

New Ark Play Association

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 256791
Inspection date 09/11/2011
Inspector Susan Ennis

Setting address New Ark Adventure Playground, Hill Close, Reeves Way,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 5LZ

Telephone number 01733 340 605

Email

Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

New Ark Play Association registered in 1981 and operates from a purpose built site in Peterborough. The pre-school operates from one main play room and the eco centre. Children also access the city farm onsite. The setting serves the local community and has strong links with schools in the area. The setting is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens on Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12noon and 12.30pm to 3pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions and have the opportunity to stay for one full day a week bringing lunch with them. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and a maximum of 56 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting also offers care to children aged over five years to 16 years and is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 100 children may attend the open access scheme at any one time. This is open each weekday after school until 6.30pm, apart from Monday and Friday when the scheme closes at 6pm. On a Friday, the scheme also offers a session from 6pm to 7.30pm for children over nine years of age only. During the school holidays, the open access scheme is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 12noon and 1.30pm to 4.30pm during the winter holidays and 10am to 12noon and 2pm to 5pm during the summer holidays. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 16 members of childcare staff. All of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications above National Vocational Qualification Level 2. The setting receives support from the local Early Years Development Partnership.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The commitment and dedication demonstrated by the whole pre-school team enable them to offer an outstanding standard of care and education to the children. Children clearly thrive and make excellent progress across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is because the pre-school has developed highly effective practices and procedures for planning, assessing and promoting their learning. Staff value diversity and are highly successful in ensuring that children's uniqueness and individuality is recognised and that all are well integrated and achieving their potential. Dedicated partnerships with parents contribute significantly to ensuring that the individual needs of each child is fully met. Strong leadership, rigorous monitoring of practice and robust self-evaluation systems ensure that plans for the future are well targeted and improvements continue to be made where they have the greatest impact on the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- reflecting on the overall practise of the setting to further enhance the outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school demonstrates a very high level of commitment to promoting children's safety. Comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues among the pre-school staff ensure that children's welfare is prioritised. All staff attend training in child protection and are aware of the contact numbers for reporting concerns should they occur. Extensive recruitment and vetting procedures, including the induction of new staff ensure that staff are suitable to work with the children and a rolling program of training builds on their childcare knowledge. Stringent procedures with regard to the use of mobile phones, cameras and social network sites further ensure the children's safety. Children's well-being is meticulously enhanced by the exceptional organisation of the pre-school and the comprehensive policies and procedures in place. All areas of the pre-school are checked on a daily basis and comprehensive risk assessments are regularly carried out, including on any new equipment purchased.

The pre-school provides a highly vibrant, stimulating environment which is consistently conducive to children's learning and which ensures that their progress in relation to their starting points is outstanding. Exceptional use is made of the outside play area and adjacent eco-centre, covering a full range of inspiring and exciting experiences for all the children. They become aware of the change in seasons as they are allocated their own tree to observe and develop their creative skills as they roll themselves in material pretending to be a chrysalis that turns into a caterpillar and then a butterfly. They are engrossed as they watch the ice sculptures and enhance their creative skills as they make natural paint from turmeric, paprika, leaves and mud with which they then paint the forest.

The pre-school consistently and actively promotes equality and diversity and tackles unfair discrimination. They, therefore, offer a service that is fully inclusive for all children and their families. All children receive a passionate and committed level of support and stimulation to help them progress and reach their potential. Staff know the children exceptionally well and work with their parents to gain a thorough understanding of each child's background and needs. For example, they work tirelessly to keep their costs to a minimum to ensure that all those who want to access the setting can do so.

The pre-school's dedication to building trusting and professional relationships with the parents and other settings ensures that children are consistently cared for.

Parents and carers are exceptionally well informed about all aspects of their children's achievement, well-being and development and are fully included in the process. They can see their children's record of achievement at anytime and are invited to regular 'stay and play' sessions to discuss and contribute to their progress in more detail. The pre-school encourages parents and carers to become actively involved in their children's learning. For example, male carers are invited to the pre-school to share in the activities with the children. During the visit, they receive a gift detailing in the children's own words what they like best about themselves. Parents are encouraged to have a very open relationship with the manager and staff team who make themselves readily available to talk to them at all times. The pre-school is highly committed to working in partnership with other agencies, professionals and settings involved in the children's lives. There are well-established channels of communication that successfully promote children's learning and welfare. Reception teachers often visit the pre-school to get to know the children before their transfer to school and developmental information is shared to ensure consistency of care.

