

The Ark Day Nursery

4 St. Patrick's Street, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST16 2PL

Inspection date	11/09/2013
Previous inspection date	17/03/2009

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

- The wide variety of activities and experiences planned for children have breadth and depth across all areas of learning, therefore, children's needs and interests are consistently met.
- Knowledgeable staff support children's learning and development through a range of observations and accurate assessments, as a result, they are making good progress from their starting points.
- Children are motivated and enthusiastic learners because practice is continually reflected upon and all staff are committed to driving improvement through effective self-evaluation.
- The role of the key person in successfully supporting children during transition times throughout the day, between rooms and school means children are confident, secure and prepared for the next stage in their learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Occasionally, opportunities for children to make independent choices during mealtimes and play times are missed, therefore, they do not always have opportunities to express preferences.
- In a small minority of cases the robust role of the key person in the development of relationships with parents is not as effective as possible, therefore, not all parents contribute as well as possible to children's learning.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed adult led and free play activities within three children's rooms in and outdoors and during a meal time.
- The inspector engaged in several discussions with the staff throughout the day and held a meeting with the manager and the deputy.
- The inspector looked at a sample of policies, children's learning and development records and recruitment, induction and staff performance related documentation.
- The inspector completed a joint observation alongside the manager and her deputy.
- The inspector took account of the views of two parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Jo Wagg

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Ark Day Nursery was registered in 2008 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a refurbished single storey building within Stafford Elim Christian Centre on the edge of Stafford town centre. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from three rooms and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs sixteen members of child care staff. Of these, eleven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level three. There are two staff members who hold a Foundation Degree in early years. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 73 children attending who are within this age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of 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:

- develop the well-established key person role so that it is fully effective in forming even stronger partnerships with parents, particularly those with English as an additional language
- build on the many opportunities for children to make choices during mealtimes and child-led times to support them even further in expressing preferences.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff plan and provide a wide range of interesting activities and experiences. They regularly observe children and find out about what they can do and what they are interested in. Children access opportunities across all seven areas of learning both in and outdoors, therefore, children's all round development is supported and they are motivated, keen learners. Staff demonstrate a strong knowledge of the different ways in which children learn, including an understanding of common schematic behaviours. They use interactions with children effectively to teach children new skills and support them in the

consolidation of learnt ones. For example, during child initiated activities staff actively listened to children as they recalled events from the past, and others were helped in finding ways to solve a problem. Staff have high expectations of the children and pose questions that challenge children's thinking. There is a balance of adult led and child initiated time with the use of teaching methods, such as direct instruction and assistance during play. Consequently, the children are inquisitive, creative and are willing to try things out, they are imaginative and take on different roles and situations with confidence.

Staff carefully plan purposeful experiences that are appropriate to support each child's next steps. Development is guided through positive interaction with skilled adults who respond to the child's emerging needs. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or English as an additional language receive tailored support to ensure they are fully included in the educational programme. Parents of these children speak about the, mostly, successful partnership with the child's key person and how instrumental it has been in their child's progress. They are kept informed on a daily basis of their child's achievements and general well-being and feel comfortable in discussing concerns. As a result, children arrive at the nursery settled and ready, they confidently choose resources and join in existing play.

Information is gathered from parents regarding children's starting points on entry into nursery and this is used to provide familiar activities that welcome children. Parents also contribute during meetings and in the two year assessments, therefore, children make good progress and acquire skills ready for school. However, not all parents are contributing to their child's learning well because the current systems in place are not diverse enough to engage them effectively. For example, it is accepted that some parents are not able to attend meetings with key persons, so the opportunity for them to always discuss their child's progress is sometimes missed.

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

Children move between rooms and onto school confidently, they are full of anticipation and eager to learn. This happens because teachers are welcomed into the nursery, staff visit schools, and key persons share information on individual children regarding their general all round development. Taster sessions within the new environment are organised and the level of support for each child is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person role is effective in building strong attachments with the children, therefore, they show self-confidence and express their feelings and ideas. Relationships with other children are positive and cooperative, children were observed sharing and taking turns. Parents commented on how well the staff supported the children to be mindful of others, particularly when interacting with children who have additional needs. Sign language is used with young children and with children who use English as an additional language, for example, a Polish child used signs to ask staff for a drink of milk at snack time.

Personal care plans are provided by the parents on entry to the nursery and include details about the care needs of individual children. Parents commented how reassured

they were that these needs were displayed on the wall to ensure their child receives continuity. The nursery offers a daily routine that provides consistency, but that is flexible enough to include all children. As a result, children explore their surroundings, are curious about events, people and resources, and take supported risks in their play. This helps them learn about keeping safe. Staff role model positive behaviour and set clear boundaries for children that are appropriate to their stage of development. Staff seek advice and support from managers and other professionals where their knowledge is not secure enough to effectively support children with complex behavioural difficulties.

The daily routine is used to teach children about health and hygiene. For example children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals, after messy activities and choose appropriate clothing. Meal times are a social occasion with much conversation between children and staff. Food is carefully planned to ensure it is nutritionally balanced and that it remains attractive to children. The menu is reflected on frequently to introduce children to a wide variety of vegetables that come with the differing seasons. However, children do not always get the maximum opportunity to make decisions about what they would like at mealtimes. Therefore, their personal preferences are not always valued. Outdoors spaces are used to encourage children to be physically active on a larger scale, for example, by jumping, running and climbing. The nursery also has an indoor adventure area to enhance these opportunities further. Children appear happy, relaxed and emotionally sound.

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

Leaders and managers demonstrate a commitment to quality and they fully understand their responsibilities with regard to the learning and development requirements. They use various methods to reflect on care practices and assess progress children make in their learning. For example, children's records are sampled for accuracy and challenge. Leaders introduce several ways of observing children, including how involved children are in activities because they understand that this process is fundamental in identifying children's next steps in their learning and development. Leaders encourage peer observations between staff, mentor practice and under performance is addressed supportively and effectively. Staff are enthusiastic and motivated and this means children are making good progress in relation to their starting points.

Self-evaluation is strong and is successful in sustaining improvement because staff actively contribute and parents' views are sought. Therefore, changes to practice and the education programme have a direct impact on children's good progress. Partnerships are established with many professionals to support the individual needs of the children and for advice and guidance on the quality of early education and care. Intervention is timely and successful. Parents are encouraged to make suggestions and this is reflected upon and any changes to practice, as a result, are fed back to them.

Leaders are effective in ensuring all staff have a secure knowledge of their roles and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding. There is a thorough induction programme where staff's understanding is assessed. Leaders also frequently review staffs' knowledge

of the nursery's policies and procedures through supervision and appraisals. This means staff can ensure all children are kept safe from harm. Professional development is an integral part of the role of staff and training is a balance between staffs' needs and interests and the needs of the children they work directly with.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

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 action. 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	EY377952
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	931560
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	55
Number of children on roll	32
Name of provider	Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance Committee
Date of previous inspection	17/03/2009
Telephone number	01785 254501

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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