

Noah's Ark Childcare Centres

30 Looe Street, Plymouth, Devon, PL4 0EA

Inspection date	30/06/2014
Previous inspection date	02/01/2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Children are happy, secure and explore confidently, and are progressing well in their learning.
- Staff plan activities according to children's particular interests, which encourages their involvement in play.
- Parents are involved in their children's learning and partnership working is strong.

It is not yet good because

- Staff do not always supervise children well to keep them safe, particularly when they go to and from the garden.
- The provider does not always notify Ofsted of significant events.
- Daily routines in the toddler room are not consistently organised to support children's individual needs.

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 children in all the rooms and in the garden.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager, area manager and members of staff.
- The inspector sampled documentation including policies and procedures, children's learning records, risk assessments and registers.
- The inspector conducted a join observation with the manager.

Inspector

Katherine Lamb

Full report

Information about the setting

Noah's Ark Childcare Centres registered in 2003 and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is part of a small, privately owned nursery chain. It is situated in a converted three-storey listed building close to Plymouth city centre, near the Barbican area. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. The younger children are cared for in playrooms on the first floor and the pre-school room is on the ground floor. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 or above. Three staff are qualified to level 2. The nursery opens each weekday, all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 80 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery is in receipt of funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. 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 meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure children are adequately supervised and staff are deployed appropriately so that children are kept safe from harm, particularly when moving to and from the garden

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

- improve the organisation of daily routines in the toddler room to support children's individual needs more consistently.

Inspection judgements

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

Children show that they enjoy their time at the nursery as they enter quickly and greet their friends on arrival. Parents and children access the nursery after ringing the bell to the video phone and staff record children's arrival and departure times as part of their safeguarding routines. Children are happy and independently play on their own or in small groups, confidently asking for adult support. All rooms are well resourced. Staff label resources with photographs to help children recognise what is available and children move with confidence around the rooms.

Staff show close, warm relationships with children and they know them well. They use suitable teaching techniques to motivate children to learn, ensuring they are prepared for their next stage of learning and for their eventual move to school. The staff team has appropriate systems to identify children's starting points for learning. Staff make use of the settling-in visits to talk to parents and establish information about their children's needs and progress to date. They use these starting points as a basis to develop each child's interests while promoting learning when they start at the nursery. The staff make contact with other providers where the children attend to support each child's development consistently. Each child has a development record called a learning journey, which includes planned and spontaneous observations. Staff use this system effectively to track and monitor children's learning and development. In addition, these records enable staff to complete the progress check for children aged two years. Staff plan well for children's interests and cover all areas of learning and development, both inside and outdoors.

Children are clearly enjoying their play and are keen to show their friends and staff what they can do, demonstrating a positive attitude to learning. Staff talk to children to assess what they already know and build on this to extend their learning. Children of all ages enjoy playing in the well-resourced garden. Children learn to take risks as they are able to use the climbing frame and slide that they can climb and jump from. Staff position themselves to supervise children and are available to support play if needed. Staff now use garden registers appropriately to record which children they have and they carry out head counts on their way to and from the garden to check they have all the children. Risk assessments of the garden have also been completed to help staff keep children safe and secure within the premises.

Older children use numbers naturally in their play. For example, when playing skittles children stop after each go to count with staff how many they have knocked down. This shows that children have learnt that numbers carry value. They show confidence in counting and are keen to get it right so that they receive praise from staff. Younger children also focus hard and concentrate on completing puzzles, knowing that staff are available to support them when they are stuck. Children also have the opportunity to explore sensory activities as water, sand and a cornflour mixture are readily available for them to investigate and use to support their play and exploration.

Staff focus on promoting children's communication and encourage conversations. With younger children staff repeat back key words and recognise communication attempts so that even babies feel valued. Older children take part in small group work activities that focus on thinking. Discussion with staff using questioning suitably helps to check learning and extend children's thoughts. Staff support children who are learning English as an additional language or have additional needs well. They use picture cards and words of phrases in children's home languages as well as working closely with their parents. Consequently all children are making sound progress in all areas of learning.

