

The Ark Centre

The Ark Centre, 36 Main Road, Harwich, Essex, CO12 3LU



Inspection date

5 November 2015

Previous inspection date

11 November 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Teaching is good because staff are skilful, enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the learning needs of young children. They hold children's interests well and all children make good progress from their starting points.
- Staff encourage all children to try things for themselves which improves their confidence and independence ready for school.
- Leaders and managers provide strong support for all staff to encourage them to develop their practice. Staff respond well to this and eagerly attend training to help them continue to improve.
- Staff are vigilant about children's safety, and make all children feel safe and secure in their care.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Some changes made since the last inspection need more time to fully embed, for example staff do not plan new small group times as well as other activities to fully develop children's skills at these times.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to develop the planning for activities such as small group times, to prompt and develop children's skills further.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to staff, parents and children about their experiences of the setting.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of practice with the manager.
- The inspector observed children and sampled their assessment records.
- The inspector sampled documents used for the smooth running of the setting, including records of staff suitability checks, policies and procedures.

Inspector

Naomi Brown

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff have been thoroughly vetted through safer recruitment procedures. There are strong arrangements to promote staff's good practice. Leaders and managers take steps to assess staff's ongoing suitability through supervisions and appraisals. This means that teaching is good and children remain safe and healthy. Leaders and managers know the needs of all children who attend. They use resources well to support all children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Managers and leaders are very reflective about their practice. They regularly review their own work and encourage all staff to do the same. This means that they are able to make ongoing and effective improvements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff use accurate assessments of children's development to plan a wide range of exciting learning experiences for all children. Staff plan according to children's individual needs and activities support all children's strong progress. There are good activities to encourage children's physical development, for example children unlock small padlocks by matching and turning keys. Children enjoy developing their imaginations as they play outdoors, pretending to be pirates and builders. Staff readily join in children's play to extend and develop their games and encourage their concentration skills. Occasionally staff do not plan or deliver some activities as well as others, such as small group times, to encourage children to gain the most from this opportunity for learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff are fully aware of their responsibility to recognise and record any concerns and follow thorough reporting procedures. All children feel safe and valued because staff cuddle them, chat with them and offer them lots of reassurance. Staff are particularly strong at managing children's behaviour. Staff know children very well and adeptly prevent most behavioural incidents before they start. Children follow the good example of staff. This means that children learn to listen to staff and each other, ready to concentrate for longer periods, for example when they go to school. The staff have created attractive, welcoming areas for children to play, including a cosy book area. Children have free access to outdoor and indoor spaces during all types of weather. This particularly supports those children who prefer to explore and play outside.

Outcomes for children are good

All children in the setting make good progress from their starting points. Tracking of individual children shows that where children's starting points are lower than expected for their age, they are making swift progress. Children are enthusiastic to learn and are confident to try new things as well as to play with familiar toys. This positive attitude towards learning and joining in with their friends supports their successful move to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY312761
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	1025504
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	36
Name of provider	The Ark Family Resource Centre
Date of previous inspection	11 November 2014
Telephone number	01255 502063

The Ark Centre was registered in 2005 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is located within the in The Ark Family Centre in Harwich, Essex. The pre-school employs 14 members of childcare staff, of whom 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday term time only. Sessions are from 9.30am until 2.45pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and from 9.30am until 12noon on Thursday. There are currently 26 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-old children.

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