken to address areas identified by the local authority for development. For example, a low-level unit is now in place enabling children to choose resources for themselves. Overall, areas for development are accurately identified and include ensuring all staff understand the new observation and assessment system so that the progress of children is effectively monitored and recorded.

Children access a good range of resources and staff are effectively deployed at activities to support learning. This ensures children's progress across all areas of learning. Children learn to care for the environment by growing seeds and visits to the orchard. Fundraising by the committee supports the sustainability of the pre-school. Children learn about the society in which they live through visits from parents and members of the local community who share knowledge of their jobs, cultures and beliefs with children. The pre-school requests and records information from parents when children first start to support the specific care needs of children. However, the pre-school does not request specific information about children's learning and development at home to enable staff to support children in making as much progress as they can from the outset.

Staff foster very positive relationships with parents and this supports them in meeting the needs of each child. Parents speak highly of the pre-school and

particularly like the friendliness of the staff. Weekly newsletters and sitting on the committee keep parents informed and involved in the running of the pre-school. Good communication ensures parents received feedback each day about the activities children participate in and parents evening and reports keep them informed of the progress children make towards the early learning goals. There are effective systems in place to work in partnership with other professionals involved in supporting children. Staff go on visits with children to their new school and the schoolteachers are invited to spend time in the pre-school to get to know the children. This supports a smooth transition to school for children.

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

Children receive good support from staff to extend their learning. They listen to children and know when to let children play and when to become involved, asking opened-ended questions to make children think. Children initiate their own play as they choose resources that stimulate their imaginative play. They dial numbers on the play mobile phones to hold 'conversations' with their parents and with the play food outside they hold a party. Overall, the planning system is effective to support children's learning.

Staff undertake regular observations and plan next steps in learning for individual children which are incorporated into the weekly plans. Evaluation of small group activities does not contribute towards children's individual learning records as the evaluation is general and does not identify individual achievements or need for further support. Most staff are aware of the planned next steps in learning for children and therefore able to provide specific support for each child. Parents are aware they can view the learning records at any time but generally do not contribute observations of children's progress at home to the records.

Children are very confident in the pre-school environment. They readily approach staff for help and talk about their paintings with visitors. Children learn to think about their own safety and that of others through fun games. For example, they hold a stop sign up at the appropriate moment as other children pedal tricycles towards them, and the other children stop. Staff work hard to enable children to develop self-care skills but the toilet facilities do not always support them in this as some toilet roll holders are empty and locked. However, children do adopt good personal hygiene routines with effective support from staff. Planned activities increase children's awareness of the benefits of physical activities. They race up and down the hall and check that their hearts are working faster. The provision of fleece jackets and a covered outside area enable children to play outside in all weathers. Children have constant access to drinking water and this reduces the risk of dehydration, particularly after physical activities.

Children are keen to learn and willingly take part in whole group activities. For example, they turn takes to help build the space rocket and show great enthusiasm as they fly off around the hall to Venus. Children know the routines of the pre-school and they work together to tidy away resources and as they do

receive praise and encouragement from staff. Children develop good relationships with staff and their peers. Staff act as good role models to children. Consequently, children behave well, use please and thank you appropriately and cooperate very well at activities. For example, two children work together creating a rainbow painting. They agree what colour to use next and who can take it home. Children laugh as they attempt to hop along the hopscotch mat naming the numbers as they go. Some are skilled at this, whilst others receive lots of support and encouragement to name the numerals and hop all the way to the end of the mat.

Children are confident to take on roles in ring games. They receive praise as they cackle like a wicked witch and think of actions for the whole group to follow. This develops self-esteem. Children thoroughly enjoy using books for pleasure because of the enthusiastic way staff read stories. Staff are available to read stories that children choose during the session. Children sit attentively and respond positively to the open-ended questions that staff ask, naming animals and making suggestions as to what might happen next. Children have a variety of opportunities to experiment with writing. They make notes in the post office and practise writing their names on their artwork. Some activities are planned in the home language of staff, developing children's awareness of languages other than English. The range of activities and effective support of staff ensure children develop the necessary skills to secure their future learning.

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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