

Inspection of The Ark Ltd

Kitson Hall, London SW13 9HJ

Inspection date: 16 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff have high expectations for all children's learning. They plan a curriculum that is broad and balanced. This motivates children to play and learn actively. Staff enhance the curriculum by offering children extra-curricular activities, such as French, music and ballet. This helps children, including those who are quiet and less confident, to make good progress in their learning. Staff create a vibrant and welcoming environment that benefits children well. Children arrive at the nursery happy and eager to learn. They delight in exploring their senses, for instance when they make imaginary food and drink. Children play in a print-rich environment that ignites their interest in early reading. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. Staff use open-ended questions skilfully to extend children's vocabulary. Children form close relationships with staff and their peers. They show that they feel safe and their emotional well-being is secure. Staff are positive role models for the children. They are very warm and approachable. Children behave well and develop positive attitudes to learning. They gain the important skills and attitudes they need to succeed in life.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The quality of teaching is consistently strong. This is because staff observe and assess children's learning accurately. Staff make effective use of the information to plan a variety of stimulating and purposeful activities. For example, when they observed that children needed to develop their dexterity, they provided them with cooked spaghetti to explore and cut. Children showed good hand-to-eye coordination as they cut pieces of spaghetti for different purposes.
- Children have very good knowledge of numbers, shape and measurement. They hear and use mathematical language, such as 'full', 'heavy' and 'big' to compare quantities and solve problems. Most children count unaided from one to 10 and beyond.
- Children form positive friendships with their peers. They behave kindly and know how to express their feelings and emotions. Children understand what is expected of them, listen to staff and follow their instructions willingly. This is evident, for example, when there is a change in the daily routines. However, on occasion, young children lose concentration during group times because the activities go on for too long.
- Staff work closely with parents. They share information with parents about their children's learning and development to ensure continuity between home and the nursery. Parents speak very highly of the staff and the service that they provide. They praise the many events that children experience to broaden their understanding of different people, families and their communities.
- Staff provide many opportunities for children to play indoors or outdoors. This enables children to make decisions about their play. For example, indoors,

children play happily in the construction area and practise their early writing. Outdoors, children enjoy using ride-on toys and large equipment, such as the slide, which helps to develop their physical skills. Other children are equally delighted as they play in the sand or water. Children of all ages are active and independent learners.

- Staff teach children to share, take turns and play cooperatively with others. They give children plenty of attention and reassurance, which benefits their self-esteem and confidence. There are good hygiene routines that help to raise children's awareness of self-care skills.
- The staff team is highly motivated. Staff work well together to ensure they provide quality experiences for all children. Staff say that leaders provide 'amazing' support that helps them keep their practice and skills up to date. For example, following training, staff enhanced their knowledge of how to manage children's behaviour more effectively, particularly that of the two-year-old children.
- The self-evaluation process is effective. Leaders reflect on their practice rigorously, involving staff and parents to ensure continued improvements for the benefit of children.
- Staff miss opportunities to involve children to help look after their learning environment, particularly when the playroom and the outdoor area become crowded with toys.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff complete regular safeguarding training to keep them informed of current guidance and policies. They are confident in identifying indicators that might suggest that a child is at risk of harm. Staff know how to report any concerns to protect children's welfare. Leaders follow rigorous checks to assess staff's initial and ongoing suitability to work with children. They meet with staff regularly to help manage their workload. Staff are vigilant. They carry out frequent risk assessments of the premises and supervise children well. There are effective security systems in place to help keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- ensure that planned group activities take into account the needs of younger children
- encourage children to develop more responsibility for helping to care for their environment.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY547821
Local authority	Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number	10109555
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 to 5
Total number of places	23
Number of children on roll	17
Name of registered person	The Ark Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP547820
Telephone number	07710577677
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Ark Ltd registered in 2017. It operates from a community hall in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. It is open term time only, from 9am until 12.05pm, Monday to Friday. The nursery receives free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are four staff members. Of these, three hold an early years qualification at level 3 and one at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marisol Hernandez-Garn

Inspection activities

- The inspector and leaders completed a learning walk. They discussed how staff organise the curriculum.
- The inspector observed activities, both indoors and outdoors. She observed an adult-led activity with the nursery manager and discussed children's learning.
- The inspector interviewed staff at appropriate times and assessed their understanding of the learning and welfare requirements. She interacted with children during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of staff's suitability. She held a meeting with leaders to discuss how they evaluate the quality of the provision and their roles and responsibilities.
- The inspector spoke with parents during the inspection and took account of their views about the nursery.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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