



Acorn After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 119924
Inspection date 15 March 2006
Inspector Jane Nelson

Setting Address The Ridings, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex, TW16 6NX

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Registered person St. Pauls Trading

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?

Acorns After School Club has been registered since 1999. It is located within St. Paul's College in Sunbury on Thames, Surrey. The setting is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of governors of St Paul's Catholic College. The committee also manages a day nursery on the same site. The club is registered to care for 24 children from 4 to under 8 years, the club also caters for children aged 8 to 11 years. There are currently 18 children under 8 on roll.

The club has the use of two classrooms within the college and use of a playground and sports fields for outdoor play

The club operates from 15:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday, term times only. There is provision to collect children from St. Ignatius school which is situated next door to St Paul's College. Three members of staff work with the children. The supervisor has a child care qualification, one member of staff is working towards gaining a recognised early years qualification, and one member of staff is unqualified.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is protected by staff encouraging good hygiene practice, such as children washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet. The risk of infection to children is minimised by the club's policy of not caring for sick children. Clear written documentation relating to children's health, such as recording of accidents and administration of medication is in place ensuring necessary information is shared with parents.

The club shares use of some of the college toilets. Not all toilets meet hygiene requirements making it unpleasant for the children to use them. Children do not always have sole use of these toilets as they are still being used by college students during the club operating times.

Children enjoy snack time, they have a hot snack of spaghetti and chicken crunchies, with a drink of water and apple. This is prepared in the nursery kitchen and collected by Club staff. Staff serve food from a table and oversee the children eating. Children sit in small groups at tables and chat while they eat. They help each other carry their food to their table. Children's dietary needs are displayed and followed.

Children have access to a grassed area within the college grounds and the nursery garden for physical play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a generally safe environment, a daily risk assessment is in place to identify issues, such as the floor needing sweeping. The premises is not always secure, as the room door is left open throughout the session. Although children are monitored closely by staff, there are opportunities for them to leave the premises unsupervised. Children's safety is not fully protected as students and other users of the premises have access to the corridor outside the room.

Good systems are in place to ensure children's safety when they are collected from school. Staff are well deployed and vigilant about children's safety during the walk from school to the club. Children learn to take responsibility for their own safety by being reminded to be careful in their play and with equipment like knitting needles. They are given clear explanations about equipment, such as, the adult scissors not being safe for them to use.

When using the toilets, children are supervised by staff generally well, however there are occasions when older children are allowed to take inappropriate responsibility for younger children. Children's welfare is protected by staff's understanding of child protection issues, and the action they need to take. However the child protection policy lacks some detail and a written procedure for dealing with allegations against staff is not in place.

Play materials, furniture and equipment are safe and in good condition. Space is organised appropriately, meaning children can move around the room, use equipment and play on the floor in safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the club. They greet each other and staff, when they are collected from school and talk about what they are going to do at the club on the walk there. Children talk about why they like coming to the club, and refer to activities they enjoy such as learning knitting.

Informal planning by staff and time allocated for preparation of the classroom before collecting children from school, means the environment is well organised. This encourages children to become involved in activities and play as soon as they arrive at the club.

Children can make choices from a range of activities and play materials that are set out. On arrival, some children immediately become involved in making woollen pom poms. They are well supported in this activity by a member of staff, showing children what to do and helping them thread their wool. They proudly show each other and staff those they have already made and explain how different colours have been achieved. A good range of play materials and equipment are provided to meet children's needs, although they have little access to materials that reflect diversity.

Staff support children well in their play, join in activities, offer advice, and make suggestions while they play. Children enjoy working together when playing board games, taking turns and waiting for each other. They socialise well with each other and staff, constantly talking about what they are doing, their school day, and their families.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about diversity through discussion and celebrating festivals such as St. Patrick's Day and Diwali. Their experiences are limited by access to few resources reflecting diversity.

Children behave well, they know the ground rules of the club, which are displayed. Their confidence and self esteem are encouraged well, through recognition and having their achievements praised. Children take pride in activities, such as

contributing to a display and making pompoms. Good strategies such as praise, sticker cards and rewards encourage positive behaviour and self esteem. Children understand and explain the purpose of a sticker card and what different symbols mean.

Staff know the children well and are familiar with individual needs and preferences. Activities are organised and planned taking children's likes and dislikes into account and recognising their need to relax at the end of the school day. Strategies are in place to support children with special needs and make sure they enjoy their time at the club.

Relationships with parents are good, they are pleased with the service provided and feel their children are happy at the club. Good communication between staff and parents, through daily discussion, means that children receive continuity of care and staff are aware of individual needs. Clear information is provided for parents in the handbook and prospectus and parental questionnaires are used to seek parents views. A complaints log is in place.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are well known due to clear written information being obtained from parents. Written documentation, policies and procedures are in place and implemented adequately, although one policy lacks the necessary detail. Records are maintained and stored appropriately on the premises or in the nursery building. Informal planning and discussion between the nursery supervisor and after school club staff, means that staff are clear and flexible about the organisation of the session and their roles within this. The setting is meeting the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

The nursery manager is responsible for the day to day management of the after school club, with some responsibilities delegated to the supervisor. The monitoring of the club and clarity of responsibility is not always fully effective, which means that issues such as staff qualification ratios being maintained and which staff are vetted is not always clear. The nursery manager has plans in place to rectify this with immediate effect.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the provider agreed to:

Ensure register is accurately completed; review procedures for the induction of members of staff and subsequent sharing of information so that all staff have a clear understanding of policies and procedures relating to the safe management of the provision and how to implement them; devise a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of activities for children, which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs in the after school club; ensure space is organised to meet the requirements, used appropriately and

creatively; conduct a risk assessment on the premises, identifying actions to be taken to minimize identified risks including when using the outside areas and from other users of the building; ensure that all records, policies and procedures relating to the after school club are readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection at all times.

The setting was also asked to ensure adequate hand washing and toilet facilities are available at all times to reduce the risk of infection; review strategies for reinforcing good behaviour, ensuring effective behaviour management is in practice to enable children to learn what is expected of them and develop skills to acknowledge children's achievements and self worth; and ensure staff develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.

The following action has been taken:

The attendance register is accurately completed and children signed in and out. A daily risk assessment is carried out and recorded on the premises. However this is not yet fully effective as some issues such as security of the premises remain.

Staff have an understanding of child protection issues and their responsibilities, however the setting's policy does not contain all the necessary information and a procedure for dealing with allegations against staff is not in place.

Children have access to hand washing facilities in school toilets, however not all toilets are clean and suitable for children's use. A suitable range of activities and equipment are planned and provided that children are interested in, enjoy participating in and are suitable for their age and stage of development. Space is used appropriately and organised to meet children's needs. Children's achievements are praised. Good strategies are in place and used to reinforce good behaviour and encourage self esteem.

An induction procedure for new staff is in place, however, this is not being fully implemented in the after school club.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- make sure all children are supervised appropriately at all times and are unable to leave the building unsupervised.
- make sure all toilets used by children meet hygiene requirements
- develop range of resources that help children learn about diversity
- review the child protection policy to include the procedure to follow should an allegation be made against a member of staff, and the procedure for staff to follow if they have concerns about a child.
- make sure staffing arrangements meet qualification requirements, and staff who have not completed the necessary checks are not left in sole charge of children.

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