

The Ark Nursery

St Martins Centre, Ellerbeck, Stoneydelph, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B77 4JA

Inspection date	03/12/2012
Previous inspection date	22/01/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children are actively engaged in a broad range of activities which help them to learn and develop well.
- Adults plan meaningful learning experiences which children thoroughly enjoy, particularly outdoors.
- Adults act as positive role models, helping children to demonstrate kind and considerate behaviour towards each other.
- Children are kept safe within the setting and follow sensible safety rules, for instance, so that they know how to walk down the stairs carefully. This gives them good access to the outdoor play area.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Opportunities for children to expand their creativity and imagination are sometimes missed during adult-guided activities and during their role play games with others. This minimises the level of engagement in their planned and spontaneous play.
- Adults do not always encourage children to think critically, to explore and talk about their own ideas fully or to express their views and opinions freely.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the first floor playroom and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager of the provision and the majority of adults working with the children.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation arrangements and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and from information included in the setting's own parent survey.

Inspector

Jayne Rooke

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Ark Nursery opened in 1992 and is run by a committee. It is registered on the Early Years Register. It operates from St Martin's Church Centre in Stoneydelph, Tamworth, Staffordshire. The nursery serves the local and surrounding area and is accessible to all children. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery is on the

first floor of the building which is accessed using a stair lift or stairs.

The nursery employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9.15am until 3.30pm. A lunch club operates from 11.45am until 1pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 39 children attending who are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- extend opportunities for children to think about what they want to say and to put their thoughts into words, by giving them more time to express their views and ideas freely
- extend opportunities for children to express their creativity and imagination by encouraging them to think about what they want to make and do, the processes that may be involved and the materials and resources they might need.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are provided with a broad range of activities and events which support their learning well. They actively engage in meaningful learning experiences which present appropriate levels of challenge in the majority of areas. However, opportunities for children to expand their creativity and imagination are sometimes missed during adult-guided activities, as children are not actively encouraged to choose art resources for themselves or enabled to play alongside others in the role play area.

Adults plan effectively for varied indoor and outdoor experiences which cover the seven areas of learning. They skilfully observe children, adapting their routines and practice to accommodate children's changing needs and interests. This gives children time to make choices and decisions for themselves, promoting their independence. Children with identified needs and those who speak English as an additional language receive good levels of support, enabling them to participate fully in all aspects of the provision.

Children move around the setting with excitement and enthusiasm accessing the role play

and story corner freely. They use writing and drawing materials to make marks and patterns, smiling happily when they draw lines and circles to form a picture. They talk about the changes in the weather as a result of being outdoors in the rain and sunshine, developing their awareness of the environment. They take part in activities and celebrations which help them to learn about the diverse world, developing respectful attitudes towards others.

Children particularly enjoy the continuous outdoor provision which provides them with regular opportunities to engage in active and robust play throughout the day. They move their bodies in different ways to manoeuvre large and small wheeled toys around obstacles, demonstrating how to push the pedals to make the wheels turn faster. They join in with counting and skipping games and find out what happens to the water as they pour it into the connecting pipes and guttering, expressing curiosity and fascination.

Children show an emerging interest in small and large group activities, such as the 'Bumble Bee' session, which encourages them to speak, listen and follow instructions. However, they are not always encouraged to explore and talk about their own ideas fully, minimising opportunities for children to express their views and opinions.

Adults carefully monitor each child's continuing progress. They discuss and observe what children can do when they first start to attend and what they need to do in the future to reach their next stage of learning. They communicate very well with parents, carers and other professionals, sharing detailed and timely information about each child's development and progress. This helps parents to support their child's learning at home and enables children to transfer smoothly between settings and other childcare services, developing their confidence and abilities.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The key person system works well to secure firm relationships with children and their parents. As a result, children form strong and trusting bonds which help them to feel settled, safe and secure. Good communications between settings means that children are well supported when they first start to attend the nursery and when they are ready to move to school. The open plan nursery room is well organised overall, providing good opportunities for children to move around freely and safely. However, their free choices are sometimes restricted because of rules that only allow a small number of children into the imaginative play area; this minimises opportunities for all children to extend their creativity and imagination during their spontaneous play.

Children develop a good understanding of how to behave safely and kindly towards others because adults teach them to be thoughtful and considerate, presenting themselves as positive role models. They offer children reassuring support if they hurt themselves or upset others; this helps children to feel comforted and supported. Children follow sensible safety rules and know that they have to hold onto the blue handrail whilst walking carefully down the stairs. This enables children to participate fully in activities which enhance their learning and enjoyment.

Good arrangements are fully embedded to promote children's health and hygiene. As a result, children manage their own personal hygiene routines very well, keeping their hands, nose and teeth clean. They help to prepare fresh fruit for their snack and wait with eager anticipation for their freshly prepared meals at lunch time. They tuck in heartily to their tuna pasta and corn on the cob, learning how to hold and use cutlery correctly, as well as handling finger foods with ease. Children's dietary needs and preferences are accommodated well; children are offered healthy choices about what they can and like to eat. Their good health is further promoted as they take part in active games indoors and outside, which support their physical development well.

Children become increasingly independent in their self-care as they learn how to dress and undress themselves for outdoor play and when they wish to dress up. They participate with eager enthusiasm in tidy-up routines and older children helpfully guide younger ones so that they know what to do, demonstrating considerate behaviour.

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

Adults demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage framework. This helps them to deliver a broad range of learning experiences for all children. They use observation and assessment methods well to gain a clear picture of children's initial and ongoing progress. This enables them to plan effectively for each child's needs, interests and next stage of learning. As a result, children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Safeguarding procedures are robust. Adults clearly describe child protection procedures and are confident to act promptly if there are any concerns about a child's well-being. The written safeguarding policy sets out clear guidance to protect children from harm and neglect. The committee and senior management team implement rigorous recruitment and vetting arrangements to ensure the suitability of all adults working with the children. A well-structured mentor and appraisal system ensures that all adults receive good levels of support towards their continuous professional development. Underperformance is sensitively managed to ensure that the setting employs adults with the appropriate skills and abilities.

Self-evaluation is effective, leading to continual improvements which benefit children's daily care and their enjoyment of activities. For example, the setting have recently introduced child-choice outdoor play throughout the day which children thoroughly enjoy. This extends children's learning experiences outdoors, enabling them to explore, investigate and have fun in the fresh air. Plans for future improvement include extending opportunities for parents and carers to become fully involved in their child's day-to-day play, strengthening links for home learning.

Recommendations from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. As a result, adults plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child based on their clear assessments of how children learn and what they know and can do. Children's toothbrushes are now sterilised after each use, preventing the spread of infection so that

children's good health is promoted. The manager is taking further steps to introduce dental hygiene workshops for parents to attend. This will help them to participate fully in supporting their child's dental hygiene routines at home.

Partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals are highly effective, leading to strong and supportive relationships within the setting and with wider community services. This ensures that all children receive prompt and timely support appropriate to their needs and enables them to transfer to new situations with confidence.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	218256
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	891351
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	39
Name of provider	The Ark Nursery
Date of previous inspection	22/01/2010
Telephone number	01827 897993

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years

Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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