

The Ark

Inspection report for early years provision

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04/07/2011

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

The Ark was registered in 2010. It operates from a purpose-built unit in the grounds of Provost William Church of England Primary School, in the Ryton-on-Dunsmore area of Warwickshire. A maximum of 40 children may attend at any one time. The group is open from 7.45am to 9am and from 12noon to 6pm each weekday. The group also runs a holiday play scheme during school holidays. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and the whole of the school grounds.

There are currently 65 children on roll, of whom 27 are in the early years age group. The Ark is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The group currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

The group employ three members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one at level 2.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the group environment. They are provided with a good range of play activities which ensures they are making progress in all areas of learning. Mostly well written policies and procedures underpin the groups practice, however, not all required documentation is completed accurately and some policies and procedures are not in place. There are suitable partnerships with parents and good relationships with outside agencies and other providers. The group has an appropriate capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide further support for children to develop independence skills, particularly at meal times.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have an appropriate understanding about safeguarding procedures, including the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. However, they do not have all of the required policies and procedures in place to ensure safeguarding at all times. Procedures are not in place to manage a child going missing or what action will be taken should a parent fail to collect a child. The daily register does not always include children's hours of arrival and departure. This means that children's safety is sometimes compromised. Other policies and procedures are

well-written and are fully understood and operated well by the staff. They are also available for parents to read at anytime.

The indoor and outdoor environments are subjected to thorough risk assessments to ensure any potential hazards to children are minimised or removed. A regular checking and cleaning schedule ensures children are kept safe from faulty equipment and the risk of cross-infection is minimised.

The staff have an appropriate vision for the future to improve children's learning and development. For example, they plan to extend the growing area so that children can further explore the natural world and to include parental comments in their self-evaluation. The staff group is committed to continuous improvement and they discuss their daily activities and children's individual needs both informally and at monthly staff meetings. Although, the shortfalls in the documentation were not identified as part of the group's evaluation and this has led to a number of requirements not being met.

Parents are actively encouraged to be fully involved in all aspects of their child's care and learning and staff ensure they are given information on their child's day and free access to their learning journey folders. The group has very good relationships with outside agencies and the adjoining school which all children over three attend.

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

Children make good progress as they have access to a wide range of activities. They are settled, relaxed and are given good support to ensure that they develop fully as individuals. Planning ensures that children are provided with a good range of learning experiences which keep them involved and engaged with a good attitude to learning. Each child's individual needs are recognised, recorded and managed effectively. Information is obtained about children's starting points and regular observations and assessments of children's progress are undertaken. These are shared with parents, and the children's class teacher, to ensure everyone is fully up-to-date with each child's progress. Children's individual learning journey folders are passed on to school. The group continue to pass observations onto school so the learning journeys contain a record of the children throughout their time in the group and in school. These are shared with the parents on a regular basis ensuring they know the progress their children have made.

Children are very confident when exploring the environment, both indoors and out. They play an active role in their learning, make choices, decisions and extend activities because the staff provide support as appropriate. However, staff do not always promote independence as well as they could. Children are not expected to help tidy up after lunch and leave all their empty packets and yoghurt pots on the table. They also do not pour their own drinks. Staff promote all areas of equal opportunities and inclusion through well-planned activities, discussions and displays. Children have access to a good range of resources to support their independent learning. These include a range of ethnic dressing-up clothes, books

with stories from around the world and resources depicting disability. Staff encourage children to be proactive in their own learning by asking open-ended questions and they respond well to child-initiated activities or comments. For example, while completing tyre print artwork to support the theme of transport one child decides the car is driving off road, and explains to the staff that he is skidding. The staff encourage the child to describe the shape the tracks have made, which is a circle. During this activity children choose their own coloured paper and paint. Staff explain the different type of tyres on the vehicles being used to make the tyre tracks. These include smooth tyres, tractor tyres, thick, ridged and a caterpillar type tyre which prints zigzags. Children also discuss forwards and backwards.

A range of activities help children to understand the wider world as they explore the natural environment. They use a range of natural resources, plant, grow and recycle everything they can. Children know why they compost their leftover fruit and how it helps the plants grow. Children freely express their feelings, ask for help when they need it and are generally willing to share. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and understand the explanations staff give regarding how to safely move between the school and the group. When asked, children explain they must walk not run in case they fall and hurt themselves. Children are developing appropriate strategies to play together harmoniously. Staff are good role models and provide good explanations of acceptable behaviour, which promotes children's understanding and cooperation with each other.

The staff are good at promoting communication skills and use phonics effectively to encourage language skills. Good labelling and displays throughout the group enable children to relate the spoken to written words. They make good progress in their communication, language, problem-solving and number skills as they enjoy a range of experiences. For example, during story time children are encouraged to analyse the story. They eagerly discuss the characters in the story and explain what each one does. During a song children use the words 'sideways', 'forwards' and 'backwards', moving their body appropriately. During another activity they accurately name parts of their bodies. Children count frequently during the sessions. For example, they count how many cups at snack time and how many of them are going outside to play.

There is clear affection between the children and staff. Children have very good opportunities to learn about a healthy lifestyle as staff routinely discuss healthy eating and the positive effects of exercise. Children have access to an exceptionally well-equipped outdoor play area. Children's general good health is promoted as staff support children's independence in personal care. Children give a clear account of why they wash their hands. They explain that they use soap to get rid of the dirt and remove germs and that it is important to dry your hands to stop them getting sore or wetting your food.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take actions as specified in the early years section of the report (Procedures for dealing with complaints, Records to be kept). 25/07/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- compile a written procedure for dealing with complaints and concerns from parents (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). (also applies to the compulsory part of the Childcare Register) 20/07/2011