

# Noah's Ark Christian Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	200695
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Lucy Showell
<b>Setting Address</b>	Castle Hill Baptist Church Hall, Gerrard Street, Warwick, Warwickshire, CV34 4HD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01926 410705
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Noahs Ark Christian Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Noah's Ark Christian Playgroup is a privately owned setting which opened in 1992. It operates from two rooms within Castle Hill Baptist Church hall in Warwick, Warwickshire. A maximum of 26 children attend the setting at any one time. Noah's Ark Playgroup opens four sessions a week in term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions from 09.30 until 12.00. All children have access to a safe and secure outdoor play area.

In the playgroup, there are currently 33 children on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for early education. The setting serves families and children in the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs five full-time staff, four part-time staff and two volunteers support the children's care. Of these, three members of staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher mentor from the Local Authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to understand and learn about the importance of personal hygiene through discussions and the daily routines. Many of the older children are independent in their personal care. For example, asking for the toilet and automatically washing their hands when necessary. Children's overall health and welfare is promoted through the effective policies and procedures in place. They are protected from the spread of infection because staff implement good hygiene procedures such as continuous cleaning and sterilising equipment after use. They stay healthy because the staff follow their illness policy, which is shared with parents, and ensure children who are not well enough do not attend.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because individual requirements are recorded by parents on the registration forms and this information is used. For example, staff check records before cooking activities and have good awareness of any special dietary requirements or allergies children may have. Children choose from a range of healthy refreshments at snack time and those who bring packed lunches follow the example of staff as they eat nutritional meals.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to develop physical skills. Fine motor skills are developing well as they take part in general activities. At the craft table children select a range of resources such as sequins, pasta shapes and shiny paper and cut card, paper and sticky tape to make colourful collages. Children develop good hand-eye co-ordination as they move the mouse and press keys whilst playing on the computer and manipulate the play dough using rolling pins and cutters to make recognisable shapes.

Children are encouraged by staff to try new skills like pedalling the bikes and climbing a bit higher on the climbing frame whilst outside. Children negotiate around each other and co-ordinate movements safely around others as they bring the equipment to the shed. In bad weather physical activities such as parachute play are adapted and done inside. Children enjoy lifting up the parachute together and taking turns to collect items from underneath. They are given additional challenges such as trying to catch the beanbags as they fly off the parachute into the air.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted through the staff's good knowledge and pro-active skills with regard to safety. They are supervised well and encouraged to learn about their own and others safety through gentle reminders during play. Regular risk assessments are carried out to ensure children are safe to use equipment and any resources which are broken are mended or discarded.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment. Effective procedures are followed with regard to outings including obtaining written parental consents and maintaining high adult:child ratios. Children enjoy varied activities in the well-organised space available. The play areas are large enough to give scope for free movement and there are different areas for separate activities. For example, floor space allows children to express

themselves in various small world and role play activities, tables offer places for creative and more structured play whilst cushions in the book corner are appropriate for rest and quiet times.

Children are protected from harm through the staff's valuable knowledge of child protection issues. Staff have good awareness of their role and the person with responsibility for child protection has a clear understanding of the procedures to follow if there are concerns regarding a child. However, the written policy has not been updated in line with current guidance.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children's enjoyment and achievements at the setting are promoted through examples of children's work and photographs of children on outings and with visitors which decorate the rooms. Children develop good confidence and positive self-esteem through free access to a good range of resources. Their independence is promoted as they select the activities and opportunities which extend their learning through play.

Children interact well with each other as they act out scenarios and take up different roles in the home corner, sit quietly to look at books together and work together to produce large collages and paintings. Children build effective relationships with the staff who are welcoming, enthusiastic and value children's responses and ideas. The key worker system and high adult: child ratio promotes children's development and ensures individual needs are met.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning for children who receive funding for early education is good. All children are making steady progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children's learning is promoted because staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They have developed effective planning systems which are facilitated through good use of space and the wide range of stimulating resources. Focussed and incidental observations are carried out to assess children's achievements and to identify strengths and weaknesses to build on. Fortnightly plans are devised with regard to current themes, festivals and special events and incorporate a range of activities and experiences to promote children's overall development.

The challenges set for children are clearly thought through using the observations and assessments to develop individual targets. Activities are adapted for individual children to link with their needs and abilities. Staff work well with the children extending learning through good questioning and support and giving children time to express and explore at their own pace.

Children arrive at the setting raring to go and are greeted by enthusiastic and friendly staff who help to select their name tag for their coat peg and put on their name badges.

They develop self-confidence and self-esteem as they enjoy opportunities to explore the extensive activities which are freely accessible. They sit well at story time and circle time and take turns effectively in general play. Children are learning early writing skills and linking sounds to letters as they sing songs and write letters in the air with their fingers. They have many opportunities to recognise letters and familiar words as they enjoy and share books appropriately with staff and their peers. Children learn to handle the books carefully and to relate and extend stories through acting them out and retelling stories using puppets and props.

Children develop mathematical skills as they play in the water tray comparing size and quantity in response to staff questions and ideas. At circle time they count their fingers and recognise the corresponding number held up on a card. During general play children develop mathematic language and thinking as they are asked how many? And which is bigger/smaller?

