

# The Ark Centre

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



<b>Inspection date</b>	19 October 2018
Previous inspection date	5 November 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents

### **The provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:**

- Staff do not ensure that the learning environment provides sufficiently challenging experiences that actively motivate and engage all children. In addition, children's focus sometimes diminishes during large-group activities.
- Staff do not gather precise information from parents about children's learning at home prior to starting.

### **It has the following strengths**

- Staff keep children safe and protect them from harm. Management and staff monitor aspects of the provision. They complete risk assessments and check the environment daily, to ensure that all areas used by the children are safe and suitable.
- Many of the families using the nursery have had family connections with the setting for many years. Parents comment positively on the quality of care and learning their children receive. Those staff who work with children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve particularly successful partnership working. They use consistent approaches to help support children's individual development.
- All children have daily opportunities for exercise and fresh air in the outdoor area. This helps to promote their physical development and supports their well-being. Children enjoy being outdoors, for example, they make marks with chalks and experiment with soil in the mud kitchen.
- At times, staff demonstrate effective teaching skills to support children's learning. For example, during small-group activities staff model some language and ask children questions to build on what they already know.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

### To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
improve the quality of provision to ensure that all children experience engaging and challenging experiences to support them to make good progress.	14/12/2018

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

- enhance the provision for children's learning during routine group activities to keep them fully engaged and focused
- work more closely with parents to gather detailed information about what their children can already do so that their starting points in learning can be collaboratively identified on entry.

### 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 spoke with staff during the inspection.
- The inspector completed joint observations with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider and nursery manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

**Inspector**  
Karen Harris

## Inspection findings

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

Staff do not gather precise information from parents about their children's capabilities when they first start at the nursery to establish their abilities accurately. However, once staff get to know children they use observation and assessment to identify what children need to learn next. The manager uses effective methods to monitor and evaluate the progress made by different groups of children to help improve their achievements. Procedures are in place, such as regular supervisory meetings, to support staff practice, although these are not effective to secure good-quality teaching consistently. Safeguarding is effective. Staff complete relevant training and have a sound knowledge of child protection procedures. They know the appropriate action to take should they have any concerns a child may be at risk of harm. The provider has appropriate recruitment and induction procedures in place to help to ensure that staff are suitable for their role. Staff are appropriately deployed and supervise children at all times. They do not leave children alone with new staff who have not yet been vetted.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

The quality of staff's teaching is variable. This means that children make steady rather than good progress in their development. Staff recognise that children learn through play and, generally, support them to engage in activities so that they make some progress in their learning. At times, staff's interaction with children is good. They get down to the children's level and talk to them as they play. Staff gently remind children about the need to take turns and share. They sing rhymes during whole-group activities and encourage children to join in with the familiar actions. However, for some children these group activities do not help them to maintain their engagement and involvement.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Staff organise the indoor and outdoor environments so that children have access to a suitable range of toys and resources. Children chose what they want to do. However, for some children, staff do not always provide a stimulating and challenging environment to help them make the best progress. On occasions, children initiate their own games and lapses in behaviour occur. Staff talk to children in a calm manner as they remind them of the nursery rules. They frequently praise children throughout the day. This helps to build children's confidence and sense of self-esteem. Staff are friendly and offer close attention and reassurance to help children to settle, promoting their emotional well-being. They communicate effectively with one another to meet children's individual care needs.

### Outcomes for children require improvement

Children enjoy their time at the nursery. However, weaknesses in teaching mean that staff do not fully support children to make the best possible progress. Despite this, children do develop some key skills in readiness for their next stage of learning, including their move on to school. For example, they are becoming more independent as they select what they would like to eat for their snack. Children freely access books and enjoy sharing them with staff.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY312761
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10081764
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full day care
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	26
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	40
<b>Name of registered person</b>	The Ark Family Resource Centre
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP524682
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 November 2015
<b>Telephone number</b>	01255 502063

The Ark Centre registered in 2005. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9.30am until 2.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

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.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto: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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, 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 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

This publication is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120354](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120354).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/user](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/user).

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

