

# Inspection of Noah's Ark Nursery at the Lea

The Lea Primary School & Nursery, Moorland Road, Harpenden, Herts AL5 4LE

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Inspection date: 10 October 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is outstanding**

Children receive the best possible start to their education in this outstanding nursery. Practitioners form exceptionally strong bonds with the children. This enables them to feel safe and secure in this warm and nurturing environment. The highly skilled practitioners have a clear vision of how to deliver the ambitious and deeply embedded curriculum. Children take a lead with their own play, enabling them to feel empowered to follow their own ideas. For example, children incorporate their real-life experiences into role-play opportunities, such as going to hospital. They dress up in doctor's uniforms and explore X-rays as they learn about different bones in their bodies.

Practitioners have high expectations for children's behaviour. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary. They show respect for their peers and adults that care for them and have an exceptional attitude towards learning. Children are familiar with routines. They anticipate what comes next in their day. For example, when they hear the tambourine shake, they instinctively know it's 'tidy-up time'. Children work as a team with the practitioners to help tidy up the toys.

Children become confident learners. Practitioners consistently praise children for their efforts, which raises their self-esteem. Children's needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are fully understood. As a result, all children make excellent developmental progress from their starting points.

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

- The managers are inspirational and provide strong leadership. They promote a positive culture, which cascades through the team. The nursery works exceptionally well with the school it is based in. Managers have established a unique and special relationship with the school. This allows the most cohesive, wrap-around care to be provided to the children. Detailed handovers on children's learning, development targets and well-being are shared between school staff and the nursery team. This enables children to receive seamless continuity of care and make superb progress.
- Children develop a very secure knowledge of mathematics. Practitioners use every opportunity to introduce numbers and shapes. For example, children learn about the 'number of the week' and count to six using their fingers. Children make shapes from play dough, using shape cutters. Practitioners help them identify the shapes they have used and teach them the difference between a hexagon and a pentagon. They count the sides together and work out which shape it is.
- Children are swiftly developing literacy skills for their future learning. Practitioners read stories enthusiastically. They ask questions, leaving time for

children to respond. They recall familiar stories and learn to recognise specific letters, such as 'f'. Children talk about different words that begin with 'f', which helps to deepen their understanding.

- Children who speak English as an additional language are given unparalleled educational experiences. Practitioners are trained in sign language to help children communicate effectively. They learn phrases from children's language spoken at home to support speech and language development. Practitioners use visual cues to help children have a voice and make their own choices. As a result, children consistently use new vocabulary and make excellent progress in their speaking.
- Partnerships with parents are extremely effective. Parents speak very highly of the nursery. They say their children thoroughly enjoy attending the nursery and make remarkable progress in all areas. They value the 'amazing, nurturing care' that practitioners provide. Parents are kept fully up to date with their child's learning and development through a secure online platform and daily handovers. Families are provided with a wide variety of ways to continue children's learning at home. For example, they take books and resources home and attend workshops delivered by the nursery to celebrate events such as Father's Day.
- Children show high levels of independence in preparation for school. For instance, children are independent in their self-care skills. They understand the importance of washing their hands before eating snack and learn to dress themselves independently. Children become familiar, as their learning is integrated into the school environment. They explore books in the school library and have activities, such as visiting the class hamster in the Reception classroom. This helps children to transition smoothly and be completely prepared when they move on to the next stage of their education.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Practitioners show excellent awareness of how to keep children safe. They know the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and/or neglect and are confident in reporting any concerns about the welfare of the children. The managers have high expectations of practitioners. They ensure their safeguarding knowledge is kept up to date and hold regular discussions in team meetings. Practitioners carry out robust risk assessments to ensure the provision always remains safe. They remain vigilant and supervise children extremely well. Children are taught about safety at every opportunity. They learn about road safety and how to keep each other safe as they play at the setting.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2592164
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10249178
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	3 to 9
<b>Total number of places</b>	37
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	37
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Noah's Ark Harpenden Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2519662
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 767939
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Noah's Ark Nursery at the Lea was registered in 2020 and is privately owned. The setting employs eight members of staff. Of these, five hold qualifications at level 3. It is open from 12.30pm until 6pm, Monday to Friday, during term time. The pre-school and after-school sessions can be joined together. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Emily Woodhead

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk. She talked to the inspector about the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors. She discussed children's progress with staff.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation. This included evidence of staff suitability, staff training records and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of written feedback provided.

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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