

Noah's Ark Childcare Centre

Green Ark Children's Centre, Leander House, Fore Street, Devonport, Plymouth, PL1 4DW

Inspection date	28/10/2014
Previous inspection date	03/11/2008

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

- Parents appreciate the caring atmosphere and positive relationships with staff.
- Staff implement consistent behavioural management strategies to support children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Staff provide a safe environment for children to play in. They follow positive routines and procedures to maintain an environment free from hazards.
- Staff promote children's independence skills at meal times, helping them to develop confidence and preparing them for future learning.

It is not yet good because

- Staff do not use the information from their observations well to plan appropriate activities and experiences that challenge children's learning.
- Staff do not make effective use of play areas and resources both indoors and outside to stimulate and promote children's interest and motivation to learn.
- Not all group times work well for the different stages of development of individual children, so they benefit from the learning experiences offered.
- Staff do not provide numbers, letters and signs outside to enable children to develop literacy and mathematical skills as they play.

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 a range of activities across all areas of the nursery and talked with staff and children about what they were doing.
- The inspector reviewed documents and the nursery's policies and procedures.
The inspector sampled a range of children's records, the nursery's systems for
- planning, evaluation and exchanging information with parents and external professionals.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector met with the leadership team and conducted several joint observations with the manager.

Inspector

Margaret Baird

Full report

Information about the setting

Noah's Ark Childcare Centre is privately owned and is part of a small local chain of nurseries. It is situated within Green Ark Children's Centre in Devonport, Plymouth, The provision is accessed by a level pathway and has private off street parking. The nursery has exclusive use of a large playroom, a room for younger children, a quiet room, and a sleeping room. After school and holiday activity provision is available for children aged up to eight years. They occupy a room that is also used, at other times, by the family centre crche. There is a large landscaped external area for outdoor play. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They provide full day care all year round. The nursery opens from 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday and there are currently 124 children on roll. The nursery supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who learn English as an additional language. Out-of-school care for children under eight years of age operates during term time from 3pm to 6pm Monday to Friday. During school holidays, this is available from 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday. The nursery employs 16 members of staff, most of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The nursery receives the support of the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve the planning across all areas of learning to provide appropriate and challenging experiences tailored to meet children's individual learning needs
- improve organisation and use of play areas and resources both indoors and outside so they stimulate and promote children's interest and motivation to learn.

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

- organise developmentally appropriate group time activities that engage and motivate all children and meet their individual learning needs
- enhance learning in the outdoor areas by providing signs, letters and numbers so that children can use them in their play.

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy coming to the nursery and take part in a range of different activities. Staff have a suitable understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, they do not use their knowledge to promote all aspects of children's learning well. When children start at the nursery, staff find out about their current skills and abilities and carry out regular observations as they play, as part of the children's learning journals. They use assessments to identify children's next steps in their learning. However, staff do not use this information to successfully plan activities and experiences that provide sufficient challenge using children's individual next steps. Therefore, while most children enjoy their play because staff know the types of activities to offer for the different ages, the activities do not provide appropriate challenges. This means children do not make good progress in their learning and development.

Staff do not organise the play areas within the nursery and the range of resources well to interest and motivate children to learn. For example, in the baby room, activities, such as scooping and pouring rice in a tray are not set up well to excite and motivate children to use them. Staff did not add additional resources to create interest. This means that not all children take part in activities that encourage them to explore different materials and experiment. This limits their ability to develop small muscle control, and to become active learners. Consequently, children's progress is not consistent. The indoor environment is safe, with a suitable range of resources. However, staff do not provide resources to effectively support and enhance children's development in all areas of learning. For example, in the baby room, staff did not provide enough support or resources for very young children to pull themselves up and practise their early walking skills. This limits their opportunities to consistently develop their physical skills and independence.

Staff encouraged children aged two to five-years to develop their phonic skills as they sat together and sang songs and rhymes. Some children enjoyed this activity and staff encouraged them to join in with actions. However, the activity did not meet the developmental needs and interests of all of the children, which meant they did not all fully engage. Staff did not adapt the activity when they noticed some children lost interest. This activity did not fully consider the different ages and stages, therefore, limiting the learning and children's overall enjoyment. Other group time activities, such as meal times, work well to develop children's social skills and independence.

