

# The Ark Children's Centre Nursery

The Ark Childrens Centre, Water Lane, LOWESTOFT, NR32 2NH

<b>Inspection date</b>	30/10/2013
Previous inspection date	06/11/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	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 play and learn in a welcoming and stimulating environment. This helps them make good progress in all areas of learning through activities and resources which interest and engage them.
- Staff get to know individual children well. This, combined with their enthusiasm and good understanding of child development, helps them plan and provide activities, which help individual children enjoy learning and achieving.
- The nursery continuously improves the service it provides. By encouraging staff to attend further training, and developing clear action plans, the management team are able to take prompt action to successfully improve children's experiences.
- Robust safeguarding procedures are in place. These help ensure children are safe and secure while at nursery, and that any concerns about children's welfare are quickly passed on to the relevant professionals.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Occasionally, at busy times of day, staff do not respond quickly enough to change the activity, when they notice children have become bored or restless.

## 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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed all of the nursery facilities, including the garden areas.
- The inspector spoke to staff, children and parents about the nursery.
- The inspector looked at children's learning records and observed the range of equipment and resources available for children.
- The inspector reviewed documentation, including risk assessments and self-evaluation.

## Inspector

Jenny Howell

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

The Ark Children's Centre Nursery was re-registered in 2009 and is managed by St Edmund & Waveney YMCA Services Ltd. The nursery operates from two rooms in a single storey, purpose built building. Both rooms have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The children's centre is in the northern area of Lowestoft and houses a range of extended facilities for families and young children. It is open each weekday from 8.00am to 6.00pm for 51 weeks of the year.

The centre is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 115 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Children can attend for a variety of sessions or for full day care. The nursery cares for a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

There are currently 25 members of staff, 23 of whom hold early years qualifications to at least Level two. Two members of staff hold Early Years Professional Status.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- monitor and review children's learning during busy times of day and respond appropriately to ensure all children are interested and engaged by the activities provided.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff make very careful observations of what children can do and use this information to plan activities and resources, which support individual learning and development. They also base learning on themes that interest children, such as activities inspired by giants or space. For example, staff transform the roleplay area into a space rocket, and children make pictures of bean stalks using dried beans, paint and glue. Individual learning plans are written for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These are based on the views of parents, staff and specialists, such as medical health professionals and ensure children make consistent progress in small, achievable steps. Children who speak English as an additional language are also well supported. Recently developed resources, such as dual-language books, as well as postcards and speaking books, support children in learning English, and also reflect the cultural backgrounds of all children at the nursery. Regular 'stay and play' sessions

and parents' meetings help keep parents well informed about the progress their children are making, and also provide them with ideas for ways to support learning at home.

Very good use is made of the indoor and outdoor environments to provide children with a wide variety of learning opportunities. Children can move freely between inside and outside for most of the day, allowing them to follow their imagination and take the lead in their learning. This, along with easy access to books and mark making materials, helps children develop an interest in exploring and concentrating, which will prepare them for learning at school. Each day is structured well to provide a good balance between child initiated and adult-led learning. However sometimes at busy periods, such as after lunch time, staff are not as responsive to children's levels of interest, resulting in some children becoming bored a restless for a short time.

Staff teach children through careful support and questioning. They chat to children as they explore materials such as, shredded paper, encouraging them to think about its texture, colour and weight. Children soon start to talk about snow and how it feels to play in real snow. This helps children make links between different experiences while also allowing staff to assess children's levels of understanding and development. Children of all ages are able to explore independently. Babies enjoy crawling over to the toys that interest them, while older children are engrossed in using tape measures to find out how tall their friends are. Small group games provide excellent opportunities for staff to ask children questions, which encourage children to think and develop their vocabulary. Babies also take pleasure in playing with others, smiling and giggling as they play peek-a-boo through the glass door.

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

The effective key person system helps children form strong bonds with staff. Home visits are carried out before each child joins the nursery. This helps children get to know staff in a familiar environment and allows parents and staff to share detailed information about each child, so they can be well cared for when they start nursery. Children settle in gradually, visiting with their parents at first, with short visits continuing until children feel comfortable and secure to be left. When children are upset they are quickly comforted by staff with cuddles or a favourite story.

Children's behaviour is good. This contributes to a calm atmosphere in which children can concentrate on the activities that interest them. Children are encouraged to be kind to others and to consider their environment. This can be seen as children wash their own plates after snack time, or pass the water jug to their friends after their turn. Meal times are used well to support children's independence as all children are encouraged to feed themselves and older children serve their own food and drink, with support provided whenever needed. At snack time older children chop their own banana and spread butter on their cracker. Snack and meals are healthy and nutritious. Children talk about making healthy choices and discuss, for example, the benefits of eating different types of fruit. Children also learn about healthy lifestyles as they have daily opportunities to exercise, which include riding tricycles, balancing on beams and kicking balls.

Staff are very attentive to children's individual needs throughout the day. Babies have their nappies checked and changed regularly and staff notice when children are becoming tired and need a nap. Sleeping children are frequently checked and are always within the sight of a member of staff, ensuring they sleep in safety and comfort. Children also learn how to keep themselves safe. They are reminded to walk indoors, or to avoid walking with scissors. Stories, such as 'Goldilocks' provide opportunities to discuss stranger danger and safe people to go to for help.

Transitions are well supported. When moving room, children make a number of visits with their key person, until they have become familiar with the new staff and surroundings. When starting school children are visited by future teachers and enjoy stories and role-play themed around school, helping to reduce any anxiety they may feel about leaving nursery.

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

Clear safeguarding systems are understood by all staff and ensure that children are protected from harm. All staff understand what action to take should they have concerns about a child, or in the event of an accident or injury. This is due to clear policies and procedures, as well as regularly updated training in safeguarding and first aid. All staff have undergone vetting checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service, and at least two references are requested. Records, such as accident and medication logs are correctly completed, to ensure all relevant information is kept and passed on to parents. Accident records are reviewed to identify if any improvements can be made, for example, to the positioning of furniture. Daily risk assessments of all areas used by children also help to protect children as staff give consideration to all potential hazards, including extreme weather conditions, such as strong winds.

Senior managers and room leaders regularly monitor the quality of planning and learning for individual children. Staff supervision and appraisals provide staff with the support they need to develop their skills, as well as identifying training needs. All staff attend in-house and external training and several members of staff have been supported in improving their level of qualification. This results in a staff team that provides all children with good levels of care and stimulating learning opportunities. Thorough self-evaluation is effective in identifying areas for development. These include changes to the location of some furniture and equipment, so they are easier for children to access and the development of positive behaviour management techniques to help ensure all staff are consistent in the language they use to promote good behaviour.

Good relationships with parents, and other professionals involved with children, help ensure all relevant information is exchanged on a regular basis. Parents are provided with a wide range of information, covering all aspects of the nursery. This is shared via newsletters, daily diaries and informative displays in the entrance hall. Parents' and children's views are actively sought using questionnaires. The feedback gathered from these has led staff to develop a quiet space in the garden, an area which is now frequently used and enjoyed by children. Parents and carers comment very positively about the

nursery, emphasising how reassuring staff are and how happy their children are to arrive each day.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY392883
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	937425
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	51
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	115
<b>Name of provider</b>	St Edmund & Waveney YMCA Services Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	06/11/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01502502239

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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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