

The Ark Pre-School, Bromley Christian Centre

2 Masons Hill, Bromley, Kent, BR2 9HA



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

3 June 2015

8 September 2010

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		Good	2
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:

- Staff do not organise the resources and activities adequately so that they challenge and invite children to engage fully in their learning. This means the quality of teaching varies and children do not always have good quality learning experiences to help them progress.
- Staff do not always use discussions and questions to develop children's communication and language skills effectively.
- Staff do not effectively support children's understanding of letters and their sounds to extend children's early literacy skills during activities.
- Some staff do not always ensure that group times fully engage children in their learning. As a result, children's interest is limited and these times do not always support children well.

It has the following strengths

- Children are happy, and feel safe and secure at the pre-school because they form strong relationships with the staff.
- The manager has robust safeguarding procedures and she ensures staff implement these effectively to keep children safe. This means staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities securely and are able to take prompt action if they have concerns about children's welfare.
- Staff encourage children's independence well through everyday routines such as snack time. Therefore, children develop some of the skills needed for starting school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the quality of teaching and monitoring of staff practice so that staff plan activities that provide sufficient challenge, and motivate and engage children to help them make good progress.

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

- strengthen children's literacy skills by raising their awareness of letter names and sounds
- develop the use of discussions and questions to help children think and respond with their ideas
- review the management of group times so that these times stimulate children's interests to help them fully participate and engage in their learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held conversations with the manager, deputy manager, staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector checked evidence of staff suitability and qualifications, and relevant policies and procedures.
- The inspector sampled children's observations, planning and assessment records.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Ann Murray

Inspection findings

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

Staff have an adequate understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They plan a sufficient range of activities, which helps children to make suitable progress. However, at times the activities do not challenge or fully engage the children. For example, children become restless during group times because staff do not engage them well or capture their imaginations. Staff do not always use learning opportunities to talk about letter names and sounds such as when children write their names. This means children do not consistently make links to letters and sounds to support their literacy skills. In addition, staff do not always use effective questioning techniques to stimulate children's thinking so that they can respond with their ideas. Children choose from a range of resources, which promotes their independence and self-initiated learning. Staff carry out observations regularly, which help them plan for children's next steps for learning. However, they do not use these effectively to plan interesting and stimulating activities that promote children's further progress.

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

Staff provide a caring and happy environment for children. There is an effective key-person system in place and children settle well and show confidence in their play. As a result, this helps prepare children emotionally for starting school. Staff respond quickly and efficiently to children's care needs and ensure children are safe at all times. They develop children's independence skills effectively. For example, at snack time children cut up their fruit and pour their own drinks. Staff use positive methods to teach children how to behave well. For example, they teach children to share resources and to wait patiently for their turn. This supports their awareness of managing their own behaviour.

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

Managers have a sufficient understanding of their responsibilities to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff keep parents up-to-date with their children's learning and progress, which helps to provide consistency in supporting children's learning. Management supports staff through informal supervision sessions and appraisals, and encourages them to attend training to develop their knowledge. However, checks on staff practice do not robustly highlight some of the weaknesses in practice. Management has some positive strategies to develop and improve the pre-school and has a development plan to help target improvements. For example, staff have recently started to use a format to track children's achievements to assess their overall progress. This helps them to identify possible gaps in children's progress. Staff's effective partnerships with parents and other early years settings children attend promote consistency in meeting children's needs.

Setting details

Unique reference number	137365
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	836500
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	65
Name of provider	The Bromley Christian Centre Committee
Date of previous inspection	8 September 2010
Telephone number	020 8460 1660

The Ark Pre-School is a committee run group managed by the Bromley Christian Centre. It has been open since 1981 and is located in Bromley, Kent. It is open Monday to Friday during school term time from 9.15am to 4pm. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years old. There are 15 members of staff, 14 of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

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