All staff at the pre-school have very high aspirations for the quality and care the setting provides. Their infectious enthusiasm and genuine aim to provide consistently high standards of care means that they continuously evaluate their practice and make changes to improve the outcomes for all children and parents. Self-evaluation at all levels reflects rigorous monitoring and analysis of what the pre-school does well and what it needs to improve and staff recognise that this is an area for constant reflection. As a result, actions taken have an outstanding impact in bringing about sustained improvement to the early years provision. Parents confirm their happiness with the pre-school through comments, such as 'The facilities are fantastic and we are kept very well informed about the children's development. Staff are always on hand for support and advice.'

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

Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning because the staff are expert in using their wealth of understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to extend their learning and development. The exceptional organisation of the education program ensures that children receive rich, varied and imaginative experiences that meet their needs exceedingly well. Thorough settling-in procedures and initial assessments ensure that staff are aware of children's interests and capabilities. Comprehensive observations and assessments then enable the staff to build on what the children know and plan for their continued development. Staff are highly motivated in meeting the individual needs of all the children. When active children become restless whilst waiting their turn to wash their hands, staff sensitively ignore them as children go to the bathroom without being asked, as they recognise that they have sat very well for long enough.

The exceptional range of child-initiated and adult-led activities ensure that children's interests and knowledge are continually extended. Staff know the children extremely well and are expert in their understanding of how young

children learn and progress. For example, they encourage children's listening skills as they introduce 'Bob' the bear to circle time. Children are encouraged to describe the items they have brought for 'show and tell' and to develop their language skills by asking each other questions about the item concerned. They develop their problem solving skills as they work out how to join the pieces of train track together and that placing the trains the correct way enables them to magnetically stick together. When in the eco-centre, they work hard to see which pipes and tubes fit together to enable the water to run through and watch excitedly as they let logs roll down the slope to see how fast they can go. Children's knowledge and understanding is enhanced as they experiment with the toy cash till pressing the buttons to open the drawer and use metal detectors outside to help look for hidden treasure. Staff are also expert at drawing out the learning from daily routines and activities. For example, children develop their confidence and language as they predict the words to their favourite book at story time and enjoy doing the actions that accompany the tale.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration. They forge friendships with the staff and each other and their behaviour is excellent. They follow the exceptionally positive role modelling of the staff and learn the expectations in place. For example, they independently help to tidy away the toys and know to sit on the carpet to wait for their parents at the end of the session. They are learning to care and respect others as they regularly visit the onsite city farm. Here they handle and look after animals, such as, chickens, rabbits and guinea pigs and particularly enjoy feeding the lambs with bottles of milk. Staff actively help the children learn about the society in which they live and the wider world. For example, celebrations of festivals are built into the planning. Children thoroughly enjoy dressing-up in oriental costumes to celebrate Chinese New Year at the role play 'Willows' restaurant and resources, such as, musical instruments, puppets, books and dressing-up clothes help them develop further their understanding of different ways of life.

Children's health and welfare are extremely successfully promoted as the staff take active steps to minimise the spread of infection and develop children's understanding of healthy living. For example, all children show an exceptional understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines, as they know to wash their hands before snack. Their independence is promoted as they help prepare the fruit provided and pour their own drinks. They are learning where food comes from as they grow a varied range of items in their pre-school garden and participate in cooking activities. Children become very aware of their own physical needs as they participate in, for example, music time. They march to the music, learning control of their movements and as they 'stand to attention' as the music finishes. Staff then play the next piece asking the children 'What does this music make you feel like doing?' The children then become ballet dancers standing on their toes and trying to pirouette. Children further develop their physical skills as they put on their all-in-one suits and Wellington boots to play outside. They run and climb over tyre structures, dig in the sand, play the outside musical instruments and take great delight in rolling down the grass slope into the mud and puddles at the bottom. Children are made extremely aware of their own safety and that of their friends. When planning an outdoor picnic on a raised

wooden seating area, children are asked to think about the possible hazards and decide that pushing and running are not a good idea. They also know that the use of red flags on the outside apparatus means that they cannot play on that particular item as it may be slippery or dangerous.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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