

Noah's Ark Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY305369
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Inspector Shirley Peart

Setting address West Park Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 4LB

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Noah's Ark nursery was registered in 2000. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery operates from an adapted building, which is situated in a residential area in Wrekendyke, South Shields, South Tyneside. The nursery serves the local area. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The babies and children who attend after school are cared for on the first floor, which is reached via a flight of stairs.

The nursery opens Monday to Saturday for 51 weeks of the year from 7am until 9pm. A maximum of 78 children may attend the group at any one time, of whom no more than 66 can be in the early years age range. There are currently 83 children attending who are within the early years age group. Children attend for a variety of sessions and full days. Wrap-around and out-of-school care are also available each weekday from 7.30am until 9am and 3pm until 6pm during term time. The nursery provides funded early education for children and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is one of three in the area and is managed by a private provider. The nursery employs 15 members of child care staff. Of these, most hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, and some are training for qualifications. Two staff hold Early Years Professional status. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for by a caring staff team who are generally deployed well to meet children's all round individual needs successfully and overall resources are managed sufficiently. Staff use the Early Years Foundation Stage framework successfully in practice, so that children make good progress in their learning and development. Recording and documentation is fully in place to support children's well-being, health and welfare very well. Staff work effectively with parents and other professionals to ensure that children's overall care and learning is consistent. A clear system of action planning to identify areas of improvement is in place, so that the nursery has a good capacity to improve further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- organise and improve the indoor and outdoor environment to ensure that older pre-school children have sufficient opportunities to participate in

- activities such as water play, painting, exploring the natural world and role play when they choose
- build on everyday routines, such as meal times, to maximise and support children's thinking and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding children as they know who to contact and where to seek advice should they have concerns about a child's welfare. Recruitment, selection and induction procedures are appropriate to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children, and all staff undergo Criminal Records Bureau checks before they can start work. Recruitment procedures are an area for further development identified by the owners, which they are currently working on. The environment is secure and comprehensive risk assessments ensure that children are kept safe. Accident and medication procedures are good and followed by staff. Children are monitored closely if they have an accident while in the nursery.

The nursery owners and area manager are keen to improve the nursery further and are currently aiming to appoint a new manager in the near future. They have robust action plans in place, which are clearly targeted. All staff are involved in this, and they act on any feedback from parents via information from questionnaires to develop the service and partnerships further. Parents receive a good information pack and regular newsletters, and relevant information, such as the complaints procedure, is clearly displayed in the lobby. Daily verbal and written information is exchanged so that parents are kept well informed, and formal parents' evenings are held when they can discuss their child's development with their key person in more depth. Questionnaires indicate that parents are pleased with the provision, and comments about a key person include, 'she always puts the children's interests first.' Babies' care and routines are closely monitored in conjunction with the parents, for example by regularly updating the individual care plans, to ensure that children's needs are well met.

Overall, the environment, staff deployment and resources support children's learning and development appropriately. However, older children do not always have sufficient opportunities to follow through their choices in specific areas or activities such as water play, painting and role play. This is due to the current restrictions staff put on the numbers of children using the areas. Some staff are not sufficiently resourceful to provide alternative similar options for children so that they can carry out their chosen activities. The outdoor area provides a safe, spacious place for children to play on small bikes and climbing and balancing equipment; however, the outdoor classroom is not set up efficiently and the planting and digging areas have not been used over the summer months, which limits children's opportunities to maximise their learning opportunities and understanding of the natural world in the outdoors.

Children with any specific needs are well supported. For example, staff work closely with speech and language therapists and parents. They go to regular

meetings and carry out activities and games supplied by the therapists to ensure that no children are disadvantaged. They have three-way communication diaries for any children who also attend other early years settings. This ensures that they all work together consistently to support the children so that they make good progress.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, and planning, observation and assessment systems are good. Most staff are clear about how to observe and assess children across the six areas of learning. They use a very good tracking system that enables them to identify any gaps in provision or any particular areas of learning that a child may not be sufficiently covering. This then enables them to target specific activities with clear learning intentions to help children progress. Staff use post-it notes to record the observations, they link these to the specific areas of learning and place them in the children's learning journeys. Parents are also given good opportunities to contribute their observations on what their children do and enjoy at home on an ongoing basis. Some information, such as gaps in provision, is displayed on tracker sheets, which enables staff to see at a glance what is missing. This identifies individuals and whole groups of children, which then help the staff to target areas of learning. For example, when a key person in the two-year-old room noticed that most children were not displaying an interest or understanding of simple problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy skills, they planned more activities around this. General planning also builds on children's interests well. For example, as children enjoyed a printing activity, staff aim to do this again and add different items, such as fruit and vegetables.

When staff work with children during adult-led activities, they encourage and extend their play very well; for example, when children put pegs into a peg board staff encourage them to follow a pattern. Children successfully complete this with help and recognise familiar colours. Staff reinforce and encourage children to repeat colours that they are not so sure of, which helps them to consolidate their learning. Most children in the older pre-school room use scissors eagerly and competently as they cut around shapes, which helps with their fine dexterity, mathematical and concentration skills. Children are confident and articulate. They explain where they have been playing and what they have been doing, they ask questions, and they introduce themselves by name. They make their needs known and are beginning to understand how to stay safe, as they practise the fire drill or count heads along with staff before they go outside. Staff help children prepare for transitions to school or when they are ready to move into the next age-group room. This is done sensitively to meet the individual needs of the child, and their key person accompanies them so that they are fully supported. Children's good emerging writing skills are displayed as they copy words underneath adult writing and pictures for the daily routine, which gives children a good sense of belonging.

Children enjoy substantial home-cooked meals on the premises, such as curry, rice

and naan bread, and they clearly enjoy fresh carrots and cucumbers for snacks. Children are given some opportunities to be independent as they give out the cutlery and cups and return their plates when finished, although they have limited opportunities to serve themselves and pour their own drinks. Staff also do not build on everyday routines and activities, such as meal times, to maximise and support children's learning. For example, when children talk about 'fizzy pop' or when they choose vegetables from a plate, staff do not extend children's thinking by encouraging them to talk about healthy options or what is good for them, and they do not encourage children to count the vegetables they choose. Children have regular opportunities to be outside in the fresh air, and the covered verandas and the outdoor classroom enable them to go outside in all weathers, which promotes their overall well-being very well.

Older children use their imaginations spontaneously and very well; for example, four children in the role play area pretend to be a family, including a dog and the mummy and daddy. They cook the food and feed it to the dog. Children happily engage in play, working cooperatively and sharing tasks and pretend to take on other roles. They are beginning to recognise the needs of others; for example, when the inspector indicated that the roof in the mezzanine area was too low for an adult to stand up, children kindly offered their seats.

Children's behaviour is good and they tidy up enthusiastically as they dance to lively music that plays in the background. If there are any minor conflicts or if children are upset by another's actions, staff are quick to intervene and give explanations of why behaviour is not acceptable and encourage children to give cuddles and say sorry. Children in the two- to three-year-old room enjoy singing and action songs and copy actions successfully, such as rolling their arms and whispering. They sit attentively when listening to a story and count along with staff, shouting excitedly when they recognise numbers. Babies and toddlers are well cared for and are given lots of one-to-one attention. They eagerly explore their environment and have good opportunities to play with paint during planned activities. They also have very good opportunities to develop their physical skills, such as walking along benches outside with support, and have plenty of space to crawl or to pull themselves up on sturdy chairs.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
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