

The Little Ark

The John Wesley Church of England Methodist Primary School, Wesley School Road,
Ashford, Kent, TN23 5LW



Inspection date	14 July 2017
Previous inspection date	8 January 2014

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		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff keep parents fully involved in their children's learning. For example, they regularly share resources, such as popular books and props to bring the story to life.
- There are extraordinarily positive relationships between staff and children. This helps children settle rapidly and into play. Children are extremely happy, highly confident and have an excellent sense of belonging. Their behaviour is excellent.
- The manager and staff closely track children's progress. This enables them to quickly highlight any gaps in their development. Staff provide good individual support for children to catch up in their learning and make good progress.
- Children learn good early writing skills to support their future learning. For example, they 'write' their own recipes and shopping lists during role play.
- Staff skilfully support children to prepare for the move to school. Children learn what changes they will experience, such as having their lunch in the school hall.
- There are good opportunities for children to learn about the natural world around them. For example, they understand the cycle of life, as they watch chickens hatch from eggs.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not always make the most out of partnerships with other settings that children also attend to strengthen the consistency of their shared care and learning.
- Staff miss some opportunities to build upon children's enjoyment and interest in technology and extend their skills in operating equipment even further.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the partnerships with other settings that children attend to help provide a more consistent approach to their shared care and learning experiences
- extend children's interest and develop their understanding of operating equipment and developing their technology skills more.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff interactions with children.
- The inspector viewed the indoor and outdoor environments.
- The inspector looked at written documentation, including a sample of policies and procedures, risk assessments and staff training records.
- The inspector spoke to children, parents and staff, and took their views into consideration.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Kelly Hawkins

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The manager and staff effectively evaluate their current practice. For example, they have daily discussions to reflect on how well the activities of the day engaged children. This helps ensure that staff keep children motivated to learn. The manager closely monitors the quality of care and teaching that staff provide children. For example, she carries out daily observations as they teach and provides them with helpful advice. The feedback highlights any training needs. The manager and staff attend regular training to help build on their skills and knowledge even further. For example, staff learn about different ways in which children play. Staff use additional funding effectively to meet children's individual learning needs. For example, they purchase additional learning experiences from outside agencies, such as animal experts. Safeguarding is effective. All staff have a good knowledge of the safeguarding procedures, including knowing who to contact to follow up concerns if they arise. They help protect children's safety and welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff support children to develop good communication skills. For example, they ask children challenging questions to extend their thinking skills. They use visual prompts to positively reinforce words for children who require additional support. Staff skilfully build on children's interest. For example, when children are excited by the builders nearby, they are keen to become 'builders'. Staff encourage them to make links to the real world as they dress up as a builder and use foam to 'cement' their brick structures together. Children are well prepared for the next stages in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children show impressive levels of kindness and empathy. For example, they actively organise team games to make sure that everyone has a turn. Children have outstanding opportunities to challenge their physical skills. They all very excitedly explore how they move in challenging ways, such as climbing cargo nets. Children develop an incredibly good understanding of healthy eating. For example, they are enthusiastic about the interesting foods they grow and try, such as corn. Children have extensive opportunities to develop excellent levels of respect and understanding of other people's similarities and differences in the wider world. For example, they celebrate interesting events, such as 'national dress day', where they learned about Spanish flamenco dresses.

Outcomes for children are good

All children, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in relation to their starting points. Children gain good mathematical skills. For example, they confidently count up to 20 and complete simple sums. Children participate in more-complex activities that require a good level of maturity. For example, they learn how to use real tools safely in woodwork activities, such as hand drills and hammers.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY391487
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	1068940
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	55
Name of registered person	The Little Ark Preschool
Registered person unique reference number	RP905741
Date of previous inspection	8 January 2014
Telephone number	01233 614 660

The Little Ark registered in 2009. It is located in John Wesley Church of England Methodist Primary School in Ashford, Kent. The pre-school is open on Monday to Thursday from 9am until 3pm, and on Friday from 8.45am to 2.45pm, during term time only. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school employs 11 members of staff, nine of whom hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3 and one member of staff holds a relevant qualification at level 4.

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