

Noah's Ark Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY277774
Inspection date	01 May 2007
Inspector	Jan Healy
Setting Address	Princecroft Lane, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 8NT
Telephone number	07759211172
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Registered person	Noah's Ark Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Noah's Ark Pre School opened in 1991. It operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of Princecroft Primary School in the town of Warminster, Wiltshire. A maximum of 20 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 22 children from two to four years on roll. This includes 19 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties.

The group opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 09:00 until 15:00.

One full-time member of staff and two part-time staff work with the children. All the staff have early years qualifications, which include NVQ level two, three and six. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit as the staff maintain the cleanliness of the premises by checking the playrooms are clean and tidy before they arrive for play, so such chores do not interrupt the children's activities or take the staff away from directly working with them. Suitable hand washing and drying facilities are in place and the staff take this opportunity, to teach the children about the importance of personal hygiene, to keep themselves free from germs. Paper tissues are freely available for the wiping of noses, which are disposed of after a single use, to help prevent the spread of infection. Medication records are maintained with details about the dosage and time administered, which are shared with the parents, to help maintain the children's good health. The parents are requested for their written permission for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment, to prevent the delay in the children from receiving the appropriate care.

The staff are aware that nutritious food is essential for the children's well being, therefore, they provide fresh fruit for the children's mid-morning snack. A jug of fresh drinking water and cups are within children's reach, which they help themselves to when thirsty, helping to prevent dehydration and to aid the children's independent skills. Written information is readily available for parents perusal, detailing different ideas for the provision of healthy lunches, which the children eat whilst sat together, making for a sociable occasion.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children and parents are warmly greeted upon arrival entering a playroom prepared with activities to stimulate the children's excitement. There are pictures of the children's artwork displayed on the playroom walls, which helps to enhance the children's confidence and self-esteem as this proves that the staff value their efforts. Parents have the advantage of a notice board, which contains relevant information about forthcoming events and copies of policies, statements and procedures, which they are welcome to browse.

All resources, furniture and equipment are in good condition and meet the needs of the children, for example, there are child-sized tables and chairs, which enable the children to play and eat in comfort. There are a balanced range of toys, which are stimulating and fun, for example, there are a wide range of interactive games, which the children enjoy playing with the staff, who aid them to solve the puzzles.

Effective procedures are in place to ensure the children's safety, for example, there is a fire blanket which is easily accessible in the kitchen area, fire extinguishers which the staff are adept at using and an evacuation procedures is in place, for the event of an emergency. However, there is no smoke alarm fitted, which may cause a delay in the staff being notified of impending danger. The staff hold current first aid certificates, so they are able to deal confidently with an accident. Details of all accidents are shared with parents, so they are aware about any injury to their child. The staff supervise the children at all times to protect their safety, and they check the toys and resources for any damage, so they do not pose a hazard to the children.

The staff have efficient knowledge and understanding about the procedure to follow in the event of noticing a child protection concern. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of

abuse and neglect and know the children in their care well, so are quickly alerted to a change of behaviour or appearance and have experience of liaising with the relevant authority to protect the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The staff are friendly and approachable, making for a pleasant atmosphere, where the children feel confident and assured. Reassurance is provided for the children who are engaged in an activity which is new to them, for example, on a trip to 'Longleat', when they handled the snakes in the pet corner. Well organised play opportunities allow the children to further their learning and development as the staff give careful thought to the space and resources required to make the activity a success. Significant steps in achievement are shared with parents and advice is offered as to how they can continue their child's progress at home, helping to aid consistency.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage of learning and use the time and resources available to the children's benefit, as the staff spend the majority of their time working directly with the children, and ensure the activities are well organised, by providing and using suitable equipment. The staff are well trained and continue their development by attending a wide range of training courses, to keep themselves up to date about current legislation. All the children are included in all the activities available, as the staff plan carefully to include the children who have a learning difficulty or who speak English as an additional language.

The children are making good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Upon arrival, they greet each other and communicate their feelings, such as happy or sad through a 'feeling tree', where they place cards of faces depicting a variety of facial expressions. This helps the children to develop an awareness of their own needs and to become sensitive to the needs of their friends within the group. The children show sympathy and concern when another is hurt, for example, a child scrapped her knee when she fell in the playground and they gathered to look at the graze and to pat her head. They are learning that at times, they have to wait to gain an adults attention and to take their turn when riding on the wheeled toys in the garden.

Strong progress is being made in children's communication, language and literacy. During register, the children listen carefully for their name and reply appropriately. They listen and respond to stories, but the staff do not extend their learning by introducing them to the concept of a book, for instance, talking about the author, pages, pictures, illustrator and whether the book is a hard or soft back, which helps to extend their understanding of literature. The children recognise some simple words, using 'Ed tech letter flips' and recognise their name when written on their placemat during snack. Titles and words adorn the walls of the playroom, aiding the children's understanding that print has meaning, and they attempt to write their name, holding their pencil correctly.

The children are making successful progress in their mathematical progress. The children sing counting songs to aid their number skills, for instance, 'Five Little Ducks', count how many children are in the group each day and are learning to recognise numerals up to ten. Water is used to aid the children's understanding of displacement and they use wet and dry sand to

compare the difference in weight. The children are learning about measurement when comparing their foot size using a ruler. The children are learning about patterns when threading different colour beads onto string. They are able to recognise a range of shapes and to say how many sides a square and triangle have.

Efficient progress is being made in the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The children investigate through the use of their senses, for example, when exploring the properties of water, they are encouraged to describe what it feels like and to listen to the noise it makes when being poured into a glass. The children enjoy recognising the difference between wet and dry sand, adding drops of water to make it stick together, so they are able to form the sand into shapes of their choice. They are learning about everyday technology, for instance, a computer, which they use to play a variety of games and have the use of programmable toys.

The children are making consistent progress in their creative development. They explore colour and can recognise and name a variety of them, including primary and some secondary colours. They are learning through the mixing of paint, that they can create a different colour and select their choice of crayons for different objects in their drawings. They understand that some objects have a traditional colour, for instance, the sun and bananas are yellow. They show imagination in their pretend play, incorporating objects from the home corner into the roles they create, including a range of dressing up clothes.

Challenging activities are aiding the children to make good progress in their physical development, for example, to throw and catch a ball with increasing accuracy. They move with confidence and are learning to show awareness of their own and others space, by avoiding to bump into each other. They ride on wheeled toys with enthusiasm and travel over, under and through a wide range of small and large equipment. They are learning to handle and use tools safely and with increasing control, such as scissors and cutlery.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The staff are aware that the children's attitudes towards others are formed in the early years, which is why they treat all the children with respect, speak to them kindly and teach them about how their words and behaviour has an effect on the other children in the group. The children have the advantage of being cared for a member of staff who is bi-lingual, who aids their understanding that there are many other languages in the world. Labels in English and Welsh are clearly visible and the children learn about other cultures through the use of resources, which reflect positive images of diversity, including dolls, pictures in books, posters and dressing up clothes.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The staff are proactive in identifying and ensuring that the children who have a learning difficulty are provided with the support and care that they require. Written plans incorporate how activities can be adjusted, so all the children are able to join in. The staff raise the other children's awareness by the displaying of posters containing positive images of disabilities, aiding their understanding of similarities and differences.

Effective behaviour management strategies encourage the children to behave well, for example, by the staff praising the children when displaying wanted behaviour. The children are aware of and abide by the 'Golden Rules', which are in place to ensure the happiness and safety of

all the children in the group. The staff and the parents work together to resolve any problems that occur with incidents being recorded, so a pattern can be identified and a resolution sought.

Partnership with parents is good. Information about the group is freely available and all parents are provided with a prospectus on application and they are invited to visit the group during a session, so they are able to make an informed choice as to whether the care is what they require for their child. A settling in period is negotiated, as the staff are sensitive to the needs of different children. Parents are kept up to date about events taking place, such as visitors coming to the group, including a chef and diver through regular newsletters. The parents are made aware of the topic the children are working on and request the parents help, by allowing them to bring in items from home, with regard to the current project, which their child can talk about. Parents are invited to participate in the groups activities, including sports day and are requested their help when fund raising and to become a member of the committee. The parents are knowledgeable about the procedure to follow in the event of them wishing to make a complaint, as a policy is readily available.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The person in charge holds a relevant qualification in early childhood education and care, putting her knowledge and understanding in place for the benefit of the children's further development. She is enthusiastic and keen to provide the children in her care with good quality activities, so they make consistent progress in their learning. She has a clear vision for how the group is to be run, providing her staff with the strong leadership they respect. The staff work well together, learning from each others strengths and supporting each others weaknesses, so they are able to form a strong team. Appraisals take place annually to help identify training needs for which courses are sought, to help maintain a high level of staff knowledge.

All the staff have a clear understanding about their roles and responsibilities and execute them well. They keep an up to date record of attendance, which details the times of both the staff and children's arrival and departure, so they are all accounted for in the event of an emergency. Each child has a key member of staff who cares for their individual needs, so they feel secure and confident. The staff work in partnership with the committee, who help with the running and administration of the group, so responsibilities are shared and strengths are used to the groups advantage.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The person in charge maintains efficient records to aid the efficient management of the provision, to help promote the children's care, learning and development. All records are stored confidentially to protect the children's personal details and are stored for a reasonable period of time. Records and documentation are readily available for inspection so relevant checks can be made.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the staff were requested to adapt the activities on offer for the children who have a learning difficulty, so they are able to join in with their friends. This is now in place, allowing all the children to participate in all the activities on offer. They were requested to allow the children to express their creative freedom, which is now in practice, so the children further their imagination. The complaints policy now contains the address of Ofsted, preventing

any delay in the parents contacting the regulator. A refrigerator is now available for the storage of food, to prevent it from spoiling.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve fire safety by the fitting of a smoke alarm

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- extend the children's understanding of the concept of a book

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk