

Noah's Ark Childcare Centres

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Lynne Bowden

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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

Noah's Ark Childcare Centre was registered in July 2003. It is part of a privately owned, small nursery chain and operates from a refurbished three-storey listed building on the edge of the Barbican, close to Plymouth city centre. The youngest children, aged under two years, are accommodated on the first floor, where there are two base rooms, a separate sleep room, toilet and nappy changing facilities. Children aged over two years are accommodated on the ground floor, where there are one large and one smaller base room, toilet and nappy changing facilities. There is an enclosed garden, accessible from the ground floor and first floor. The second floor accommodates an office and staff rooms. A maximum of 53 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 57 children aged from birth to five years on roll, children aged two, three and four years of age are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties/disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is open on weekdays, from 7:30am to 6pm, all year round. Fifteen staff work with the children, fourteen of whom are appropriately qualified, with one currently working towards relevant qualification. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority, the National Day Nurseries Association and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are confident and secure at this welcoming nursery. Staff plan and provide a range of activities which interest children and promote their learning and development. Policies and procedures are largely effectively implemented and staff are aware of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. They demonstrate a suitable capacity to maintain continuous improvement. Partnership with parents is a key strength of the setting, with equal opportunities, difference and diversity generally very well promoted. Highly effective links with other agencies promote children's development and support staff in meeting children's needs.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve systems to identify staff training needs in order to promote a consistent approach to practice
- provide positive images of people with disabilities to challenge children's thinking and help them to embrace difference.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are very effective. There are effective recruitment and vetting procedures designed to ensure that children are cared for by suitable and qualified staff. The safeguarding children policy is understood by the staff, who confidently and conscientiously follow them to promote children's safety and well-being. Effective risk assessments are carried out to keep the environment safe, with close circuit television enabling staff to control access to the setting.

Staff make sure that children develop good hygiene habits reminding children to wash their hands at appropriate times. Babies and young children are protected from cross infection, with staff following effective nappy changing routines.

The recently appointed manager is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery. All recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed and this demonstrates the nursery's commitment to driving improvement. However, systems to identify staff training in order to promote consistent practices are not fully established. This leads to some inconsistent practices such as some children developing independence through pouring their own drinks and others not.

Children have access to a good range of resources that support their learning and development. Equal opportunities and difference and diversity are very well promoted in most aspects. The involvement of male members of staff in daily activities and routines, provides children with positive role models. The wide range of cultures and languages spoken by users of the setting are valued and celebrated, with resources reflecting these. The variety of languages used by children and families using the setting are displayed in the environment. Documents are translated and interpreters are used to enable effective communication. However, there are fewer resources showing positive images of people with physical disabilities. The staff are very experienced at following the special educational needs code of practice and are highly effective at meeting the needs of children, in close partnership with parents and other agencies. For example, they provide packs including support materials and resources in line with children's individual education plans.

Staff actively encourage parental involvement in their children's learning, providing information sessions on the Early Years Foundation Stage. They seek information and support from parents about languages spoken and successfully encourage parents to share information about their children's achievements at home, which they are able to incorporate in assessments and planning at the setting.

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

Children are secure and confident at this setting, where staff take account of and respect their preferences and wishes. Children make good progress in all areas of learning; they are engaged and interested in the range of activities and resources available to them. Children mainly develop independence skills as the older children dress themselves appropriately for outdoor play and serve themselves their snack and lunch. However, staff do not always encourage children to pour their own drinks and so develop this skill. Daily access to the outdoor play area enables children to enjoy the fresh air and explore their environment, where they enjoy playing in the recently developed covered area. Children develop confidence as they enjoy sing familiar songs and follow the actions. They enjoy sharing and exploring books. Children understand the importance of good hygiene as they wash their hands before meals. Babies are able to crawl in safety in the baby room, where the floor is kept clean because the staff do not wear outdoor shoes. They are protected from risk of cross infection by the staff using individual flannels to wash hands and faces and following good nappy changing routines. Sleeping babies are kept safe by staff making frequent checks on them, in addition to listening to the baby monitor and being able to observe the sleep room from the baby room. Children learn about the effects of light and colour as they thoroughly enjoy exploring and experimenting with the light box. They observe and discuss its effects on different materials and develop this into observing the effects of looking through materials of different colours.

Children behave well, they become aware of the needs of themselves and others as they talk about how to keep the nursery's pet snails happy and discuss whether they themselves feel sad or happy. Children learn to respect and value diversity and difference in many aspects as they learn about each other's cultures and languages, seeing the wide variety of languages displayed in the environment and learning nursery rhymes in other languages. However, the lack of positive images of people with physical disabilities, limits their awareness and opportunities to discuss and consider these issues. Children develop skills for the future as they learn to concentrate and listen to instructions from adults. Children learn to make choices and show concern for others and all help tidy resources away.

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	1

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