

Noah's Ark Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	122408
Inspection date	17/03/2011
Inspector	Gillian Cubitt

Setting address	Caterham Community Church, Coulsdon Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5NF
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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*.

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 registered in 1987. It is organised and run by Caterham Community Church and operates from the hall and rooms of the church which is situated in Caterham-on-the-Hill. The children also have access to a small enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the premises. The provision mainly serves children from the local community. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school is open for two sessions on Monday, Thursday and Friday between 9am to 3.30pm and Wednesday from 9am to 12noon. There are currently 29 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who learn English as an additional language. The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Five hold appropriate early years qualifications. All staff hold a valid first aid certificate. The manager is a qualified teacher and one member of staff is working towards her Foundation Degree in Childcare Studies.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are extremely well settled, happy and enjoy their time at the pre-school, where they are valued and their uniqueness is recognised and respected. They make generally good progress in their learning and overall, organisation is good. The outstanding partnerships with other professionals ensure that all children's needs are met with regard to their learning support, safeguarding and welfare. Continual improvement is given high priority and the well organised self-evaluation system clearly identifies future aims and goals.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the current methods of organising tidying up time to reflect children's different ages and abilities, for example encourage younger children to tidy up as they play and give older children specific responsibilities
- develop strategies to promote children's spontaneity in seeking out stories and books during the session to further support their communication, language and literacy development

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded extremely well because of staff's excellent understanding of the procedures to support children's welfare and follow through concerns competently with the correct authorities. The lead member of staff for safeguarding ensures all members of staff, parents and volunteers have up-to-date knowledge and this is continuously reviewed at staff meetings. As a result, the systems in place to protect children are outstanding. Furthermore, the risk assessments completed by staff are thorough for both inside the building and when on outings. The building and outdoor play area is secure to prevent uninvited visitors from entering and children are effectively supervised to ensure they play safely. Careful recruitment and appraisal procedures ensure that all adults working with the children are both suitable and well prepared for their role.

Staff develop very trusting partnerships with parents; they work very closely with them to help children settle and promote their ongoing welfare. Parents are welcomed to stay and settle their children if appropriate and are encouraged to share valuable information about children's likes, dislikes, family backgrounds, routines and starting points in their learning. This ensures each child's key person can help them to settle quickly and establishes a firm foundation for their future learning. Staff make time to chat to parents on a daily basis, keeping them informed about their child's day, their general welfare and learning.

Communication systems, including notice boards, questionnaires and policies extend informal information sharing and strengthen partnerships. The very strong links with other professionals to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are a particular strength and demonstrates the effectiveness of excellent working partnership to include all children and promote equality in their access to play and learning. All children benefit because there are also strong links with local schools which fully supports children during their transition from pre-school to their reception class.

The manager and staff team are fully supported by a committee who all are dedicated to continually improving the setting. Staff meetings enable all staff to be involved in the pre-school's development. They also effectively use reflective self-evaluation, discussion and questionnaires to ascertain views of staff and parents and to identify areas for improvement. The pre-school has fully addressed all the recommendations made at the last inspection. They have also made further beneficial changes, such as developing outside play, which enhances children's health, learning and development.

Children have a broad range of high quality toys and resources; these are well maintained and appropriate to their age and stage of development. Staff are well deployed effectively organising space, time and resources to meet children's needs. Their passion and motivation enables them to create an environment which successfully supports children's learning and development. Free play sessions are particularly good where staff skilfully interact with children in a harmonious way, knowing when to intervene and join in and when to allow children to play on their own. Structured sessions after tidy up time are not as effective as it breaks

children's free flow and developing concentration in their activities. Staff have a positive attitude towards equality and diversity; they regularly plan activities which help to develop an understanding of a range of cultural backgrounds. Children feel good about themselves as staff treat them with respect. They develop self-esteem and confidence as they voice their opinions and make choices and decisions.

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

An extremely welcoming, stimulating and inclusive environment is created, where all children are acknowledged and respected as individuals. Daily activities with simple themes are thoughtfully planned, taking into account children's individual interests and needs. Next steps in their learning and development are identified and provided for. Children's progress, interests and achievements are clearly recorded. These records show the good progress children are making towards the early learning goals and successfully engage parents in their children's learning and development.

Children are active learners and eager to join in the fun as they enter the pre-school where they help themselves to an abundance of well-organised toys and resources. Children role play, dress up in outfits such as a police officer; they display care for their environment by sweeping up spilt sand and some children return toys to their correct places which supports their sense of order and respect for their environment. Children are learning to play together very well, helping each other to balance on the beams and sharing blocks, cars and dividing play dough to share. Older children benefit most from small bikes and scooters where their physical skills are extended by instructions such as 'stop' and 'start' and discussions about where they are going. Children also have opportunities to use climbing frames to develop their large muscle development.

All children show enthusiasm for creative activities. They paint to music and they create rockets and houses from cardboard and plastic containers. They become very skilled with scissor control and joining pieces together with sticky tape. This demonstrates children's ability to work out problems and they create pieces of work with pride and beam when staff recognise this with praise. Other resources such as number posters and puzzles reinforce children's understanding of the meaning of numbers. Children enjoy counting and become animated when they recognise numbers displayed especially in the outdoor area. Children have some good resources that inform them of the wider world such as persona dolls and books. They also benefit from having access to a computer where they become competent with mouse control and enjoy the brightly coloured programmes that support their learning in many other areas.

Children are generally well behaved and good at sharing and taking turns during their free play session which includes an excellent buffet system for children's refreshment. Half way through the morning, however, the formal tidying up time does not suit all children. Although older children cope with the structure and eagerly participate and help staff, some children become disorientated as their free

play is disrupted. Children are encouraged to sit and look at books after the tidying up session, however, not all children wish to participate and show their displeasure. The excellent books and posters inform children that print has meaning as well as the wider world and children quickly learn to recognise their name through their personal register labels.

Children develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe as they are gently reminded that they may collide with other children if they run in certain areas. Also children are involved in regular fire drill practices and discussions about road safety, especially when they visit the library. Good hygiene practices are actively promoted and incorporated into the daily routines to encourage children to care for themselves; they eat sensibly and access water when they are thirsty. Children feel safe as they have strong bonds with their key persons and other members of staff. Children are encouraged to discuss their thoughts and begin to identify how others may be feeling. Stories and song times also nurture children's spiritual development. As a result, children develop a caring, friendly disposition which gives them a very good start in their social development.

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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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

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