

# The Ark Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY219114  
**Inspection date** 22/04/2009  
**Inspector** Shan Gwendoline Jones

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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).

## Description of the setting

The Ark Pre-school opened in 2002 and operates from three rooms at the Christian Out Reach Centre, close to Boundary Road, Portslade. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:00 -15:00 term-time only.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. There are currently 54 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

There are nine members of staff, of whom five hold appropriate early years qualifications all at Level 3; three staff are working towards a qualification. They provide funded early education for three- and four-year-olds.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children make good progress in their learning as they engage enthusiastically in well planned activities that reflect all areas of the curriculum. All children are valued as individuals and the settings positive approach to inclusion means that children are developing a strong sense of personal identity. Partnership with parents, carers and other professionals is a particular strength of the setting. This ensures that the children's welfare and learning needs are well met. Extensive self-evaluation systems are in place, and as a consequence, the children make good progress in all areas of their learning and development.

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

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

- revise the systems in place regarding recording any child protection concerns and ensure these are only accessible to those who have a right or a professional need to see them, to maintain confidentiality (Documentation)
- ensure staff are consistent in promoting writing for a purpose and the use of worksheets in children's learning environment (Educational Programme)

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure risk assessments are fully completed in relation to any potential hazards and set time scales for their review (Suitable premises, environment and equipment)

06/05/2009

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The manager and practitioners work very effectively together as a staff team to provide an exciting learning environment for children. Furthermore, children benefit because the setting has good systems in place to evaluate their practice. Which in turn drives their continuous improvement to improve outcomes for every child through effective practices. Inclusive practice is promoted within the setting which ensures that children have their welfare needs met and that they achieve well. For example, the setting takes a proactive approach and works well with parents, carers and external agencies in order to help support children with learning difficulties. Effective links with the community, school's and other agencies ensures children's easy transition to school. Extensive consultation and direct support from parents marked the success of the refurbishment of the sensory room to benefit all children. Comments from parents include that staff members are consistently friendly, approachable and very supportive.

The setting has in place effective procedures to ensure children's safety and welfare is promoted. For example, clear and robust systems for recruiting and vetting staff are in place. The management team implements its policies and procedures consistently. Although, confidentiality is not fully maintained in relation to recording any incidents of child protection concerns that may occur. Children play in a safe and secure environment and benefit from robust safeguarding arrangements. Appropriate fire detection and control equipment is in place and in good working order. Staff members understand their roles and responsibilities in the event of a fire and conduct evacuation drills which are in sufficient detail. There are procedures in place to keep children safe. However, the risk assessments are not fully completed to clearly identify any potential hazards. This is a breach of a specific legal requirement.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements in relation to the early learning goals. The planning systems clearly identify learning intentions and support children's individual learning both in and out of doors. The children's individual profiles show the progression they have made and what steps are being taken to move them on in their learning and development.

Each day staff take turns to carry out direct work with groups or individual children, or take time out to observe children's play. Staff are highly engaged with the children supervising and helping them if they require support. Children with identified learning difficulties benefit from the settings commitment to inclusion. Highly effective use of small group and one-to-one sessions, coupled with the key person system ensures children individual needs are well met. Staff ensure the planned topics are based on the children's interests. Staff use sign language to aide communication enabling children to feel confident to express their needs and ideas. For example, on the day of the inspection an incubator was delivered by a local farmer. Children were engaged in a lively discussion regarding the life cycle of

chickens linking in with the current theme. They observed the eggs and discussed what would happen to the eggs after being in the incubator. Children were animated and excited and compared this process to a member of staff who is expecting a baby.

Children are developing a strong sense of independence. The aesthetically presented resources and low level storage units allow children to confidently select their own play materials. They are developing their pre-writing skills as they draw intricate pictures with lots of details added. Children have access to varied selection of writing materials, although staff are not always consistent in supporting children to write for a purpose. For example, by encouraging children to attempt to write their own name on their drawings. The use of worksheets in children's learning environment is not clearly presented by all staff to ensure children gain the most from the activity. Children enjoy easel painting and experiment with mixing the colours. They sit for long periods cutting and sticking various materials and creating individual pictures.

Children's good health and well-being is promoted effectively by all staff members in the setting; for example, children have a growing understanding of healthy eating and lifestyles and how to keep themselves safe and healthy. For example, the setting operates a very successful free-flow system enabling children to access the curriculum indoors and out. Children are inquisitive and enjoy tending to their vegetables, happily watering the runner beans and sweet peas. Their understanding of numbers and counting are developing as they use a range of the equipment. Everyday day opportunities are used well to promote their skills further, for example through sand play. Children thoroughly enjoy a wide range of construction bricks and make tall towers using different sizes and shapes.

Children are developing positive levels of self-esteem as staff praise their achievements, acknowledging good listening skills and beautiful paintings. Behaviour is generally good throughout the pre-school. Children learn to take turns and be kind and considerate to each other through general play and gentle reminders from staff.

## 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> | 2 |
| How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?   | 2 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.   | 2 |

### Leadership and management

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>          | 2 |
| How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement? | 2 |
| How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?                            | 1 |
| 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>  | 2 |
| <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?  | 3 |
| How well are children helped to be healthy?   | 2 |
| How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?  | 2 |
| 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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