Staff provide opportunities for occasional visits, for example, to the aquarium, which helps children to find out about the local community and the world around them. The nursery has an extensive outdoor space, which provides a range of opportunities for children to extend their physical development. However, staff do not plan this area well, meaning it does not motivate and stimulate children's interest to explore and be active learners when outdoors. There is also a lack of letters, numbers and signs outdoors to enable children to begin to recognise them and use them in their play. This does not fully support all children to learn that print carries meaning and provides information.

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

Staff are caring and form appropriate relationships with their key children, supporting them in their growing independence and enabling them to begin to feel safe. The key-person system appropriately supports children to form strong attachments with familiar adults. Staff understand the importance of ensuring children are considerate towards each other. They encourage children to share and take turns, and act sensitively when conflict arises. Staff are positive role models and support children as they play together, helping them to manage their own feelings. As a result, children are calm and relaxed, and behave well.

Staff provide a safe environment both indoors and outside with a suitable range of resources, although staff do not maximise the play areas and use of resources, to stimulate and motivate children to learn effectively. Older children can choose to play outdoors, learning to use their physical skills as they enjoy the equipment provided. Staff help children to learn about the importance of leading healthy lifestyles. They ensure children wash their hands before meals and after messy play. The nursery provides healthy and nutritious snacks, which children enjoy eating together. Staff encourage children to become independent by involving them in the preparation of snacks, and pouring their own drinks. They praise their efforts, which help them develop self-esteem and independence. Snack time is a social occasion, and staff sit with children, listening and talking to them about their day. This encourages children to develop communication skills and helps to extend their language and vocabulary.

Staff provide children and families with sessions aimed at settling children and ensuring they feel secure when they start nursery. The nursery has good links with the local primary schools. They are in contact with school staff when they pick children up each day. The reception class teachers visit the nursery so they can meet the children who will be going into school. Nursery staff share the children's learning and development. This supports continuity and children's move into school and the next stage of their learning.

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

The nursery has undergone significant staff changes in recent times, which means they do not successfully promote all aspects of children's learning and development. However, management are aware of this and monitoring and developing staff skills to improve their effectiveness as a team. Planning systems are not successful. This is because, although staff have been using observations and assessments effectively to identify children's next steps in their learning, they have not planned well to meet them. Staff do not maximise use of the play spaces and resources at all times to stimulate and motivate children's interest. This means not all activities and experiences for all ages and stages of development, indoors and outside, provide challenge and interest to engage all children consistently in their learning.

All required safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, and implemented effectively. Staff understand the importance of keeping children safe. The manager is the safeguarding officer and staff are trained in the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. This means they are up-to-date with current legislation. Staff know the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are aware of the child protection procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. Staff carry out daily risk assessments to identify and minimise all possible hazards to children. They encourage children to take care, but allow them to develop their own sense of risk when exploring. This means children learn to understand the importance of keeping themselves safe. Clear policies and procedures for managing health and hygiene are in place. Staff have up-to-date paediatric first aid training and are deployed well so that prompt action can be taken in an emergency. Recruitment procedures are thorough and help determine the suitability of each member of staff. Staff are supported through regular supervision and ongoing training, which helps them to identify areas to develop and extend as part of their own professional development.

The nursery owner, manager and staff work together to improve the service provided for children and families. Staff have good relationships with the local authority and other professionals. This enables them to seek support and guidance to care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It also means that they can easily refer families who require additional support. The nursery is in the same premises as the local Children's Centre, and staff work together so that families receive support and advice.

The self-evaluation system provides an appropriate overview of priorities for development. The manager and staff are reflective of their practice. They have addressed previous recommendations from their last inspection. They suitably identify some aspects of weaker practice to focus on. This shows their commitment to make improvements to outcomes for children. Parents comment they find staff approachable and supportive and their children enjoy coming to nursery. They are welcomed into the nursery, which supports children's well-being and development. There is a wide variety of information and support for parents, which includes a nursery website. This means parents are well informed about the service offered and the procedures staff follow when caring for their children.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY373884
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	987792
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	124
Name of provider	Noah's Ark Childcare Centres Limited
Date of previous inspection	03/11/2008
Telephone number	01752 565156

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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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