



## **W.A.S.P.S. (Wheathampstead Afterschool Playscheme & Holiday Club)**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123642
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 April 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Gail Groves
<b>Setting Address</b>	Beech Hyde Nursery, Beech Hyde Primary School & Nursery, Nurseries Road, WHEATHAMPSTEAD, Hertfordshire, AL4 8TP
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	W.A.S.P.S. (Wheathampstead Afterschool Playsche
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Wheathampstead After School Playscheme and Holiday Club opened in 1992 and operates from the Beech Hyde Nursery building, situated in the grounds of Beech Hyde Primary School in Wheathampstead, near St Albans, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 32 children may attend the club at any one time. The after school club is open each weekday from 15.15 to 18.15 during school term times. The holiday club is open from 08.30 to 17.30 during the half term and Easter holidays and for two weeks during the school summer holidays with half-day sessions available from 08:30 to 12:30 and 13:30 to 17:30. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 119 children from 4 to 11 years on roll. WASPS admit children from the local school community, including St Helens, St Dominics and Beech Hyde Schools. The club currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and employs 8 staff, 4 of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, all staff hold current food hygiene certificates, tables are cleaned before children eat their snack or meal and appropriate exclusion times for children with infectious illnesses are maintained. They also ensure that children learn to understand simple, good health and hygiene practices such as washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating so that they develop good hygiene habits for later life. Activities planned around topics such as the Olympics and healthy living help children to begin to understand the importance of developing good eating habits and a healthy lifestyle. Recent changes to the menus for the after school club were made in full consultation with the children. Staff encouraged them to play an active part in deciding upon the meals the club should provide in order that they would have a healthy balanced diet. Snacks include fruit and drinks are available at all times if children are thirsty. Children's health and dietary needs are met because staff work closely with parents. Lists are displayed in the kitchen to ensure staff are aware which children have food allergies and menus reflect the need to avoid certain foods when some children are present.

Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors. They have free access to an outside play area where they climb, swing, balance, jump, throw, catch and kick. During the holiday club, they go out on a daily basis for walks to the local open spaces, woods and play areas. For example, they visit the common to play ball games and build large shelters with fallen branches in the woods. As a result, they are developing an enjoyment of exercise and fresh air. Opportunities for rest, such as watching a video or reading a book after lunch, are built into the daily timetable in order that children do not become overtired.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to keep them safe. For example, staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary because they have attended the relevant training. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy in place which all staff are obliged to read and sign and this is updated regularly. Well devised, consistent procedures, such as taking regular head counts, using a whistle to call children back to an adult quickly and carrying out risk assessments before going out on a visit, ensure children are kept safe on outings. Children also learn to keep themselves safe through discussions about the safety procedures they must follow within the club as well as when they are on outings. For example, they learn that they must not run inside and that they must ask permission to go and retrieve a ball if it goes over the hedge into the school playground. They discuss the importance of wearing reflective jackets so that they will be easily seen when they walk from school to the after school club or when they go for walks in the neighbourhood during the holiday club and learn why they should not run away from or stroke a dog if it comes up to them.

Children use good quality, suitable and safe equipment which is age-appropriate and meets their differing needs. They are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment in which many of the risks to their safety have been minimised. As a result, they can move around independently and safely. However, some electrical sockets remain accessible to children and put them at risk of possible injury. Also, evacuation procedures are not always consistently practised and do not take account of children's differing patterns of attendance. Consequently, children are at risk of not understanding what they must do in an emergency.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and are therefore eager to take part in all the interesting play opportunities provided for them. Upon arrival they quickly become involved in a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and learning. For example, they play creatively with paint, glue, scissors and colouring materials in a variety of adult and child initiated activities which are linked to themes such as the Romans or Easter. They cook, sew and enjoy physical play with construction toys, a snooker table, a climbing frame, trampolines and hoops. They develop their imaginations through playing with dolls and small world toys such as cars and they enjoy looking at books and taking part in quizzes to develop their thinking and intellectual abilities.

Children confidently make decisions, explore and investigate and staff are always careful to give them many opportunities to do so throughout the daily routine. For example, they decide which activities they wish to take part in and explore a wide range of creative materials, spontaneously investigating how different items can be connected to make paper flowers or used creatively to decorate an Easter egg. Children gain confidence and self-esteem because their efforts are always valued and acknowledged. Staff interact enthusiastically with children and are always interested in what they do and say. As a result, children's language and social skills are extended and they learn to relate well to both adults and other children.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children have their individual needs met because staff work in close partnership with parents and carers. The club cares for some children with special needs and liaises closely with other professionals as well as the child's school to ensure continuity and consistency. For example, the manager of the club talks to parents about how to help a child with speech and language difficulties and liaises with the school's special educational needs coordinator in order to draw up a detailed action plan consistent with that used by the school to support a child with behaviour problems. Information is shared with parents through regular newsletters, a parents' notice board and a comprehensive starter pack for new parents which includes details about the club's policies and procedures. Admission forms ask for details about any particular needs so that staff can provide the appropriate support to meet them. Children benefit from themed activities and resources which help them value diversity and recognise the positive differences between people. For example, they learn about native North American Indians, look at Chinese writing and learn about Chinese New Year. Visits to a Hindu temple which children have

participated in during school hours are followed up and discussed by the club to develop the children's understanding still further.

Children learn to respond to appropriate expectations for their behaviour because there is a simple code of conduct which they clearly understand. Reward systems such as achieving points for good behaviour or following the code earn them and their team certificates and group recognition. As a result, they behave well and learn to work harmoniously with others. Children are aware of their own needs and respect the needs of others. For example, they listen carefully to each other when they have a discussion at circle time and help each other when they are injured in the playground. Consequently, they are developing caring attitudes. The club involves children in decision making processes whenever possible. For example, there is a Kids' Committee made up of children who attend the club, which helps to decide on issues such as what new equipment to buy. There is also a suggestion box for children to use to raise any ideas they wish the committee to consider regarding the running of the club. Recently it was suggested that older children should be able to use the staff toilet rather than the small nursery ones used by the club because of privacy issues. This was discussed by the committee and agreed. Because children's ideas are valued and included in this way, they develop confidence, self-esteem and a sense of belonging.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The club's policies and procedures work well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. All of the necessary documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place and record keeping systems are used well to meet children's needs. Staff have a clear sense of purpose, a commitment to continual improvement and attend training to update and enhance their skills. For example, they are at present working towards achieving accreditation with the Herts Quality Standards quality assurance scheme and undertake regular performance reviews and appraisals.

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures contribute to children being protected and cared for by staff with a sound knowledge and understanding of child development and a high regard for the well-being of all children. They work well together as a team and are careful to ensure that they use their time constructively to support and develop children's play. The correct adult to child ratio is maintained at all times and is frequently higher than the minimum required in regulations. This positively supports children's care, learning and play.

Overall, children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the club agreed to improve their documentation. They now have a detailed registration system in place which records the times of arrival and departure for both children and staff and identifies which adult has collected each child. They have also set up a visitors book and have included Ofsted's telephone number in their complaints policy. These measures mean that children's safety and welfare are more fully monitored and ensure that parents can report any concerns easily. The club also agreed to ensure that any person left in charge, in

the absence of the manager, meets the qualification requirements for supervisory staff. The deputy manager has now completed an appropriate National Vocational Qualification at level 3. This has improved children's care, learning and play.

### **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**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. 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):

- ensure regular emergency evacuation drills are carried out which also take account of children's differing patterns of attendance
- ensure all electrical sockets are safe or inaccessible.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)