



Avenue Out of School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	257870
Inspection date	20 April 2006
Inspector	Rosalie Mary Turner
Setting Address	Avenue First and Middle Schools, Avenue Road, NORWICH, Norfolk, NR2 3HP
Telephone number	01603 219102
E-mail	
Registered person	Avenue Out of School Club
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Avenue Out of School Club is run by a committee of parents and carers. It opened in 1975 and operates from rooms within Avenue First and Middle School in the city of Norwich, Norfolk. A maximum of 56 children may attend the club at any one time. The club is open each weekday from 08.00 to 09.15 and from 15.30 to 18.00 during school term times and from 08.00 to 18.00 during the holidays.

There are currently 55 children aged from 4 to under 8 years on roll. The club also provides care for children up to the age of 12 years.

The club employs seven staff. Six of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health needs are partly promoted because they are cared for in a warm, clean and hygienic environment. The staff help children to understand the importance of personal hygiene by wiping tables with antibacterial spray and reminding them to wash their hands after using the toilet and before they eat. Staff have updated their first aid training so they are able to act quickly if children are ill or injured and they collect robust information from parents and carers to ensure that children's medical needs are met.

All children have a snack as soon as they come in from school and many have their tea at the club. Although some options are healthy, staff also provide less nutritious snacks such as crisps, chocolate biscuits and sweets. This is in conflict with posters and displays in the school hall that encourage children to 'Eat five - fly high!' As a result of this inconsistency, children are not effectively learning that some foods are bad for their health. However, they are able to help themselves to a drink, especially if they become hot and thirsty after physical exercise to maintain their health.

Children have opportunities to play outside in the fresh air to help them to develop a positive attitude to healthy living. Staff also organise team games within the large school hall if the weather is poor to help children play actively and understand how exercise helps their bodies to stay fit and healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are warmly welcomed into a child-centred environment where they are able to gain a sense of belonging. They are emotionally secure because they know the staff and school premises extremely well. The furniture is safe and child-sized and the walls are decorated with displays of art work so that children settle effectively.

Children are mostly safeguarded as the staff check the play areas every day to ensure that hazards, such as those from school equipment, are minimised. Children are also encouraged to be responsible for the safety of others by tidying the equipment between play to help to avoid possible accidents. They practise fire drills and are familiar with the process for evacuating the premises safely. Therefore, they have the confidence to escape quickly in an emergency. However, children's safety cannot be assured because the staff do not follow their policy guidelines and ensure that the doors to the outside are secured. As a result, children could leave unnoticed or unwanted adults access the club and pose a threat to both children and staff.

Children are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted nor are they

released to adults unless the club has written consent from their parents. Therefore, they are to some extent protected from 'stranger danger'. Children are safeguarded from possible harm because the staff are secure in their knowledge of child protection. For instance, they demonstrate a clear ability to recognise the signs and symptoms of children at risk and keep local guidance to hand so that they may take action as soon as they have concerns about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and have a warm rapport with the staff who are kind and friendly in their approach to them. They are confident in the staff's company and good relationships are being established. Children get along well together, laughing and chatting as they play despite the differences in their ages. The staff display a pleasing commitment to working with children that ensures they maintain a stimulating environment. The well developed key worker system enables the staff to get to know individual children and obtain feedback on what they like or dislike. Consequently, the staff plan flexible play opportunities that are not only extremely well matched to current trends and interests, but also help children to achieve as much as they can. As a result, children play an active part in the club and they are fully occupied in meaningful play.

Children have pleasing choices and they move freely between the activities, independently selecting items from a worthwhile range of good quality equipment such as art and craft materials, construction sets or table games. They thoroughly enjoy the relaxed atmosphere where they can organise their own fun with their friends. Children are also tempted to build on their existing skills through the new experiences that are offered as part of planned activities. For example, they greatly benefit from taking part in the variety of outings that take place during school holiday periods, such as the recent tour of the city in an open-topped bus, to help them learn about their community.

