

Noah's Ark Pre-school

Cookham Dean Village Hall, Cookham Dean, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 9NZ



Inspection date

13 May 2015

Previous inspection date

11 March 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The quality of teaching practice across the pre-school is inconsistent, particularly in relation to children's communication and language development. As a result, not all children are actively participating and learning during these times, and this hinders their progress towards the early learning goals.
- Some staff do not have a suitable knowledge and understanding of child protection issues to safeguard children. Consequently, children's well-being and safety are put at risk.
- Leadership and management do not have an adequate knowledge of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage to monitor and evaluate staff practice and performance effectively. This means that they do not identify and address weaknesses in staff's knowledge and understanding or in the quality of teaching.

It has the following strengths

- Partnerships with parents and other local schools are established. Parents share positive feedback about the pre-school. They report that staff share relevant information with them, which they use to support their child's learning at home.
- Staff teach children the importance of washing their hands before eating. As a result, children learn good personal hygiene practices.
- Secure vetting and recruitment procedures help to ensure that staff are suitable and qualified.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- increase knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements in order to improve the quality of teaching and consistently monitor staff practice, especially in relation to promoting children's communication and language effectively
- ensure all staff are up to date and confident in their knowledge of issues concerning child protection and safeguarding children.

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

- strengthen the systems for self-evaluation to clearly identify and address all weaknesses in practice to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for children.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children in their play, indoors and outdoors, and in their interactions with staff.
- The inspector spoke to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and held meetings with the owner and deputy supervisor.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the deputy manager.
- The inspector toured the premises and checked risk assessment procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Tanisha Hodge

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Staff provide children with a range of toys, resources and equipment, which help to support their learning and development across the areas of learning. Children make steady progress in most areas of their learning. However, the quality of teaching varies considerably across the staff team. Children enjoy positive interactions with some of the staff, who increase their understanding of healthy lifestyles as they engage in physical activities. However, during play routines, other staff fail to involve children in conversations through questioning to promote communication and language development adequately. Despite this, children are occupied and generally happy. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported appropriately. The special educational needs coordinator gains advice from other professionals to help support children's learning.

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

Children show confidence and settle comfortably to play with available resources. Warm, caring relationships are evident between staff and children, and the key-person approach helps children settle and makes sure their care needs are met. Staff encourage children to put on their fleeces and to fasten them. This shows that staff support children to become independent with self-care skills in preparation for school. Most staff reinforce children's understanding of safety through valuable walks to outdoor play areas. They hold children's hands and remind them to stop, and look left and right before crossing the road. These experiences help children to develop a sense of danger and learn how to keep safe.

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

Leaders and managers have a general overview of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, this is not good enough to ensure all requirements are met. Management implements suitable risk assessments to help staff monitor health and safety. This is effective in promoting children's safety and reducing risks. However, leaders and managers have not ensured that all staff have a suitable understanding of their responsibilities for issues concerning child protection and safeguarding children. For example, some staff were not able to identify the signs and symptoms of possible abuse, or follow the pre-school's safeguarding policy, including who to contact for additional support if necessary. This means children are put at risk. There are some processes for evaluating practice and staff have worked hard to address actions from the last inspection. For example, they redesigned the All About Me booklets, which has improved the quality of information they gain. However, reflective practice is not robust enough to identify and address key weaknesses and the effect of these on children's care and learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	108444
Local authority	Windsor & Maidenhead
Inspection number	845947
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	25
Name of provider	Noah's Ark Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	11 March 2011
Telephone number	01628 485708

Noah's Ark Pre-school is a parent committee run pre-school and opened in 1975. It operates from Cookham Dean village hall, near Maidenhead. The pre-school is open each weekday, from 9am to 1pm, term time only. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four. The nursery employs five staff and one additional bank staff to cover absences. The manager and three of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. This includes one member of staff who holds Early Years Professional Status.

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