

# Noahs Ark Playschool

Crabtree Church, Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 5RD



## Inspection date

22 October 2015

Previous inspection date

10 March 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision is outstanding

- Staff have excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and set high expectations for children's achievements. They constantly reflect on and evaluate their practice in order to establish the very best working practices.
- Staff have excellent working relationships with parents and professionals. They seek professional guidance from experts and work very closely with the local children's centre and schools. This ensures all children and families are extremely well supported.
- Children settle very easily. Staff gather detailed information about new children on entry. In some cases, they make home visits in order to quickly gain a full understanding of children's needs. Staff meticulously observe children during settling-in periods which helps establish precise and accurate starting points for learning.
- Each child benefits from a strong attachment to their key person. They evidently enjoy the company of familiar adults and happily spend time sharing stories and exploring activities together.
- Children are very confident and independent for their age because staff provide numerous opportunities for them to make choices and take responsibility. This includes during snack time and when organising their clothes and belongings.
- Parents spoken to have extremely high opinions about the quality of pastoral care offered and the rate at which their children learn. Some particularly note their children's rapidly developing social skills and knowledge of numbers and letters.
- Children's health needs are met extremely well. Staff rigorously follow health and safety procedures when preparing and serving snacks and when attending to children's personal care needs. The majority of staff are qualified in paediatric first aid in order to provide prompt and appropriate treatment when needed.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to use staff supervision and performance management to maintain and strengthen the already outstanding quality of teaching.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector met with the manager, a member of the management committee and provider. She looked at relevant documentation, such as self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.
- The inspector spoke to a selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

### Inspector

Hilary Preece

## Inspection findings

### Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

A well-defined management structure leads to safe and highly effective practice at all levels. The new manager is extremely well supported by an experienced management committee. While she is rapidly developing her own leadership skills and introducing enhanced ways of working, she benefits from an excellent partnership with the previous manager. This has supported a seamless handover and continuity in implementing the setting's quality improvement plan. Management follow rigorous recruitment and induction procedures to ensure that all staff are suitable and well equipped to meet the setting's high expectations. Safeguarding arrangements are effective and robust. Staff at all levels are knowledgeable about a wide range of safeguarding issues. They are well trained to understand their individual responsibilities in keeping children safe.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

The quality of teaching is outstanding. The manager expects all staff to attend training courses and share new skills and knowledge with the team. Following recent training, staff evaluated and reviewed their approach to teaching early writing skills and considered how to further enhance their approach. The manager recognises her team's excellent teaching qualities. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to make full use of supervision meetings and performance management systems to strengthen teaching even further. Staff provide a stimulating and very well-resourced indoor learning environment. This helps keep children engaged and self-motivated. Since the last inspection, staff have developed the outdoor learning area and continue to introduce new ideas and additional resources. This provides far greater opportunities for children who prefer to actively learn outdoors. The observation, assessment and planning process is robust and works very well. Staff continually seek the best way to use assessments to support their daily teaching practice so that they can target individual learning needs most effectively.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Staff are excellent role models. They consistently demonstrate expectations for behaviour by using approaches that help children understand their own needs and those of others. Children rapidly become familiar with good health and hygiene practices and learn to manage their own personal care. Staff are acutely aware of children's individual dietary needs. Snacks are nutritious and well balanced. Staff encourage children's physical skills in numerous ways. Children are keen to master physical equipment in the garden, with staff on hand to guide them and build their self-confidence. They eagerly take turns on a trampoline and persevere with the new challenges, such as balancing on beams.

### Outcomes for children are outstanding

Children make rapid progress in relation to their starting points and are extremely well prepared for their next stage in learning. Staff have excellent knowledge of the needs of children who speak English as an additional language, disabled children and those with special educational needs. They work extensively with parents and professionals to tailor activities to children's precise learning needs. This ensures the very best outcomes for all children, regardless of their starting points.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123613
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	854167
<b>Type of provision</b>	Sessional provision
<b>Day care type</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	26
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	33
<b>Name of provider</b>	The Trustees of Crabtree Church Trust
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 469308

Noahs Ark Playschool was registered in 1992. It employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The setting opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 1pm. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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