Children concentrate well as they produce crowns and headbands. They are responsible for their work from beginning to end and spend long periods of time carefully sticking on tissue paper or colouring an intricate pattern to complete their work. Children respond very well to the personal attention that helps them to be patient and to take turns. For example, when working with play dough to create exotic creatures, the staff remind them to share and 'make sure you all have a go'. Consequently, children work extremely well together and show that they are aware of each others needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel at home in the club because they are treated with equal regard. For example, the staff warmly welcome children from all backgrounds and of all abilities. They take time to get to know the children well so that they are able to meet

individual needs, working closely with their parents, carers and other agencies to ensure that all children receive appropriate support. Staff look at children when they are speaking and use their names, showing children that they are interested in what they have to say. Consequently, children talk happily to staff about their home life, receive sensitive support and show a caring attitude towards each other.

Children are constantly reminded of the world around them through the posters and displays that help them to learn about and respect diversity. They explore their own culture and share experiences of different countries when they sample foods or learn dances from Thailand. Children are encouraged to respect our multi-cultural society through the pleasing range of positive resources that are available to them and by celebrating their own festivals such as Easter.

Children are learning to take responsibility for their own behaviour because the staff set clear, consistent boundaries that help children to understand what is expected of them. Staff and children work together to develop positive club rules that help the children to learn right from wrong. The staff set good examples by being calm and politely explaining why they ask children to change their behaviour. They know the children well, recognise when they are becoming restless and quickly intervene to divert them to another activity. As a result, children behave very well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and contributes significantly to children's well-being within the club. Parents are supportive of the club and they are fully encouraged to be involved with their children's play. For instance, they have access to a full range of policies and procedures that explain the day to day care that is provided. Parents are encouraged to exchange news about their children's needs and interests as they collect their children. Consequently, the staff are able to provide care that is current to children's individual requirements. Parents state that they are 'delighted' with the provision and feel that the club meets their children's needs. However, the club has a policy to guide parents of actions they may take if they have a concern and a log is in place to record details of any complaints that may arise in the future to fully promote children's welfare.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare is suitably fostered because the club carries out appropriate checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. The staff support each other and work effectively as a team to provide an enjoyable time for the children. They understand how children develop and use their knowledge capably to plan a play programme that meets the children's needs. Although the staff meet regularly to monitor and evaluate the provision, children are not fully safeguarded because the contingency arrangements that are in place to cover emergencies within the breakfast club are not effective. For example, there is one staff member in sole charge of the children at each breakfast club. Staff can contact each other by mobile phone or liaise with a designated teacher from each school. However, the children who attend the breakfast club are at risk as they are unaware of the actions that they should take if the staff member is incapacitated and, therefore, they have not

practised them.

Most legally required documentation is confidentially maintained and well organised. The club policies and procedures provide staff with sufficient, accurate guidance to help them to safeguard children's well-being. However, visitors are not always asked to record their attendance and staff may not know who is present to ensure that children are safeguarded.

The aims and objectives of the club help the staff to provide a caring and supportive environment in which children can enjoy themselves. Children use the premises well and have plenty of room to move about freely. For instance, in addition to the main hall, the children are able to access the resources room where they can relax after a busy school day or let off steam in the playground.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the club was asked to continue to ensure that there are sufficient staff available to meet the needs of children at the breakfast club and to provide opportunities for children to make decisions.

Two staff are on site during breakfast club and, although they are in separate rooms, they can contact each other by mobile phone for support. In addition, arrangements have been made to liaise with designated teachers from each school in case of emergency. However, children are not effectively safeguarded because they are unaware of the actions that they should take if a member of staff is incapacitated. Children have opportunities to make choices and take decisions for themselves. For example, they freely choose what they would like to do from an extensive range of activities and children are independent in their play. Children also set the ground rules for the club and work with staff to make decisions about what they think is acceptable. Consequently, each child is able to play an active part within the club.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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

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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 snacks and meals are healthy and nutritious
- ensure the premises are secure and that children are not able to leave them unsupervised
- improve record keeping to ensure that a record is kept of visitors
- ensure that the contingency arrangements that are in place to cover emergencies within the breakfast club are effective, with particular reference to if a member of staff is incapacitated.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk