

Noah's Ark Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY294973
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Inspector Aileen Ewins

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Noah's Ark is a day nursery, registered under its new owner in 2004. It is set within its own extensive grounds, which also accommodates a small children's farm and woodland area. The farm has a number of small pets as well as ponies, a cow and goats. The farm has a current veterinary certification.

The babies, toddlers and pre-school children are accommodated in three separate units within a spacious barn conversion, which also houses the offices and kitchens. Each unit has its own access to enclosed outdoor play area. The whole setting is situated in a semi-rural location and children attend from neighbouring towns, the nearest of which is Woking.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is registered to provide care for 65 children in the early years age group from three months of age. A Montessori classroom is available for the three- to five-year-olds run by a trained Montessori teacher. The manager of the nursery holds a Foundation Degree. Of the 16 other staff in place, 13 have a relevant childcare qualification and four are working towards a recognised qualification. The majority of staff have a paediatric first aid certificate and half the staff have taken part in safeguarding training.

Noah's Ark Day Nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 07:30 until 18:00, throughout the year. It provides facilities for disabled access and toilets and welcomes children with specific learning difficulties and needs, as well as those children for whom English is a second language. Currently there are 89 children on roll. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery receives funding for three- and four-year-olds.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children and parents are welcomed into the nursery by staff who are committed, caring, creative and enthusiastic. Children's individual needs are planned for exceptionally well. Staff act upon the policies and procedures in place, which further creates a safe and inclusive environment. The management have been proactive in successfully evaluating the nursery's provision in both welfare needs and children's development and learning, highlighting and recognising their strengths; as well as reviewing the environment to ensure that it is interesting and accessible to each and every child. They have acted fully upon the recommendations set at the last inspection, and identified their aims for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- further enhance children's understanding of shape and space, using everyday opportunities to measure, talk about and recognise patterns, using language such as bigger or smaller, lighter or heavier.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

An extensive range of policies and procedures are in place which promote a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment. These procedures are shared with parents and acted upon fully by staff. The leadership and management structure ensures that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities through in-house and additional training, and all staff complete a comprehensive induction. Regular meetings and appraisals help to identify training needs and staff development is encouraged and promoted successfully. Future training includes that for the entire nursery on linking sounds and letters. Staff are committed to their work with the children and the nursery ethos. They work well as part of a team. Almost all staff have completed paediatric first aid training, with half having attended safeguarding training. Staff are aware of how to safeguard the children they care for. They take a professional approach and are able to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures for protecting children. Equally staff are aware to protect themselves from false allegations. Risk assessments are conducted effectively on all aspects of the environment and for the animals within the farm area. Daily checks within the nursery, the garden, woodland and farm areas help to minimise hazards and the risks to children.

Children's records are maintained confidentially. Registers maintain an accurate record of children's attendance. Parental written consent is in place prior to any medication being administered; when this is required, prescribed medications are administered by senior staff and documented appropriately. Parents are made aware of any accidents which occur and these records are also completed efficiently.

Children's needs are met successfully. Partnerships with parents are a top priority. New parents and children visit the nursery and are provided with all the necessary information. They further share vital information with staff about initial starting points, children's likes and dislikes, achievements and needs. New children are welcomed by being shown where to hang coats and bags on their peg and through flexible settling in sessions. Parents are invited to attend meetings and complete questionnaires about the day to day care the nursery provides. Parents from each group are invited onto a parent-link committee. This is a valuable aid which provides a useful way of communicating between nursery staff, the children and parents on day-to-day issues. Parents are welcomed into the nursery at any time and participate in fundraising as well as social events. Two parent evenings are held each year. Opportunities are therefore in place for parents to meet with their child's key person to discuss development and progress in a more formal manner. Regular feedback through discussions, daily diary and home-nursery sheets further provide exceptional opportunities for staff to understand and develop the relationships they have with individual children. Provision is made for children who need particular care, who have specific needs, or for whom English is a second

language. Good use is made of the local authority and other professionals who aid and assist in these matters.

