

Noah's Ark Pre-School

Pack Lane, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG22 5HN



Inspection date

2 March 2015

Previous inspection date

26 April 2011

| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend | | Outstanding | 1 |
| The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children | | Outstanding | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision | | Outstanding | 1 |
| The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings | | | |

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- Staff value children's ideas and create topics around their current interests. They plan and provide rich experiences and use them to nurture children's progress across all areas of learning and development.
- Staff consistently give the highest priority to the safety of children and support their growing understanding of how to manage age-appropriate risks and keep themselves safe.
- Staff extend children's understanding of what constitutes healthy eating as they teach them to prepare, categorise and portion out food at snack time. They also support children to develop an interest in growing their own garden produce.
- Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the care and support each key person offers them and their children. They report that the pre-school is a happy place where staff always make time to meet children's individual needs.
- Staff are highly effective in working with external partners to strengthen learning experiences for children at the pre-school and within the wider community.
- The manager has a strong drive to continually improve her own knowledge and use it to raise standards further across all aspects of the pre-school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend the focus on developing creative thinking and problem-solving skills to inspire children to reach even higher levels of learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed a wide range of activities across all areas of the pre-school and talked with staff and children about what they were doing.
- The inspector reviewed documents and procedures relating to safeguarding and equal opportunities, and checked a selection of other policies.
- The inspector sampled a range of children's records, the pre-school's planning, evaluation and the information exchanged with parents and external professionals.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and reviewed written communication from parents.
- The inspector met with the leadership team and conducted a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Helen Robinshaw

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is outstanding

Children make excellent progress in their learning and development during their time at the pre-school. This is because highly committed, experienced and knowledgeable staff plan and provide an abundance of rich learning experiences. For example, children reflect on growth and change as they represent flower buds opening with pastels and collage materials. They make links with bees and honey as staff help them dissect flower heads in search of pollen. The quality of teaching is high and all staff encourage children to experiment and discover. However, some staff are more skilled than others in helping children think through problems and challenges. Older children benefit from extra activities as they near school age. For example, they become more skilled in handling small tools as they discover, match and thread different sizes of nuts, bolts and washers.

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

Children settle quickly and explore a wealth of interesting activities and resources in the security and care of staff who know them well. Children show high levels of self-control and risk management as they collect, move and paint the garden furnishings with water, brushes and rollers. When necessary, staff draw attention to the location of aprons, brooms and mops so that children become increasingly competent at keeping themselves appropriately dressed and safe. Older children help younger ones tape up boxes and mix the right consistency of dough. Staff teach them to understand how younger children learn new skills. This empowers the older children, who learn to tolerate and take more responsibility for cooperating and negotiating with other children. Home learning bags, holiday surveys and shared reading schemes also help children to achieve high levels of skill, independence and self-confidence as they prepare for school.

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

The manager takes a clear lead in guiding the best possible practice across the pre-school as she applies her training and innovative research in early years education. She has an excellent understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She and her experienced and capable team set themselves high standards across every aspect of children's safety and welfare. Precise monitoring of children's progress enables staff to create daily opportunities where they nurture and target new skills. This results in staff closing any gaps or delays in children's learning through carefully designed activities, child-initiated play, and daily routines. Recent staff training in mathematics is evident in activities across all areas of the pre-school. All staff routinely evaluate the impact of their teaching and care. This helps them identify clear targets for improvement, such as working with the community to extend their planting area and to enhance children's understanding of the world.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | 511667 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 836962 |
| Type of provision | Full-time provision |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 2 - 8 |
| Total number of places | 54 |
| Number of children on roll | 85 |
| Name of provider | Noah's Ark Pre-School Committee |
| Date of previous inspection | 26 April 2011 |
| Telephone number | 01256 323853 |

Noah's Ark Pre-school registered in 2000. The pre-school is open each weekday during school term times. Sessions run from 8am to 4pm, and children attend for a half or full day. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four. Of the 13 staff who work with the children, 12 hold relevant qualifications at level 2 and above. The manager has a Masters degree in Early Years. The pre-school committee also employ an administrator.

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