

The Exwick Ark

The Old School, Exwick Road, Exeter, EX4 2AT

Inspection date	19/11/2014
Previous inspection date	13/12/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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

- Staff have a good partnership with parents and outside agencies, to provide a shared approach to children's learning and development.
- Staff supervise children well to keep them safe and promote their well-being.
- Staff provide children with a broad range of resources and an enabling environment for them to learn and develop.
- Staff are consistent in how they manage children's behaviour. Consequently, children learn how to behave and play well alongside their friends.

It is not yet outstanding because

- At times, some staff miss opportunities to extend children's language during their free play and some craft activities.
- Staff complete observations and assessments on the children to identify the next steps in their learning. However, the frequency and detail with which they are completed varies.

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 the children at play indoors and in the outside play areas.
- The inspector held discussions with the owners/ managers and the staff at convenient times.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector sampled documentation including some policies and procedures.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records.

Inspector

Sally Hall

Full report

Information about the setting

The Exwick Ark is a privately owned nursery. It registered in new premises in 2013 and operates from an old school, which has been refurbished, in the city of Exeter in Devon. The Exwick Ark has achieved accreditation as a Healthy Setting. The ground floor accommodation comprises of one room for two- to four-year-old children and a room for the youngest children. There are three separate rooms for quiet activities and a dedicated sleep room. There is a kitchen where cooked meals are prepared daily. There are garden areas for outdoor play. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am until 5.45pm all year round. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It receives nursery education funding for two, three and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language. There are currently 76 children on roll in the early years age group. There are 19 members of staff, including the two owners/managers. Of these, 18 work directly with the children. There are two members of staff on the team with Early Years Professional Status, including one of the owners/managers who also holds Qualified Teacher Status. The majority of the remaining staff hold childcare qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review how staff are deployed and interact with children in the pre-school room during free play and some craft activities, with regard to further encouraging children's language

- review how observations and assessments are completed by some staff, with regard to clearly showing the progress all children are making.

Inspection judgements

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

Children have bright, welcoming rooms in which to play and learn. Overall, they are making good progress in their learning and development. They are very happy, settled and familiar with the routine for the day. Children have a key person to support them as they play. Staff plan themes to support children in their next steps of learning and development, and to support their individual interests. Observations and assessments are completed on the children to monitor the progress they are making. However, although staff know children well, some records do not contain enough detail to show clearly when children have made progress.

Staff present as positive role models to the children. They work very effectively with children in small groups, helping them to learn to be confident to express themselves and take responsibility for their own self-care, for example how to get ready to go out to play. Children are keen to learn and concentrate well at their chosen tasks, for example when playing with play dough and at the craft table. However, occasionally, some staff miss opportunities to interact with the older children during their free play, to enhance their language and to provide extra challenge during craft activities. Children with English as an additional language are very well supported. Some staff can communicate in their home language. The children learn action songs in other languages and staff use sign language and flash cards. This helps children with limited understanding of English to learn the routine for the day, and to feel safe and secure. Staff provide a very inclusive provision, with effective one-to-one support for children. This helps to ensure that every child's needs are met and they are fully included in planned activities.

The rooms are well set up with a very good range of resources that are easily accessible for children to select. Children have visits from people who help them, such as the police. They make visits to the city centre, catch the train to go to the library and visit a farm to learn about nature. This helps children to learn about their local community. They also enjoy walks to feed the ducks and see the swans, thereby learning about nature and wildlife. The staff teach children about the wider world and diversity by celebrating festivals throughout the year. Parents are invited in to share their own customs and to cook with the children.

Children learn problem solving by making puzzles and working out how things fit together. They enjoy listening to stories and looking at their own scrap books showing photographs of them at play and places that they have visited. Younger children enjoy looking at photographs of family members; this gives them reassurance. They learn to start to make marks as they play with gloop in the garden and start to learn about volume by playing with sand and water.

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

Children's personal, social and emotional development is supported very well. Children are very confident and keen to show what they are doing. They leave their parents quickly and confidently on arrival and settle into their play. They receive consistent praise and encouragement, as well as achievement certificates. This positively develops their well-being and good self-esteem. They learn to share and take turns, with gentle reminders from the staff and by playing games. They behave very well and play cooperatively alongside their friends. Children learn how to keep safe as they play; they learn how to take well-managed risks and to assess risks themselves during outside play.

