

Noah's Ark Pre School Wells

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Fiona Robinson

Setting address c/o St Joseph and St Teresa Catholic Primary School,
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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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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.

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Description of the setting

Noah's Ark is a Catholic Pre-School and was registered in 1987. It is situated within the grounds of St Joseph and St Teresa's Catholic Primary School in Wells, in Somerset. There is ramped disability access to the building. The pre-school has sole use of the building and a small securely enclosed garden area, and outside log cabin. It can also use the school environment, outside grassed area and hard standing playground. There is provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. It is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 16 children from two to the end of the early years age range may attend at any one time, none of whom may be under two years of age. There are currently 14 children on roll, all of whom are in receipt of funding and are under five years of age. At present there are no children from five years to under eight years on roll. The pre-school is open each weekday from 8.55am to 3pm, during term time. Children attend from Wells and the surrounding area, for a variety of the sessions on offer. There are four members of staff who work with the children. Of these one holds an Early Years Foundation degree; one holds a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 3 and is working towards an Early Years Foundation degree; one holds a NVQ at level 3; and another member of staff is working towards level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy the activities and achieve well in this bright and stimulating environment. They are fully included in indoor and outdoor play and behave very well. Staff have excellent links with parents and carers, the host school and the community, and as a result, information is shared very effectively. They take into account most of the children's individual needs and interests and are very skilled at increasing their understanding of keeping healthy. The manager and staff have a mainly good knowledge of the pre-school's strengths and areas for improvement, such as developing the use of the wider outdoor environment. They demonstrate a good capacity for future improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop a clear overview of children's attainment on entry to the pre-school and the progress they make over time
- include sharper detail when recording the outcomes of self-evaluation and the identification of improvement priorities in order to support quality and extend practice.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is protected well because staff have a very good awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues. Security is given a high priority and parents and carers are familiar with the rigorous procedures for the collection of children. Risk assessments are carried out regularly to keep the indoor and outdoor environments safe. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that adults working with or having contact with the children are suitable. Comprehensive policies and procedures are implemented by staff to keep children safe. Staff are deployed effectively in the indoor and outdoor environments to ensure children's safety. Fire drills are practised regularly to familiarise staff and children with the routine. Resources are tidily stored, accessible to the children and well-maintained. The pre-school is well-led and managed and the manager embeds ambition and drives improvement well. Staff meet regularly as a team to discuss planning and activities and to identify areas for improvement. Good progress has been made in addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection, demonstrating the pre-school's good capacity to improve. The manager and staff work purposefully together and there is a good, shared commitment to develop the pre-school. The views of parents and carers are valued and continuous reflective discussion and evaluation take place. However, written self-evaluations are less effective in terms of supporting quality and extending practice to improve children's outcomes, because they lack detail. Staff have a clear idea of the areas for improvement, such as increasing the children's use of the wooded forest school area. They make effective use of a good range of resources to meet most of the needs of the children. Although key staff monitor children's individual progress effectively to plan the next steps in learning, there is not a clear overview of the children's attainment on entry and the progress they make over time. Staff actively promote equality and diversity to a very high level and ensure children are fully included in activities and achieve equally. They provide excellent support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, so that they make similar progress to their peers. Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding and they are very familiar with policies and procedures. Staff share information very effectively through informal discussions, comprehensive newsletters, the website and the parents' notice board. Parents say their children enjoy attending pre-school because staff are very caring, approachable and supportive of them. They feel that key staff keep them very well-informed of their children's achievement and progress and value the learning journey records that document children's progress. They are very supportive of special events, such as Sports Day and the Christmas Bazaar, and lead activities, such as pasta making and the celebration of the festival of St Nicholas. The partnership with the host school is outstanding and consequently children experience a very smooth transition into full-time education. There are excellent links with outside agencies to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Outstanding links have been established with the local church and the community and children benefit from visits from a group which participates in the local carnival.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

There is well-organised, purposeful indoor and outdoor play for the children. Staff value the children's interests and ideas and include these in activities. Themes such as Bonfire Night and Autumn result in colourful displays which make the environment interesting and welcoming. Key staff evaluate their planning carefully and use the information gained and their ongoing assessments, to help children build on their existing skills. As a result, children achieve well and make good progress across all areas of learning. The extent to which children make a positive contribution is outstanding because they fully respect the golden rules and boundaries they help to compile. Their behaviour is exemplary because staff are excellent role models with a consistent approach to behaviour management. Children cooperate very well as they tidy up and share resources sensibly with one another. They are very kind, thoughtful and considerate of one another as they construct models and create collages. Staff actively promote their independence and encourage them to make their own decisions as they play. Festivals such as Harvest, Diwali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year are celebrated and give the children an excellent appreciation of other cultures and customs. For example, children are helped to understand that Swedish people celebrate the festival of St Lucia. Children develop an outstanding understanding of keeping healthy. They experience excellent opportunities for exercise in the activities area. They learn about making extremely healthy choices at snack time and the importance of taking exercise. Children eat a wide range of fruit and vegetables and enjoy making fruit salads and smoothies. They use equipment safely as they make pumpkin cakes, pizzas and sandwiches. They readily explain the importance of washing their hands before eating or handling food. Their physical skills are developed very well as they balance on the climbing frame and ride their bicycles and pedalled vehicles. Children develop a good understanding of keeping safe and staff ensure that they learn about fire and road safety. They benefit from trips to the local fire station and talks from the police and ambulance services. Children are keen to learn and make good progress. Their communication, language and literacy skills are developed well through role play in their Chinese restaurant, carnival float and log cabin. They listen carefully to stories and enjoy taking turns to look for the bear that is lost in the wooded area. They enjoy building dens and searching for insects. Children's creative skills are developed well as they make colourful collages with leaves and create glittering pictures of fireworks and bonfires. Most children count to fifteen and beyond with confidence and recognise two-dimensional shapes in the indoor and outdoor environments. They enjoy singing counting songs such as 'Five Speckled Frogs' to help them to practise their counting skills. They develop their understanding of the town well, identifying special buildings, such as the cathedral and church. Most children write their own names and are able to complete simple programs on the computer. They enjoy planting and growing vegetables and herbs, and making a scarecrow to protect their vegetable garden. They sing songs such as 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star' tunefully and cooperate very well as they build homes for the 'Three Little Pigs'. Overall, they are prepared well for their next stage in learning.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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

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