



St Mary's After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY271661
Inspection date	07 March 2006
Inspector	Jane Shaw
Setting Address	Belgrave Avenue, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1HT
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Registered person	M.A.S.K (Mossley After School Club) Limited
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?

St. Mary's Out of School Club is one of two provisions run by M.A.S.K (Mossley After School Club) Limited. It opened in 2003 and operates from a single storey building within the grounds of St. Mary's Catholic Primary School in Congleton, Cheshire.

The club have access to two main playrooms, toilet and hand washing facilities. There is also access to a small kitchen for the preparation of snacks and drinks. Children access the adjoining school playground and fields for outdoor play. The premises are used during the day by a pre-school group.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the club at any one time. The facility is open each week day during term-time from 07.30 until 09.00 and from 15.15 until 18.00.

There are currently 62 children aged from 3 to 10 years on roll. The provision supports children with English is an additional language. The club offers out of school care to children from St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Quinta, Astbury and Marton Primary Schools.

The registered providers employ eight staff in total across both provisions. Five of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The club are members of 4Children and receive support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is satisfactory overall. The club operate from within a clean and healthy environment ensuring children's health. Staff have effective routines and procedures in place to ensure that the areas used by children support their health. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating or after certain activities, and are able to do this independently or with support and gentle reminders from staff. An appropriate sick child policy, which is shared with parents and carers, ensures children are cared for within an environment, which is as free from infection as possible. Parents and carers are contacted if staff consider children to be unwell. Children's safety and placements are supported by the use of suitable medication and accident recording systems, however, accident records do not show specific details of children's injuries and pre-existing injuries are not recorded.

Staff provide for children's physical health as they offer them opportunities to be outdoors when weather permits. Opportunities to offer large physical activities indoor are limited due to space and layout of equipment from another provision using the premises. Children's small physical skills are encouraged through access to a variety of construction equipment, craft and table top activities.

Children enjoy a range of healthy foods at breakfast and evening snack-time. This includes healthy breakfast cereals, fruit, pancakes, crumpets and toast, and a choice of juice, milk or water. Evening snacks are varied and are prepared by club staff who hold appropriate food handling qualifications. Children are also given opportunities to help prepare their snacks and describe how they enjoy making their own pizzas. Children's individual needs in terms of allergies and preferences are known to staff and appropriate arrangements are made to address these needs. Mealtimes are sociable where children sit together with friends from their own and other schools. Children access suitable crockery, cutlery and furniture at mealtimes ensuring their comfort.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The environment is welcoming for children through some out of school club displays, plus displays belonging to the pre-school who share use of the building. Staff plan some activities in readiness for the children, but are not always able to access and prepare all registered spaces used in sufficient time for the arrival of the children. Children access a variety of activities across the two rooms available, for example, one room is used for quieter activities such as reading, watching TV and drawing. The second room is used for more active opportunities, such as table snooker, however, this space is restricted by the presence of equipment not belonging to the club, some of which poses safety concerns.

Children access a satisfactory range of toys and equipment, this range is restricted due to the limited storage space available to the club, however, the situation is currently under review. Children access toys and equipment which is appropriate for their age and level of development, and addresses their health and safety through the regular checking of all items.

Children are cared for within a safe and secure environment. Staff are alert to the children's safety at all times by checking the areas used and regular checking of toys and equipment. Risk assessments conducted by school maintenance staff and daily checks by club staff ensure children are safe. A health and safety policy is in place along with other policies and procedures that relate to children's safety, ensuring they are cared for safely. However, the uncollected child policy does not show the procedure to be followed if this were to happen. Staff encourage the children to have an understanding and awareness of their own safety. Regular fire evacuations are conducted ensuring children are safe in the event of this occurring.

Children's welfare is considered as staff have an awareness of child protection issues and procedures and their responsibility in this area. A child protection policy and procedure is in place but this does not include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, relaxed and engaged in a range of play experiences. Children confirm that they have 'fun' and enjoy the activities on offer when attending either before or after school. They talk about meeting their friends and having opportunities to play together, for example, children making up their own games or stories when involved in imaginary role play and challenge one another to a table snooker tournament.

