

# Noah's Ark

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Inspection date</b>	27/02/2012
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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 re-registered in 2011. The setting was previously registered in 1993. It is operated by The London Early Years Foundation, a charity and social enterprise organisation. The setting is based in Little Oaks Children's Centre in Bethnal Green, in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The setting operates from the lower level and ground level of the premises, where children have access to three, large play areas and associated facilities. There are outdoor play areas to each level. Access to all floors is available by lift. The setting has an agreement with the neighbouring nursery school to use their outdoor play area at agreed times, when they are not operating.

The setting is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 6pm throughout the year, except Bank Holidays, Christmas period and for staff training. The setting also operates Under Fives Playaway sessions on Saturdays 10am to 12noon, aimed at male carers. The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 50 children at any one time, and of these, not more than 26 may be under three years and no more than 24 may be under two years. There are currently 62 children on roll. The setting is currently in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Children attend either full-time or part-time sessions. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting employs 15 members of staff including the manager. All staff holds appropriate childcare qualifications.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff have an excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which enables them to promote all areas of children's learning and development. Children thrive as they play in a well-organised environment and access a stimulating range of resources. Staff create a safe and secure environment, where children are valued as individuals. Children benefit generally from the experiences on offer to promote anti-discriminatory practice. Excellent relationships have been established with parents and other professional agencies, promoting very good outcomes for children. Management makes good use of self-evaluation, involving all staff, to promote continuous improvement and identify areas to improve.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- improve the positive representation of disability, gender, ethnic, cultural and social diversity, for example through posters, pictures and other resources on display in the setting, to show children and families that they are valued.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The setting has all required policies and procedures in place to promote safeguarding for children. Management ensures all staff and parents have access to the setting's policies and procedures, such as child protection, complaints, and health and safety. Further steps are taken to ensure children's safety is promoted. For example, all staff undergo relevant suitability checks every three years and detailed risk assessments are undertaken of the premises daily. Staff regularly attend training in safeguarding, and health and safety. A high number of staff are trained in current first aid and food hygiene. All required information for each child is in place and maintained in a safe manner. This includes parental consent for seeking emergency medical treatment.

The setting is extremely well organised, with all areas of the premises being used to their full potential, including all the outdoor play areas for all ages. The organisation of resources, promotes children's independence well because they can make free choices in their play. Care and consideration have been given to the under two's areas, to ensure young children have resources at their height, these include wall displays, sensory textures and mirrors. Children's work and photographs are displayed and give recognition to children's achievements. Children are surrounded by a rich and extensive range of resources for play, safety and comfort. The children benefit from the support and engagement they receive because there is a high staff ratio and staff are well deployed. Staff are positive role models, passionate about their roles and attend regular training. Children benefit from other professionals visiting the setting, such as those supporting children with additional needs or who offer sessions in music and dance. Equality and inclusive practice are promoted well by staff, who reflect the diverse community and backgrounds of the children attending. Children's key workers demonstrate a good understanding of their individual needs. They work well in supporting children who have English as an additional language and those who have special needs and/or disabilities. To ensure ease of communication, the setting promotes the use of basic signing along with spoken English. Children have access to a range of play materials reflecting diversity, although there are few positive images elsewhere in the environment, especially of gender and disability.

Partnership with parents is highly valued and is extremely well promoted through robust systems of communication, such as newsletters and the use of the daily diary for children aged under two years. Parental notice boards are informative about the delivery of learning activities, staff details and community information. Feedback from parents is unquestionably positive. Parents describe the setting as 'marvellous', 'brilliant', 'children are always busy and learning' and 'staff are so

professional and approachable'. Links with the neighbouring nursery school, to which the majority of children move, are very strong, and children are fully prepared and supported when they transfer. Management and specific key workers work in highly effective partnership with other professionals to ensure that children who require additional input are receiving it, and relevant information is shared and gained.

Management is robust in addressing self-evaluation. Managers help staff develop their knowledge through attendance at training offered by the local authority or by the organisation. A range of systems are used for ongoing self-evaluation, for example exploring parents' views, engaging the staff in reflection on practice, and working with the local authority advisory team. These factors contribute to improving the outcomes for children. Clear targets are in place to support improvement, for example improving parental involvement.

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

Children are making excellent progress in their learning and development because staff offer them a wide range of learning opportunities. The staff have a growing understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, provide a well-resourced learning environment and allow for children to learn through first-hand experiences. Each child has a developmental profile, which staff update throughout children's time at the setting. This reflects on areas children progress well in, where they need additional support and what particular interests they are developing. Planning is detailed and covers all six areas of learning.

Children separate confidently from their parents and settle quickly on arrival because they are welcomed warmly and are interested in the stimulating range of play set out. Children receive lots of physical contact in the form of being cuddled and held warmly, very much the case for young infants. Children present high levels of independence as they make choices in their play and select additional resources from the low storage units. Children gather quickly around staff who skilfully read to them and they share books with their friends. Story bags are borrowed by parents to promote children's language skills in the home. Children love to play superheroes, taking on roles and characters and initiating ideas using their imaginations. Young infants learn to crawl and slide on the large, soft-play equipment indoors and learn to balance and steer small vehicles outdoors. All ages thoroughly enjoy the music and song sessions. Young infants bounce, rock and clap as they develop a sense of rhyme and rhythm. They are intrigued by the use of the trombone and guitar, stepping up close to investigate and respond to the vibrations they feel. Children explore a range of resources to solve problems, such as identifying shapes, learning to count, sorting by colour or grading by size. Creative play allows all ages to explore different mediums, such as young infants playing in corn flour. Older children find out about animals in water or bury resources in the wet sand. Young infants practise their early writing skills as they freely draw on large sheets of paper. Older children explore a range of writing

materials and props in the children's office area. Children are confident, chatty and make friends. They develop nurturing roles as they have opportunities to socialise with children in other rooms. Children are comfortable to use their own home languages and staff learn basic key words to ensure there is ease of communication. Children's vocabularies are being supported and extended, staff engage well with children and use effective questioning and listening skills. Children show interest in using the adult camera, learning how to operate it. Young infants are intrigued to see pictures of themselves or friends when shown by staff. Young infants hammer with their hands as they learn to operate computer keyboards. Older children explore calculators and interactive resources, and learn to use educational programs on the computer. Sensory and heuristic resources are used to promote the development of young children's sensory skills. Infants explore lights, sounds and textures.

Reminders and close supervision from staff ensure children learn to play safely; for example, they explain how to climb large equipment carefully. The practice of regular evacuation drills supports children's understanding of what to do in an emergency. Children behave very well, learning to play happily on their own or alongside others. Staff use consistent and positive strategies to manage any incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Children are developing an understanding of healthy lifestyles through regular outdoor play, fresh air and the provision of healthy meals. Staff sit and eat with the children, promoting a sociable learning environment. The outdoor activities help children develop valuable skills and engage them in physical exercise. Children are aware of developing good personal hygiene habits; for instance, they learn to wash hands before handling 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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	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	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
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	1

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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