

Inspection of The Ark Pre School

Crowthorne Baptist Church, 144 High Street, CROWTHORNE, Berkshire RG45 7AT

Inspection date: 25 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children's behaviour and attitude to learning is exemplary. They demonstrate confidence, are happy and settled and have incredible fun in the stimulating environment. The highly effective and well-established key-person system promotes children's emotional well-being and helps them to form secure attachments. The attention to detail in implementing an exciting, stimulating learning environment that motivates children to learn is inspirational. The manager and staff have a clear vision and strong focus for the curriculum. They know what each child can do and what they need to learn next. They follow children's interests to ensure each child receives a rich and meaningful experience. All children, including the most able, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, develop essential skills to support them in their future learning. They are eager to explore, investigate and find out new things.

Children display extraordinary levels of social skills and are extremely considerate towards others. For example, they notice when other children want to join in with their games and welcome them to play. During physical activities, children recognise when others need help and hold their hands as they walk along balancing beams.

Children develop a strong knowledge of other cultures. They understand that countries may have different languages and they show a deep interest in learning key words. Children confidently count and name the days of the week in French, and English.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The extremely dedicated manager and staff demonstrate exceptional knowledge and experience over many years of working with children. This is highly evident in the way they demonstrate a deep understanding of children's learning and development.
- Staff use every opportunity to skilfully extend activities and conversations to challenge children's thinking. For example, children use screwdrivers to explore a variety of electronic devices, such as telephones, tablets, and irons. Children show great expertise as they take these apart and discuss the different components that they have inside.
- Partnerships with parents are highly effective. Parents are very complimentary about the pre-school and describe the staff as caring and nurturing. Staff share information about children's learning through daily discussions, newsletters, and face-to-face meetings. These positive interactions enable staff to make suggestions on how parents can support their children's learning at home.
- Staff expertly provide an excellent range of controlled risk activities and help

children learn to identify hazards and how to keep safe. For instance, children use safety knives during role play to cut vegetables into small pieces.

- Staff place a strong emphasis on supporting children's literacy skills. They read to children with enthusiasm and excitement. Children listen with interest and question staff when they are unsure of what they see in the story. For instance, they ask what a 'gnat' is. Staff use these opportunities to question other children to see what they know and remember from previous discussions. Children comment that a 'gnat' is like a fly. Staff use this interest to extend children's knowledge even further by explaining that the word gnat has a silent letter at the beginning.
- Staff use each moment to extend children's learning. High level conversations and interactions support children to make exceptional progress. For instance, staff provide experiences to enable children to explore a range of musical instruments. Children confidently name unfamiliar instruments, including 'tambour, guiro' and 'caterpillar rattle' and recognise the sounds that they make.
- Children have an excellent understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. For instance, during mealtimes they comment that the foods they are eating are healthy, as they do not contain sugar. Staff make good use of physical activities to extend children's knowledge even further. For instance, they encourage children to place their hand on their chest after exercise to see what happens to their heart. Children recognise the impact that exercise has on their body, such as their hearts beating faster during exercise and more slowly when they are resting.
- The manager and staff constantly look at new ways to develop and improve their already high-quality provision. Staff supervision is highly effective in supporting staff's performance, professional development, and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a very secure knowledge of safeguarding procedures and policies. They understand the signs that a child may be at risk of harm and/or neglect and the process for reporting or referring any concerns. This includes those they may have about a colleague's behaviour towards children. Staff have a strong understanding of wider safeguarding issues, such as children being drawn into extremist views or radicalisation. Recruitment procedures are robust to ensure that only those suitable to work with children do so. Staff place utmost priority on the safety of children. Children show in their behaviours that they trust staff implicitly and feel extremely comfortable in their care.

Setting details

Unique reference number	119271
Local authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	10228194
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	The Ark Pre School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP524471
Telephone number	07827 892397
Date of previous inspection	22 September 2016

Information about this early years setting

The Ark Pre School registered in 1998. It is situated in Crowthorne, Berkshire. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions last from 9.15am to 12.15pm. There are currently five members of staff. Of these, two hold relevant qualifications at level 3 and two hold teaching degrees. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Ingrid Howell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector asked staff questions throughout the inspection to establish their understanding of how to safeguard children, and how they assess and plan for children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and the children and considered the impact on their learning.
- The views of the parents were gathered through face-to-face discussion and written feedback.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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