Staff plan activities with input from the children, for example, children requested a drawing competition. Plans are flexible and enable children to make choices about what they would like to be involved with during sessions. Children have opportunities to choose whether to relax and be involved in quieter activities, such as reading, drawing and occasional television, or to be active and participate in more physical activities, such as table snooker or outdoor activities when the weather permits.

Children access toys, equipment and activities that cover a range of play experiences, for example, imaginary play, craft, construction, tabletop activities and quieter activities, such as drawing, reading or completing homework. The range of toys and activities can be limited because of the lack of storage space, but the registered providers rotate equipment on a regular basis between their clubs.

Staff provide children with physical play opportunities. When weather permits children are involved in a variety of physical activities, such as ballgames and as they use a parachute. Children access smaller physical activities indoors such as table snooker, various craft activities and construction. They enjoy joining in with board-games and other tabletop activities.

Children are happy and supported by staff as they participate with children in their activities, they sit with children at snack time where they are encouraged to socialise. Staff offer support to children who wish to undertake homework. During their evening children are able to move between both rooms, when available, accessing a variety of activities in each room giving them opportunities to make independent choices about their time. Children play independently, in small groups or in larger groups dependent upon their choice of activity. Relationships with staff are well-established and friendly with children talking to staff about their day and a range of other topics.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed and have access to all the activities and opportunities offered to them. Children are encouraged to think about one another as they share and take turns patiently with activities, for example, children access a games console on a rota basis giving them equal access to equipment. Children access resources and materials, which promotes their understanding of diversity.

The club offers support to children with special educational needs when applicable. All children's individual needs and circumstances are known to staff enabling necessary support and encouragement to be offered where applicable to ensure their participation.

At the time of the inspection children's behaviour was good. Children are encouraged to share and take turns with toys, equipment and opportunities, encouraging co-operation. Staff understand the need to exercise appropriate behaviour management strategies; any incidents are recorded and shared with parents and carers. Children are encouraged to have a say in the formulation of the club rules and make suggestions for good behaviour and the provision of activities and opportunities.

Children's placements are supported by sound partnerships with parents and carers. Staff obtain relevant information about children's needs and requirements and other relevant information ensuring that their safety and wellbeing is addressed. Staff give verbal feedback to parents and carers on their child's time at the club as they collect their children from the club. During the inspection communication between staff,

parents and carers was seen to be friendly and appropriate. An information booklet about the setting along with written policies and procedures is available for parents and carers to make choices about their child's placement.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for within a safe environment because all necessary clearances on staff members are complete. The registered persons are aware of recruitment and selection procedures and effective induction for new staff. Children are cared for by staff who are experienced in working with children within a variety of situations, they are offered access to additional training opportunities to enhance their skills and expertise. The required ratio of qualified staff is in place, they are also qualified in first aid ensuring that accidents and incidents are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Premises are organised on a daily basis. Indoor space offers children access to a variety of play experiences; children also access outdoor play opportunities. Legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place and is shared with parents and carers, however, an up to date insurance certificate is not displayed and the attendance register does not show arrival times for staff, children and visitors.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, being healthy outcomes for children have been improved by the implementation of suitable systems to obtain parental consent for the administration of medication and the actual recording of any medicines given.

Children's safety has been improved through the completion of risk assessments and the retention of certain documents, records and the development of policies. However, some amendments are required to policies and evidence of insurance cover.

Outcomes for children in terms of their enjoyment and achievement and positive contribution have been improved through the extension of activities made available to the children, and involving the children in making choices about their activities. Arrangements for more storage facilities continue to be ongoing and will enable the registered providers to further enhance the provision of activities and equipment.

The organisation of the provision has been improved through the development of recruitment and selection procedures and the setting up of suitable staff files. Children's enrolment forms are now consistent and contain all required information.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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

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 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):

- review the information retained in accident records and record existing injuries to children
- amend the uncollected child and child protection policies to include required detail
- ensure all registered space and activities are available for the children's arrival and that equipment not in use by the out of school club children does not pose a hazard to their safety
- ensure attendance registers are accurate, detailing times of arrival and departure for staff, visitors and children and ensure an up to date insurance certificate is on display at all times.

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