Staff have a strong knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). They are positive and enthusiastic with the children and have a strong understanding of children's individual needs. The management staff have completed a thorough self-evaluation of their provision, identifying their strengths and acknowledging the hard work since implementing the EYFS. They further use the self-evaluation to inform themselves of areas for continuous improvement. They have successfully met the recommendations set at the last inspection, which therefore enhances the outcomes for the children who attend.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The nursery is set in a delightful environment. Children have everyday opportunities to explore and experience the woodland and farm areas, spending time with the animals and learning about the wildlife and nature on their doorstep. All rooms within the nursery have direct access to the large courtyard garden, set out with a variety of surfaces which include a safety surface, grass and paving. Outdoor play is an integral part of the day. Children's activities are planned with their current interests in mind. Free flow play, with an almost seamless flow between the indoors and outdoors, is in place for the older children. Toddlers and babies also go outside for at least two sessions each day. Parents are aware to provide children with suitable outdoor clothing and footwear to maximise the benefits of the outdoors. Play is child led and adults take a back step as children use their imaginary talents, for example in pretend painting outside, carrying a bucket full of brushes and rollers and using a crate to reach higher areas as a child imagines himself as a decorator. Children enjoy messy and malleable play. They are confident to put on aprons, peg up paintings, washing their hands afterwards. All six areas of learning within the EYFS are provided for, both indoors and out. For example, physical play equipment helps children to understand and extend their boundaries and imagination; creative play is readily accessible, children communicate through discussions, songs and stories and are provided with opportunities such as blackboards and other materials to practise their mark making. Opportunities to see and use number are consistent, but the nursery are aware to further enhance children's understanding of shape and measure through everyday activities. Children experience the sheep being sheared and ponies being shod and take turns using the computer. Learning zones for each area are provided in classrooms with complementing areas within the garden. Adult-led activities are enjoyed by the children; innovative staff extend children's interests by repeating the same activities, first indoors and later outdoors but on a larger scale. Children are motivated within their own learning and curiosity and share their interests, knowledge, experiences and understanding with one another and the staff who care for them.

A key person system is in place throughout the nursery. Staff work closely with the children, providing purposeful play opportunities to help them develop to their full potential towards the early learning goals. Family group time enables staff to work with the children in small groups, stimulating current interests and encouraging

children's development and self-esteem. Planning is effective and activities are evaluated daily. Each child within the nursery has a learning and development journey. Observations around children's development are conducted regularly and appropriately. Effective use is made of these observations to inform staff of children's individual next steps and future planning. Staff interaction with children throughout the nursery is enthusiastic and positive. The Montessori classroom is used effectively during the day and the three- to five-year-olds share time within this room and benefit from the Montessori methods and resources. Staff are warm and caring, which means that happy and settled children are comfortable in their surroundings. They remain stimulated throughout the day and demonstrate an interest and independence in their play. Children are listened to and staff use a range of resources, including puppets during group and story times, which increases children's confidence to speak in groups. Children behave extremely well, are kind to and respect one another. The positive approach in place encourages children's confidence and promotes their personal, social and emotional development. Babies are cared for well. The room is clean and babies play on a carpeted area designed for a relaxing and homely mood. The babies have individual cots and clean bedding. Resources promote sensory experiences and staff have a warm rapport with the babies. Sleep times are monitored appropriately and home routines are adhered to. Toddlers feel safe and secure. They have a large room inside and a part of the garden is dedicated to their own use. Toddlers are encouraged to explore and learn new skills.

Children learn and understand healthy routines. They know to wash their hands after messy play or being outside, after the toilet or potty training, and before meals. Food is provided by an outside caterer and is of a very high standard. Children's dietary needs and allergies are catered for and both the staff and the cook who serves the meals understand the plate system in place to secure the health and well-being of the children. Snack time is a social event. Children sit together and enjoy their meals. In the older age groups children serve one another at snack time and help themselves to vegetables at lunch. Children understand about one another's differences and similarities, and appreciate the needs of others. For example, children planted daffodil bulbs in aid of the Marie Curie Cancer Appeal. Children are able to easily access materials to help them explore. For example, scientific drawers housing binoculars and magnifying glasses are used by the children, along with walkie-talkies, dance mats, egg timers and torches. Children demonstrate a strong ability to master computer knowledge, such as mouse control and keyboard skills. Children learn about their own safety. They climb and use resources outside and understand the safety guidelines about walking in the woodland area. Children take part in fire drills and are therefore aware of the necessary procedures needed to evacuate in times of emergency.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met