

Inspection of Abacus Ark Nursery

St Paul's Church, St Johns Hill, London SW11 1SH

Inspection date: 27 July 2023

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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children of all abilities and from different backgrounds have a wonderful time at Abacus Ark Nursery. They are very well cared for by staff who are extremely warm, caring and approachable. This helps children to feel safe and secure. Children show high levels of social confidence. For example, they greet unfamiliar adults happily and enthusiastically. There are plenty of opportunities for children to make choices about their play. This promotes their decision-making and independence skills effectively.

Children respond positively to the high expectations of staff. They are able to retain knowledge and recall previous learning. For example, older children talk to staff about how caterpillars turn into butterflies using a good vocabulary. Children of all ages enjoy singing and dancing sessions. These sessions present them with sensory and physical challenges, which have a positive impact on their motivational levels. Younger children explore various malleable materials, such as yoghurt and ice. They delight in exploring the smell of citrus fruits in a water activity. These opportunities encourage children to develop their creativity and sensory skills. Children relate well to each other. They play together, sharing and taking turns.

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

- The provider and managers are highly committed leaders who aspire to achieve the very best for the children and their families. They include the views of parents to evaluate their strengths and areas for improvement. The managers are currently reviewing the indoor play areas to ensure that children get the most out of their nursery experience.
- Parents are very complimentary about the staff and the service they provide. They find that staff are kind, friendly and offer personal care to their children. Parents feel very involved in their children's learning and are able to share relevant information with staff. Parents also praise the highly successful transition process for their children within the Nursery and into other settings.
- Staff help children, including those who speak English as an additional language, to make rapid progress from their starting points. For example, they make good use of visual props to develop children's understanding and language skills. In addition, staff sing songs and read stories as part of their curriculum. This helps to extend children's vocabulary.
- The curriculum for mathematics features highly in the educational programmes. Staff use numbers and mathematical language, such as 'big' and 'small', spontaneously and during group activities. This practice contributes to the development of children's mathematical skills from an early age.
- Staff observe and assess children's learning regularly. They use the information gained to plan an ambitious curriculum which takes into account children's

interests. However, during some planned activities, staff do not focus enough on the intended learning in order to achieve the highest level of teaching.

- A key feature of the Nursery's work is to build strong relationships with parents and people within their community. These relationships contribute greatly to children's educational experiences. For example, they experience a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including yoga, cooking and drama sessions. They organise outings, such as to the local park and farm. However, there are fewer opportunities, particularly for younger children, to support their understanding of the wider world.
- Staff report that they receive good levels of support from the management team. They are offered expert guidance by external professionals to enhance their teaching practice. For example, staff have learned how to organise the daily routines more effectively. As a result, children have more time to play because it has reduced the waiting time for them between activities. Some staff have also completed training which has improved their knowledge of how to prevent biting incidents at the Nursery. Following this, they have put successful strategies in place to help children to understand their feelings and emotions. This has had a positive impact on children's behaviour.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider and managers follow robust procedures for assessing the suitability of staff to work with children. The managers ensure that staff complete safeguarding training to keep their knowledge up to date. This stands out as an area of strong practice. Consequently, staff are highly confident to talk about safeguarding issues, including how to identify signs of extreme views or behaviour. There are clear procedures for reporting any concerns about a child's welfare. The managers deploy staff effectively to help supervise children, indoors and outdoors. They follow clear procedures for emergency situations 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:

- strengthen the support given to staff to ensure that they plan group activities as effectively as possible
- explore other ways of enriching younger children's experiences to support their understanding of the wider world.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY497084
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10301226
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 2
Total number of places	95
Number of children on roll	80
Name of registered person	Abacus Ark2 Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP534520
Telephone number	0207 738 1943
Date of previous inspection	25 January 2018

Information about this early years setting

Abacus Ark Nursery registered in 2015 and it is located in the London Borough of Wandsworth. It is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm, except for two weeks during the Christmas period. There are 20 staff members who work directly with children. Three hold qualified teacher status and 10 hold qualifications at level 2 or level 6. The Nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two and three years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marisol Hernandez-Garn

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 managers and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the Nursery.
- Parents spoke with the inspector to share their views on the quality of the provision. Some parents also left written feedback which was taken into account.
- The managers showed the inspector around the Nursery and explained how they implement the early years curriculum. One of the managers conducted a joint observation with the inspector. The impact of the observed activity on children's learning was assessed by the managers and inspector.
- The inspector observed children at play throughout the day. She talked to staff and engaged with the children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector discussed the self-evaluation process with the managers and viewed the required documentation, such as staff's training records. She also held a discussion with the provider about how they operate their childcare provision.

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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