Children develop understanding of information technology as they play games on the computer using the mouse and keyboard with support. They investigate and explore, ask questions about why things happen and how things work and find out and identify some features of living things as they look for mini beasts in the environment on a trip to a nature centre. They find out about their local environment as they enjoy talking with visitors and going on trips. For example, a female fire fighter shows them how to use the hose and torches during a visit from the local fire service and a parent arranged for the children to come to his butchers shop to make sausages which they took home for their dinner.

Children enjoy opportunities to learn about their own culture and beliefs and those of other people. Most of the children who attend are from a Christian background and the church has a strong influence at the setting. They hold special services for the children and have sessions of prayer before snack. Photographs of a recent topic of 'around the world' starts with a role-play travel agents where children look at brochures and compare the pictures. They then look at different countries and make different foods, wear different costumes, make houses such as a Red Indian Tepee and sit inside, make 'the Leaning Tower of Pisa' with boxes and cartons, eat using chop sticks, place orders in a drive thru 'McNoahs' and watch and copy the moves in 'Riverdance'.

Children explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two or three dimensions during a range of well-resourced creative activities. One of the volunteers comes to play the piano for the children and they sit with her singing a range of familiar songs and rhymes. Whilst playing with the dinosaurs children use musical instruments to represent the sounds that the dinosaurs make and use their imaginations to learn about various subjects through role play. The positive and encouraging interaction with staff enables children to express and extend ideas and thoughts as they act out characters and use the props available within this rich learning environment.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Overall, the children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered.

Children's sense of belonging is promoted by the dedicated and caring staff at the setting. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are nurtured by staff who have a good understanding of their needs and intervene appropriately. The written statement has regard to current legislation and children's implemented individual education plans ensure each child progresses well.

Children are well behaved and respond well to the boundaries set. Positive methods of behaviour management promote children's responsibility of their own actions. They share space and resources well and learn about maintaining their environment as they help to tidy up after play.

Children have good self-care skills and are most are independent with toileting and personal hygiene. Children's independence is further developed as they select resources for themselves. There are many opportunities for children to express their ideas, thoughts and feelings during

general discussions and play. They respond well to staff's open ended questions and extension of ideas within daily routines.

Children's awareness and understanding of the diverse community is developing well. Their diversity is celebrated through good access to a variety of activities and resources and through opportunities to discuss themselves and their family structure.

Partnership with parents and carers of children receiving funding for nursery education is good. Children benefit through the positive relationships between parents and staff and the two-way flow of information. Parents are invited into the playgroup before their child starts to share information which is used to assess the children's starting place for new learning. Ongoing verbal and written communications, such as newsletters, are shared with parents and they are invited to visit the setting at any time.

Parents are informed about their child's achievements and progress using the observations, assessments, photographs and examples of children's work to make a book about the child. They are involved in their child's learning by bringing in requested items from home which link with topics. They are made to feel welcome, valued and necessary at the setting. Photographs show parents reading stories and assisting in general play sessions and enjoying family events such as a Barn Dance, summer barbeque and prayer meetings. The knowledge and expertise of some parents are used to support the learning opportunities provided by the setting. For example, children visit a local shop where one of the parents work and other parents visit the setting to talk to the children about their professions.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Space is organised well to ensure children access a good range of fulfilling opportunities and experiences. Children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution is promoted well through the implemented policies and procedures that work well in practice although some written policies have not been updated in line with current guidance.

Staff deployment and high adult:child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. The grouping of children at focussed times contribute to children's ability to fully take part in the setting. However, the provision is failing to comply with requirements set out in regulations because less than half the members of staff hold a qualification appropriate for the care or development of children.

The quality of the leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Dedicated and caring staff are committed to offering good quality care although not all staff are involved fully in the planning of the programme for education. They attend relevant training to update knowledge and skills and performance management systems ensure that children are nurtured and protected by suitable adults. The group assesses their own strengths and weaknesses through successful monitoring and evaluation of practice to ensure children's progression towards the early learning goals is actively promoted.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting received four recommendations.

The first asked the person in charge to obtain a level 3 qualification. This has been achieved as she holds a relevant qualification.

The other three recommendations asked for improvements to be made with regard to the safety of stored equipment and furniture, the outside play area and the children access to the kitchen. Significant improvements have been made. The storage of equipment and furniture is safe as children do not access these areas, safety checks and risk assessments are carried out to identify and reduce hazards in the outside areas and children only have supervised access to the kitchen during cooking activities.

At the last nursery education inspections three key issues were raised.

The first asked the setting to provide more opportunities to promote writing and reading skills. Many opportunities for mark making were observed throughout the inspection for all children to freely access and a good selection of books are available for children to self-select.

The second asked the setting to increase opportunities for mathematical development. Children enjoy activities which promote mathematic language, calculation and problem solving skills within daily routines.

The third key issue asked for planning and deployment of staff to be improved to provide more opportunities for the more able child to express their own ideas during all creative activities. All children enjoy the role-play areas, exploring sounds with musical instruments and freely accessing a wide range of craft materials to make collages, paintings and drawings either independently or with support from staff.

Staff have worked well to provide effective experiences and a rich learning environment to promote children's overall development.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure at least half the staff hold a level 2 qualification appropriate for the care or development of children
- update written policies and procedures in line with current guidance

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop staff involvement in planning so that they understand their roles and responsibilities and work together to help all children make progress toward the early learning goals

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)