

Noahs Ark Weston

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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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Description of the setting

Noah's Ark Pre-school was registered in 2002. The pre-school operates from a converted loft in an old Victorian school, in Weston Village, Bath. The pre-school has access to a main room and associated toilet and kitchen facilities, and occasional use of a large hall downstairs. All children have access to a grassed and tarmac area for outside play. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday during school term times, sessions are from 9.15am until 12noon, with afternoon sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12.15pm until 3pm. Children attending the pre-school are mainly from the local area and surrounding villages.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 40 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The pre-school is registered to receive government funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is privately owned and five members of staff are employed to care for the children. Four members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 3 in childcare.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment where staff know them well as individuals. Inclusive practice is promoted throughout the setting and children for whom English is an additional language are particularly well supported, ensuring all children are included at their personal developmental level and are able to fully participate in all activities offered. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are effective systems in place to promote partnership with parents, carers and other professionals. This ensures that the children's welfare and learning needs are well met. The owner/manager and staff team are committed practitioners. They regularly reflect on and evaluate their practice so that continuous improvements in the care and education they provide for children can be made.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve opportunities for children to develop their independence, particularly in choosing activities and at snack time
- develop further the use of the outside area to enable children opportunities to explore across all areas of learning

- increase opportunities for children to find out about and use information and communication technology to further support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well through the policies and procedures in place that help to keep them safe at all times. Training updates for safeguarding children have been undertaken and staff are aware of child protection issues and how to refer any concerns. All required documentation and records are in place to promote children's ongoing well-being and good health. Children's safety is further promoted as a robust system is in place with regards security. Staff ensure no one can enter the building without their knowledge and all visitors are requested to sign in and out. Daily safety checks are carried out and effective risk assessments are completed for all areas of the provision and outings. There are clear recruitment and induction procedures in place to check staff's suitability to work with children and to ensure they know their responsibilities. Effective staff deployment means that children are supervised at all times and supported in their activities to make good progress in their development. Children access a broad range of resources chosen and set out by staff and further resources are stored in cupboards in the main play room. However, there are no systems in place to show children what is available and this does not encourage children to independently identify and choose their preferred activities.

Partnerships with parents are good. Parents are welcomed into the setting and encouraged to share information about their child to enable positive working relationships to develop and the children to settle well. Staff keep parents informed about their child through newsletters, daily discussions and learning diaries. Parents have positive views about the service they receive. They contribute to their child's learning and development records, for example, through the 'All about me' sheet and through more formal meetings during the pre-school year. Staff work in close liaison with parents to ensure all children's individual needs are met, including those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. There are a good range of positive images and resources that children can access, such as books, dressing up clothes, dolls and displays, which promote respect for diversity and positive attitudes to differences. Effective links are made with other early years providers, as well as with other professionals and outside agencies. This ensures consistency and continuity is promoted for children.

The owner/manager and staff work well as a team. Regular staff meetings and appraisals are conducted, and as a result, staffs' professional development is monitored and training issues identified. This ensures that the team continue to build upon their skills and knowledge. Staff continually review pre-school practice and are committed to further developing the pre-school setting. The use of self-evaluation is generally good and helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and set realistic targets for improvement. The recommendations set at the last inspection have been addressed, which has improved aspects of children's safety, information for parents, and learning and development.

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

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school happily learning through play. Adults support children's learning well. For example, they help children to settle as they arrive and interest them in the resources and activities provided. Staff ask many questions to engage children during circle time, this enables children to actively participate and promotes their language and communication abilities. Initial sounds and letters are explored each day and fast repetition helps to reinforce children's learning. Children have good opportunities to develop their imagination as they play in the home corner, dressing up and caring for dolls. They have access to a range of creative resources that stimulate their minds as they use glue sticks, scissors, wool, material and different types of paper to create pictures. All children take delight in singing familiar songs and dancing along to favourite tunes, joining in confidently with known dance steps and actions. Children have access to everyday technology in the role play area, such as, play cookers and telephones. They also have access to an audio centre and camera, however, opportunities to use information and communication technology such as, a computer are not regularly provided. Children start to develop their problem-solving skills as they take part in a memory game. They take turns to choose an item from a tray and put it into a bag, then as a group try to remember which child chose which item. The children sit very quietly and follow the game carefully demonstrating their memory skills as they are able to identify who put which items into the bag.

Children enjoy an interesting balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities each day, keeping them busy and occupied as they play and learn. The pre-school staff demonstrate a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn. They make observations of the children's play and identify each child's next steps in learning and development, monitoring progress in all areas. Staff utilise the information they have obtained from observations to plan further activities and play opportunities for children's future learning. Overall, children's learning diaries record the good progress they are making towards the early learning goals.

Children's health and well-being is actively promoted by the pre-school. For example, children are encouraged to blow their own noses and dispose of tissues appropriately. Good hygiene is promoted at all times, such as hand washing before eating and after messy activities or visiting the bathroom. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and children bring fresh fruit from home for a healthy snack. The garden area is enjoyed by the children and they can benefit from fresh air and physical activity. However, the area is not used to its full potential to provide children with opportunities to explore across all areas of learning. Children start to develop their independence as they attempt to put on their coats to go outside and take themselves to the toilet. However, children's independence is not always fully encouraged, particularly at snack times when their snack boxes are put out ready and drinks are poured for them by staff. Children show a good sense of safety within the setting. They learn how to use equipment such as scissors safely, practise the emergency evacuation procedure and sit down when eating. Children

feel safe and demonstrate this through their eagerness to play together and approach staff for help and support. Children generally behave well, they learn to take turns, share resources and are encouraged to help tidy away toys and help with tasks such as sweeping up the shredded paper. Children know what is expected through familiar routines and explanations and receive regular praise and encouragement for effort and achievement, which helps boost their self-esteem and confidence.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	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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