Children demonstrate they are familiar with the routine for washing hands independently from a young age. They have nutritious snacks that are cooked on the premises. Snack times and meal times are very social occasions. The children join together to have lunch and the staff sit with the children, having the same meal. The lunch is very well presented

and the children can help themselves to seconds. The staff use meal times to teach children good social skills and manners. It also gives children the opportunity to see their siblings and time to play together for a short time after lunch. Children from a young age confidently pour their own drinks and learn to serve themselves; for example the younger children learning to use spoons to put hummus on their plate. They are encouraged to try foods that are new to them, and are given time to enjoy snacks and lunch times.

Children benefit from fresh air each day by playing outside. This gives them space to run and explore. The nursery provides protective clothing, which allows the children to play out in all weathers. The younger children have their own garden. This means they can play safely away from the older children as their mobility develops. Children confidently choose whether they want to play indoors or outside. This helps them to be involved in decision making about what they would like to do and play with. They have ride-on-toys to support their physical development and areas set up with sand and water play. In the mud kitchen, they engage in imaginative play by making stew in the mud with leaves. This shows children are encouraged to use their own ideas to support their learning and development. Younger children's individual routines are met very well. Staff promote good hygiene when changing children and check children regularly when they are sleeping, to make sure they are safe. They have an area with a no shoe policy. This enables children who are crawling to play safely on clean floors. There are soft play and comfortable areas where staff can sit and read to the children, and give reassuring cuddles as they tire.

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

The managers and staff have a very secure understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Overall, they provide good quality learning experiences for children, to help them make good progress in their learning. There are clear procedures for the appointment of new staff, which include a probationary period and training on their roles and responsibilities. Supervision and appraisals take place to monitor how staff are meeting their responsibilities and to identify any additional training that is required. These opportunities are also used to discuss the safeguarding and whistle blowing procedures, and to confirm that staff remain suitable to work with children. Children are supervised well at all times. On arrival, children are welcomed by a member of staff who records their attendance and any visitors to the setting. This ensures it is clear who is in the building at any one time.

The managers are in the process of reviewing how children's observations and assessments are being recorded, and have plans to introduce a computerised system in the new year. The premises are safe and secure. Risk assessments are undertaken to ensure there are no potential hazards; this allows children to have a safe environment in which to play indoors and outside. Staff are clear about what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern, in order to protect children's welfare. They are vigilant about recording any accident to a child and ensure that parents are informed. The accident records are monitored to establish whether there is a pattern of accidents and to review the safety of the children.

Since the last inspection, the nursery has improved partnership with parents, to provide a shared approach to children's learning and development. Staff offer regular parents' evenings, to share children's progress and to discuss their planned next steps. Parents are encouraged to share their child's achievements from home. There are good arrangements for children joining the nursery, with home visits made by the manager and the child's key person. This gives parents the opportunity to meet and get to know who will be supporting their child. These opportunities are used to gain an understanding of children's likes, dislikes and their routine before they start. Parents are encouraged to stay for settling in periods with their child, and to attend stay and play sessions. This gives them the opportunity to see their child at play. Staff give information to parents on how they can support their child's learning at home. Parents are also invited in for social events throughout the year. This gives them the opportunity to get to know the staff in a relaxed environment. The nursery has very good links with outside agencies, so that every child is included and has the support they need to make good progress in their learning and development.

The required documentation is in place to meet the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, including policies that are shared with parents. Staff reflect on and monitor what they are providing, through their self-evaluation process; this helps them to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, to enhance the learning outcomes for children. They seek parents' views through questionnaires, and white boards are displayed in the hallway, on which parents are encouraged to record what they would like for their children. The outdoor play areas are well resourced to extend children's learning during outside play. However, the managers/owners have identified this as an area that they want to develop, to enhance the learning opportunities for children. This demonstrates that they are pro-active in developing their provision.

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
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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	EY466130
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	962955
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	76
Name of provider	The Exwick Ark Limited
Date of previous inspection	13/12/2013
Telephone number	01392 425551

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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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