

Inspection of Noah's Ark Nursery and Pre School

St Justus Church, Clifton Close, Rochester, Kent ME2 2HG

Inspection date:

18 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

The leadership of the setting is weak. The provider has not ensured that the manager is fully supported in her role. Those responsible for the lead in safeguarding do not demonstrate a robust enough understanding of all aspects of child protection. Where staff have identified potential risks to children's safety on the premises, the provider has not swiftly ensured the maintenance of these areas. This does not ensure that children are kept safe and well.

Despite the weaknesses in leadership and management, children arrive happy and confident when entering the nursery. They build strong relationships with staff from the start. Staff take time to get to know children and ensure they support children's interests and learning needs well. Staff have high expectations for each child. For example, they arrange activities that will appeal to each age and stage of development. Staff ensure that they prepare a curriculum that supports all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children behave well. For example, staff support them to show consideration for others by taking turns and sharing. Children learn valuable social skills as they interact with others during the fun and engaging activities that staff provide.

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

- The provider has not ensured Ofsted is notified of changes to the manager, as legally required. In addition, there is not a named deputy available to support the manager, should they be absent. Vital oversight to ensure the safe and efficient running of the setting, such as maintaining the premises, is not effective. Gaps in the safeguarding knowledge of key staff have not been identified or addressed. This compromises children's safety and well-being.
- Children have access to a stimulating learning environment. For example, they enjoy imaginative play in a large role-play area. This contains resources that help children feel comfortable in familiar surroundings, such as various items found in the home. Staff also place photographs of the children's family members on the wall. Children are encouraged to share who the significant people are in their lives. This provides children with opportunities to understand what makes them unique, in relation to their peers.
- Children are constantly exposed to language through singing and stories. They enjoy playing with resources that encourage creativity and spark discussion. However, at times staff give children too many instructions at once. They do not offer children the chance to respond in between questioning. This has an impact on the important two-way flow of conversation that ensures staff can check children's understanding.
- Children with SEND are well supported. Staff plan activities with advice and guidance from external professionals, such as teachers of specialist learning.

They set up activities that promote progress towards children's identified next steps in learning. For example, children who enjoy sensory play choose from sand, soil and play dough. This encourages them to develop simple language or words associated, such as 'pop, mix, roll' and 'pour'. As a result, children make good progress towards their learning goals.

- Children enjoy many activities that encourage physical development skills. For example, children have an opportunity to engage in active play at they practise movement and balance in a soft-ball pool.
- Parents praise the nursery for their good communication and information sharing. They are aware of their children's next steps in learning and value the opportunity to continue support for children at home. Parents comment that their child has grown in confidence and shown clear progress since joining the nursery.
- The manager and staff have regular discussions to evaluate the quality of education that they provide. For example, they have recently placed a focus on creating more explorative play experiences for children. Staff receive regular opportunities for supervision with managers. There is effective support available for staff to access training to continually improve their teaching practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Managers, who are also the designated leads for safeguarding, do not have a full and thorough understanding of some key aspects of child protection, such as the 'Prevent' duty guidance. This means that they cannot offer secure advice and support for staff, should these issues arise. Despite this, staff do know how to make the necessary referrals. For example, they know what procedure to follow, if an allegation is made against a member of staff. Although staff complete risk assessments and identify hazards and unsafe areas, the provider does not ensure that the premises are suitably maintained to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that the designated leads for safeguarding have a robust knowledge and understanding of all aspects of child protection	02/10/2023

ensure there is a named deputy manager, who has the necessary skills and knowledge to take charge in the manager's absence	02/10/2023
ensure that the premises used for the purpose of childcare are safe and suitable.	03/10/2023

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

- strengthen staff's skills further in communicating effectively with children during their play experiences, to enhance their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2656214
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10307374
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 3
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	7
Name of registered person	Noah's Ark Nursery and Pre-School Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2656215
Telephone number	07828088580
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Noah's Ark Nursery and Pre School is in Medway and is open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 3.30pm in term time only. The nursery employs five members of staff, three of whom hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3 or above. It receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kate Williams

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to/communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a circle time activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

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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