

The Ark At Steiner Academy

Thomas Hall, Cowley Bridge Road, Exeter, EX4 5AD



Inspection date

13 November 2017

Previous inspection date

Not applicable

| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
|--|----------------------|----------------|---|
| | Previous inspection: | Not applicable | |
| 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 build children's confidence well, and encourage them to become independent and take responsibility for their own self-care needs. For example, children persevere as they peel, chop and grate food for snacks, developing good coordination and dexterity.
- Children are very creative and imaginative, and play harmoniously as they share their ideas with friends during role-play games. Staff skilfully know when to step back and allow children to play without interruption, so children can become fully engrossed and take the lead in their learning. Children are motivated and make good progress across all areas of development.
- The management provides effective support and coaching for staff, such as through regular supervisory meetings and by encouraging staff to observe each other's practice. This has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching. For example, staff have slowed their speech to make their communication with children clearer.
- The management forms good links with other settings that children attend. They share ongoing information about children's learning, to help them plan consistent experiences.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- At times, staff do not initiate or extend conversations with children as effectively as they could, to teach children new words and support them to share their ideas.
- Staff do not always successfully capture children's attention and help them learn to follow instructions between activities and routine tasks. For example, staff do not engage children well at tidy-up time, and children become unfocused and overly noisy.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- make better use of daily routines and activities to engage children in detailed discussion about what they are doing, to help extend their vocabulary further
- review the periods between activities and routine tasks, to consistently engage children and help them understand staff's expectations.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children, and children's engagement during adult-led and self-chosen activities.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspector spoke with children, their parents and staff to take account of their feedback.
- The inspector held meetings with managers at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including self-evaluation, children's learning records, and staff's qualification and training certificates.

Inspector

Sarah Madge

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. The management and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children, including knowing how to refer concerns about children's welfare to the relevant authorities. Staff receive good encouragement from the management to proactively identify their own training needs, to support their ongoing professional development. Through training, staff have learned how to use whole-group adult-led activities well to teach children to sit, listen and concentrate, which helps develop the skills children need for school. The management routinely evaluates the setting to identify and target areas for development. For example, they are making changes to the garden area to provide more learning opportunities for children. Their current plans include enhancing the tracking of different groups of children's progress to look for more patterns in learning, and finding additional ways to work with parents.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff provide children with a wide range of challenging and enjoyable learning experiences. For example, children practise their cutting, grating and peeling skills when they prepare food for snacks and lunch. They concentrate well and enjoy the hands-on experience of exploring different fruits, such as picking the seeds out of pomegranates. Staff routinely introduce mathematical language to children's play. For instance, they talk about numbers as they help children to weigh rice and encourage children to count out the number of plates they need at lunchtime. Staff make regular observations of children's achievements and use this information well to accurately assess children's progress over time. Children who have special educational needs receive tailored support from the knowledgeable staff, who work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children are confident and feel welcome. They arrive happily and are eager to see the staff and their friends. Staff are kind, enthusiastic and regularly praise children's efforts to build their self-esteem. For example, when children say they cannot manage something, staff reassure and support them until they succeed. Children show pride in their achievements and call to staff, 'I did it!' Children develop good social skills and learn to share and take turns with their friends. Staff help children assess risks for themselves, such as prompting children to consider their safety when they climb on furniture. Children develop good physical skills as they run, climb and balance in the garden.

Outcomes for children are good

Children make good progress from their starting points and learn the skills needed in preparation for their move to school. They are eager to participate in the wide range of activities offered and enthusiastically join in with whole-group, planned activities. Children confidently explore the environment in their own time and way, and make decisions for themselves in their learning.

Setting details

| | |
|--|---|
| Unique reference number | EY491187 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 1027277 |
| 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 | 3 - 8 |
| Total number of places | 20 |
| Number of children on roll | 48 |
| Name of registered person | The Exwick Ark Limited |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP903483 |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable |
| Telephone number | 01392 757371 |

The Ark At Steiner Academy registered in 2015. It is a privately owned, operating from the grounds of Steiner Academy Exeter. It draws inspiration from some of the Steiner philosophy, although is not itself a Steiner setting. The pre-school is open between 9.15am and 2.45pm on Monday to Friday, during term time only. The breakfast club and after-school club are available for school-aged children only who are pupils of Steiner Academy Exeter. The breakfast club is open from 7.45am to 9.15am, and the after-school club opens from 3.30pm to 6pm, during term time only. The pre-school employs seven staff, all of whom are qualified to level 2 or above in childcare and education. It receives funding to provide free early education to children aged three and four years.

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120354.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at www.ofsted.gov.uk/user.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017

