

The Ark Day Nursery

4 St. Patrick's Street, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST16 2PL



Inspection date	15 February 2017
Previous inspection date	11 September 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
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

- Staff have developed links with the local schools, nurseries and authority advisors, including those who support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These effective partnerships help staff to evaluate and build upon their practice to ensure children continue to make good progress from their starting points.
- Staff provide children with a range of exciting exploratory experiences that encourages a multi-sensory approach to learning, increasing children's engagement and focused attention. Children enjoy investigating shaving foam, sand, water, spaghetti, and custard. During such activities, staff use a broad range of techniques to effectively support children's communication and language skills.
- Staff keep parents well informed about their child's next steps in learning. These are displayed on the walls, regularly discussed with parents and shared at the termly parent meetings. This helps to encourage parents to support their child's learning at home.
- Staff build positive relationships with children by giving them their full attention and providing warm and consistent care. Those who work with the two-year-old children are particularly aware of their fluctuating emotional and physical needs. They support and plan for their individual needs well. This helps children to form secure emotional attachments within the nursery.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not consistently offer children high levels of challenge so that they move towards the next steps in their learning as quickly as possible.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- give children the challenge they need to consistently reach the next steps in their learning as rapidly as possible.

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 discussed with staff how they assess children's learning and plan for children's progress.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery's manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery's manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and from information included in the nursery's own parent survey.

Inspector

Linda Yates

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Since the last inspection, the provider has appropriately notified Ofsted of injuries requiring hospital visits and held full investigations into the circumstances of the accidents. The leaders and managers found that the accidents were unavoidable, however, they have reviewed all associated policies and procedures to ensure staff remain vigilant. Staff have a secure understanding of their role in the prevention or early identification of abuse and neglect. Staff have regular individual support meetings where they can discuss their future training requirements. The management team analyses and reflects on the progress of individual and specific groups of children, and compares them across the nursery. This helps the team to ensure that the planning meets each child's needs and covers all aspects of their learning.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff use a wide range of effective teaching strategies in their interactions with the children. For example, during a woodwork activity, children are taught how to use tools and try out new skills safely. Each child is praised for their attempts at hammering nails into a piece of wood, thereby developing their self-confidence. During such activities, staff ask the children questions to extend their thinking and vocabulary. Staff have completed training on promoting children's literacy development. They encourage older children to identify the initial sounds in words and skilfully and enthusiastically model how to sound the letters correctly. Staff prepare children well for the next stage in their learning, such as school. However, staff do not regularly offer children high levels of challenge so that they move towards the next steps in their learning as swiftly as possible.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staffing arrangements ensure that children are adequately supervised. The manager completes annual and daily risk assessments which are regularly reviewed in order to protect children from harm. Staff provide children with nutritious and balanced meals and snacks. Children regularly use the nursery's large, indoor soft-play facilities with steps and a slide shoot. Furthermore, they use a range of climbing and balancing equipment outdoors. Children behave well. They learn to share and take turns, and are rewarded for their good behaviour with stickers and high fives.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress. Babies sit on the floor and investigate the cornflour and water mixture with their hands and spoons. Toddlers are engrossed as they practise their scissor skills and cut out shapes to stick on their Valentine's Day card. Children in the pre-school room thoroughly enjoy the daily literacy sessions. They are confident at naming and sounding some of the letters of the alphabet, and older children are beginning to read short words. Children are confident and happy, and talk freely and enthusiastically to staff and visitors about what they are doing.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY377952
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	1065211
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	64
Number of children on roll	98
Name of registered person	Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance
Registered person unique reference number	RP520159
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2013
Telephone number	01785 254501

The Ark Day Nursery was registered in 2008. It is one of 11 settings managed by a non-profit incorporated voluntary association. The nursery employs 23 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status and another holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 6. A further eight staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and seven hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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