

Noah's Ark Nursery School

Westside Church, Melody Road, Wandsworth Common West Side, LONDON, SW18 2ED

Inspection date	20/11/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
		1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The nursery offers a very caring and nurturing environment to children and parents. This helps support children to feel secure and valued.
- The staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and deliver it effectively to promote children's learning.
- High quality leadership and management at the nursery ensures that staff have a constant drive to evaluate and improve practice.
- The assessment and recording of children's skills is very good and their next steps for learning are identified well.
- The stimulating and creative environment of the nursery supports children to learn through exploration and investigation.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector held discussions with staff members.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector talked with parents and considered their views.
- The inspector had a discussion with the manager and senior managers.
- The inspector viewed a range of relevant documentation including children's records, assessment and planning documents, and some policies.
- The inspector observed children's activities, resources and displays.

Inspector

Lena Engel

Full report

Information about the setting

Noah's Ark Nursery is one of three nurseries that are part of the Dolphin Independent School. It has been operating for a number of years and re-registered in March 2013 due to a change in charity number. It operates from a church hall and is situated close to the Wandsworth Common in the London Borough of Wandsworth.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and provides care and education for 48 children aged from two to five years. There are currently 33 children on roll and the nursery is funded to provide free early years education for children aged three and four years. The opening hours are from 9 am to 12.30 pm and the nursery is open Monday to Friday during term time. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language. A team of seven members of staff work at the nursery, of whom 6 hold relevant early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop further opportunities for children to plant seeds and observe how things grow.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children flourish in this very welcoming and caring nursery because staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and support their learning and development extremely well in relation to their starting points. The quality of teaching is excellent because staff have a secure knowledge of the learning requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They also provide an interesting range of child-initiated and adult-directed activities to promote the best outcomes for children. The information gained from observations, assessment and planning also forms the basis of the progress checks for children aged two years. Two-year-old children become active and enthusiastic learners, taking time to explore their environment and use their developing language to express themselves. There is a good pace to the morning sessions with specialist teachers supporting music and singing, physical development and dance, each of which is offered on a different day of the week. These very well led activities enhance children's opportunities to learn new skills and keep them busy. Staff identify the next steps in children's learning accurately through observation and assessment. They plan and provide exciting, challenging activities and experiences tailored to the needs of each child. Excellent artwork is displayed on the walls that demonstrate the nursery's commitment to enhance children's exploration of colour and shape. For example, children revisit paintings

to layer them with strips of green tissue grass and create the backdrop for the Christmas story. This very challenging artistic activity enables children to talk about what they did before, and to experiment with new textures to make their work even more interesting. The environment is visually very stimulating for children and adults to work in. The strong focus on the process rather than the product means that children develop very good skills in handling tools. Children contribute to the curriculum by bringing in special objects from home. Staff give them time at assembly to talk about what they have brought in to show, and this works very well to build confidence and communication skills. Also staff regularly correspond with parents through the home books so that they too can learn about what the children have been doing at home. For example, visits by some parents with their children to the zoo inspired a theme based on their first hand experiences of seeing live animals. Children talk about what they enjoyed at the zoo, and staff engage them skilfully to represent what they have seen through paintings and drawings, and by talking about the animals and their habitats. As a result children are supported very well to learn the names of animals and to understand what they like to eat and where they live. Children have very good opportunities to explore the changes in the seasons when they play games and investigate nature on Wandsworth Common each week. These experiences help children learn about the world around them. However, children have fewer opportunities to plant a wide range of seeds and observe how things grow, to develop their understanding of nature further.

Parents are very well supported as their children's first educators by the nursery and receive daily, weekly and termly feedback about their children's progress. Parents are fully involved in their children's learning. As well as having regular meetings to review their children's progress, they spend sessions in the nursery with their children. The children take great pride in sitting with their parents as they read a story or share an interesting experience with the whole group. Children learning English as an additional language are very well supported, with dual language books and by the staff who learn words in the children's home language. This helps children settle very well. Routines are used very well to help children socialise and interact with staff. For example, when children have snack, staff encourage them not only to pass the platter of fruit around the table, they also encourage them to be polite and say 'please' and 'thank you' to each other. These excellent manners have been developed at a very young age and indicate how focused the adults are on teaching children to be kind and thoughtful towards each other.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The vibrant atmosphere and the extensive range of high quality resources support the children to learn very good skills. Staff ensure that children know how to use resources because they role model their use to children and play with them to motivate them to practise new skills. Children are very confident in accessing resources and in making choices about what they want to do. They are well supported to develop independence skills with the specially made catalogues of resources that they browse through to choose activities that may not be on the shelves. The highly effective key person system enables children to form strong emotional bonds, which adds to their feeling of security and well-being. Key persons are intently focused on the needs of their group of children

and have developed strong bonds with each child and their parents.

Staff are very safety conscious and routinely ensure that children learn very good skills, keeping themselves safe and being aware of risks in their environment. For example, children are very conscious of the potential of cross infection and gel their hands after they use tissues to blow their noses. Children also learn how to keep themselves safe by knowing how to handle scissors with care and they discuss the dangers of knives when staff prepare the fruit with them for snack time. Children are very secure in their small groups and also move confidently around all parts of the hall to play. It is for this reason that children transfer so smoothly to the next stage in learning at the nursery. Staff take a proactive approach to preparing building children's self-esteem and this establishes a very good basis for future learning and the eventual transfer to school. Group times are used very well to promote children's social skills and they enjoy talking to each other about what they have done and achieved. Staff also encourage children to develop significant independence skills as soon as they start and in consequence these two year old children demonstrate very good skills in learning to use the toilet, to manage their clothes and to wash their hands. Children learn the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and they have a good balance of exercise supported with challenging large and small equipment to develop physical skills. Sport sessions and dancing teach even the youngest children very good balance and control of their bodies. They are also very good at following instructions and learning the rules, despite their age, of the outdoor group games such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf?'

Children's behaviour is exemplary because they all fully engage in worthwhile activities. Children learn that they have to listen and be kind, by taking turns and sharing resources. Staff encourage children to be polite and to treat each other with respect. They receive plenty of warm praise from staff and this builds their sense of pride and confidence in what they do. For instance, the youngest children who have only been at the nursery for a few weeks have risen to the challenge of singing in front of their peers, and they join in enthusiastically to make music. They are proud and bold, and display how comfortable and happy they are with their key persons and their friends. The promotion of listening skills, such as during the routine assemblies, also prepares children very well for future learning. They listen to bible stories and are stimulated by adults to talk about what has happened to the characters in the story, and to relate it to their own experiences. The open-ended questioning of staff is very effective in engaging children to discuss ideas and to express their feelings. It is very impressive to see two year old children becoming aware of their behaviour and learning to negotiate with their peers.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The leadership and management systems of the nursery are excellent. The manager has very high expectations for the service and nurtures her team effectively to support her in delivering best practice. The manager leads a highly motivated and enthusiastic staff team. She has respect for their knowledge and expertise and delegates roles and responsibilities consistently well. The manager and her deputy oversee the work of the

staff to ensure each child enjoys rich learning experiences that are tailored to their needs. The manager is inspirational and has a very good understanding of the early years curriculum. She guides members of staff through their training and ensures that they have the opportunities to gather the evidence they need for their assignments. She leads by example and seeks continuous self-improvement through evaluating what works and how it can be made better to further improve outcomes for children's learning.

The manager and her staff team fully understand the importance of safeguarding the children. The manager is the designated safeguarding practitioner for the nursery and has recently updated her knowledge of child protection issues. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that the suitability of all new staff to work with children is rigorously assessed. The retention of staff is very good and the majority of them have worked at the nursery for many years. This fact impacts very well on the families who use the nursery, a large number of whom have had older children attend in the past. Parents speak of their confidence in staff and value the continuity for their younger children. Staff are very focused on the welfare of children and encourage them to be aware of their own safety. Detailed risk assessments and routine safety checks of the building and outside area ensure that children play and learn within a very well presented, organised and safe environment.

In-depth self-evaluation of practice enables staff to recognise their strengths and identify areas for development. There is a strong culture of continuous professional development amongst the staff who encourage and welcome on-going training opportunities. Recent whole staff training has focused on the impact of teaching on children's learning. In consequence staff have extended the challenges that they have offered children to make choices during the morning. This has been successful because it encourages the age groups of children to mix more than they did previously. The younger children have profited from the additional time as they benefit from the older role models and copy the skills that they exhibit across all areas of learning. Over the last six months the nursery team has also revised their assessment systems so that they are much more evaluative, and therefore give a more accurate picture of what children can do. This increased self-awareness has been crucial to the nursery achieving such excellent outcomes for the youngest children. In addition staff also set themselves personal targets for growth. The manager welcomes feedback and uses it to influence decision making. For example, staff work highly effectively with other professionals involved with the care and education of the children in order to ensure the best outcomes are achieved. The Christian ethos of the nursery is communicated sympathetically to children. It is inclusive and has a very positive impact on teaching and learning because children are encouraged to develop a community identity with their group. They also learn about the importance of human kindness from the discussion of bible stories and their celebration of other cultures.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY461045
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	941377
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	33
Name of provider	Dolphin School Trust
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	0207 924 3472

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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