

# The Ark at Waddington Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY386753  
**Inspection date** 28/04/2009  
**Inspector** Anne Barnsley

**Setting address** Village Hall, Mere Road, Waddington, LINCOLN, LN5 9NX

**Telephone number** 01522 722942

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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

The Ark at Waddington Pre-school was registered in 2008 under a new owner but has been open for many years. It operates in a community hall in the village of Waddington, Lincolnshire. The pre-school uses the main hall and the room leading off it, the small room and the entrance hall as well as the kitchen and toilets. There is a fenced outdoor play area. The pre-school is accessed at ground level and is a single storey building. There is a ramp for disabled access and a large car park for parents, staff and visitors.

The group is registered to care for a maximum of 36 children on the Early Years Register and compulsory part of the Childcare Register and currently has 54 children on roll. Pre-school sessions run from 09.15 until 11.45 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and from 09.15 until 15.00 on Wednesdays and Fridays during school term-time. The group runs a play-scheme for two weeks each summer. There are a total of 11 staff including the manager, who work varying sessions over the week. Most of the staff have a relevant qualification.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children are very excited when they arrive and enjoy their time at the pre-school. Staff work extremely well together as a team. Children have a good range of resources to choose from and make confident choices. Staff have not developed processes fully for observation, assessment and planning although this is recognised and a system for improvements is in place. All children are fully included and the setting has established strong relationships with parents.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop staff's knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- develop the systems for observations, assessments and planning to clearly show children's individual starting points and the next steps in their learning
- expand the information in the existing risk assessments and include all potential risks and details about how these are minimised.

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

All necessary documentation is in place and policies and procedures show how children's health, safety and welfare needs are met. These have all been updated since the setting re-registered under new ownership and most are completed well. However, the risk assessments of the premises do not contain sufficient detail about identified hazards and how these are made safe. In spite of this, daily safety checks are completed of many areas within in the setting. Practitioners have an

understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and have worked with another successful setting to develop their knowledge. However, formal training about the EYFS has not yet been completed to secure the knowledge the staff have and, as a result, there are some weaknesses in how this is applied in practice. They plan for children's learning and assess their progress, recording observations and photographs in their individual folders to share with parents and schools. A positive start has been made however, observations, assessments and planning do not show each child's start point clearly or how they are individually progressed to the next steps in their learning.

Practitioners work extremely well as a team and arrive early before each session to set out the environment to make it welcoming and inviting. Staff communicate with each other effectively and are dedicated, motivated and committed to enhance the quality of care and learning for the children. Continuous evaluation of the service identifies the strengths of the practice and the areas to improve upon such as having had an outdoor area built recently and recognising what training needs to be completed. Areas for improvement are prioritised and steady progress is being made since the new owner assumed responsibility.

Strong partnerships are developed with parents, carers and other agencies involved in the welfare of children. Parents significantly contribute to aspects of the setting by volunteering to work with the children on occasions and through organising fund raising events. The new parents' brochure is nearly completed and highlights the aims of the setting and how children learn through play. Information is regularly exchanged with parents about all aspects of their child's care.

Children are safeguarded because practitioners have a very clear knowledge of the signs of possible abuse and know procedures to follow in the event of a concern or allegation. Relevant training has been completed and additional training is in place. Further to this staff provide good levels of supervision that enables children to explore their environment safely.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children arrive at the setting eager to play with their resources. They show their parents what they have to play with and chat happily to staff. They are secure in a familiar routine and they enjoy a good variety of play experiences. Children are confident and make independent choices about what they would like to do. There is a positive balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities, which enables children to work independently and with others. They enjoy circle time where each child is personally acknowledged and welcomed, although this can last too long for younger children who tend to become restless and anxious to get back to play. Children are well supported as staff are attentive to their needs and also mindful of not imposing when children are engrossed in their own imaginative world.

All areas of learning are promoted to children and they enjoy participating in planned activities such as learning about things that sink and float and joining in with simple experiments which help them to reason and solve problems. They make good use of sit and ride toys which enable them to be active, develop spatial

awareness, negotiate round cones, and learn to follow instructions about stopping and starting at the traffic lights. Children develop an understanding of technology by using the computer and electronic weighing scales which they use to understand weight, measure and quantity when they make muffins. They are enthusiastic about playing outdoors and ask staff when they can go out. The outdoor area is currently being developed and does not, as yet, fully promote learning in all areas. However, there are clear plans in place to achieve this and arrangements have been secured with the local authority to provide further support. Recent support from the local authority has improved the indoor learning environment through the introduction of learning zones that cover all areas of learning. These promote independent choice as children know what to expect and plan their own ideas. Children have many opportunities to be creative and to develop their emergent writing skills and they have a cosy book area where they can listen to stories or use books independently.

Children's behaviour is generally good and on occasions when this is not the case, children respond very well to staff and these situations are resolved quickly. Practitioners have a calm and caring approach which enables children to learn safe boundaries for their behaviour. Children develop a sense of right and wrong as they follow simple rules and listen well to staff. Staff give clear explanations about their expectations for appropriate behaviour and they acknowledge children's efforts as achievements with praise. Children take turns and share, they help tidy away and develop skills that foster their economic well-being. This is a harmonious group and children are helpful and display a sense of belonging.

Children enjoy a healthy, balanced diet and enjoy a selection of fresh fruit at snack times. Drink is accessible throughout the day and most children are capable of helping themselves. Younger children are well supported with this and practitioners ensure that they do not become thirsty. Children's personal hygiene needs are met very well and their independence in the bathroom is promoted. Very young children in nappies or those being potty trained are cared for well by staff who keep records of this to share with parents. There is a separate bathroom that is used for nappy changing and potty training so that children are not rushed in the process and this can be an interactive and encouraging experience. The environment is safe and secure for children. Children learn about safety through sensitive reminders. For example, they are asked to take care and not run indoors and they know to use the sit and ride toys in the designated area.

## 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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	3
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
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