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

There is an appropriate key-person system in place to support children and their families. Staff understand their roles to help children to become familiar with the nursery. They build good relationships with them. For example, staff offer babies lots of praise and actively engage in their play experiences, which helps them feel secure. Children show loving relationships with their friends and mostly play in harmony together as they share their toys and communicate appropriately. They are confident learners and either ask for support when needed or happily play independently. Children show they feel safe and secure as they move around with confidence. Staff encourage positive behaviour by using praise and encouragement for achievements. For younger children stickers are used as well as praise to promote their self-esteem. Staff manage children's behaviour well, working closely with parents for consistency between home and the nursery.

Children play in a clean and child-friendly environment. Equipment, toys and resources are of good quality and meet the children's ages and stages of development. Children are aware of the importance of self-care routines and know that they need to wash their hands before eating. At lunch times children have a healthy meal provided by the nursery. Children's dietary requirements are catered for well. Older children are able to cut their own food and pour their own drinks showing independence. This helps them to prepare for the move to school. However, organisation of daily routines sometimes means that toddlers have to wait to have their snack or go into the garden, which has an impact on their well-being.

Staff show respect for babies as they ask 'can I change your nappy please?' before carrying them to the nappy changing area. Most babies respond by lifting their arms up in anticipation or lying down on the floor, showing that they are ready to be changed. Children that become ill during the day are looked after as comfortably as possible until they are able to be collected and the nursery has exclusion periods in place to prevent cross-infection between children.

Overall, children are prepared for the move to school. They are well supported by staff who liaise with schools and invite teachers into the nursery to meet the children before the move. Information sharing is a well-established practice and children appear confident and happy about this next stage in their learning journeys.

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

The inspection took place following notification from the provider that when staff were bringing a group of children in from the garden one of them was able to access the office unnoticed and was found by a parent. The provider conducted an investigation into this incident and has drawn up an action plan with the manager to improve deployment of staff and the supervision of children. However, on investigating this incident the inspection found that this was the third similar incident in the past two months where staff did not supervise children correctly to ensure that they always knew where they were. This compromises children's safety and welfare and the provider has been sent a notice to

improve as this is a breach of requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although the provider correctly notified Ofsted of one incident they did not inform Ofsted of the previous two incidents and this is also a breach of requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Safe recruitment procedures are in place and all adults involved in the operation of the nursery undergo the required clearance checks to assess their suitability to be with the children. In line with the nursery's safeguarding policy, staff are re-checked every 12 months to ensure their ongoing suitability. References are gained prior to any new staff starting at the nursery and robust induction processes are in place. Staff and management have a suitable understanding of safeguarding policies and practice and the procedure they must follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare. There are also appropriate safeguarding, garden play and outings policies in place to help staff to protect children's welfare.

Staff are supported through appraisals and supervisions to improve practice. The manager has a sound understanding of the strengths and aspects for further development of the nursery and plans to work with head office, staff, parents and children to improve the service provided. For example, she has already identified that care given throughout the age groups is not consistent and has deployed the deputy to support staff in the under two's area and model good practice. However, improvement has been slow and is still ongoing.

Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff communicate verbally with all parents to ensure that they are well informed about their children's day. Further written records are available in the form of daily diaries and learning records. Effective arrangements are in place for involving parents in children's learning. These include regular parents' evenings, where they are able to review their children's next steps for learning with their child's key person. The manager seeks parents' views by having an open-door policy and the use of questionnaires. These allow parents to feel involved in their children's learning, development and in helping drive nursery improvements. Staff have appropriate links with other settings that children attend to further support their learning and development.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY262422
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	979863
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	53
Number of children on roll	80
Name of provider	Noah's Ark Childcare Centres Limited
Date of previous inspection	02/01/2014
Telephone number	01752 601888

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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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