



Base Zero Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY311291
Inspection date	05 May 2006
Inspector	Denys Rasmussen

Setting Address	Sedgehill Community Centre, 69-85 Sedgehill Road, London, SE6 3QN
Telephone number	0208 461 3775
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Registered person	Happy Days After School Club Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Base Zero Pre-School and Happy Days After School Club is privately owned by Happy Days After School Club Ltd. It has been registered since 2005. It operates from Sedgemoor Road Community Centre and has use of a hall and two lobby areas. It is situated in a residential area of Catford. A maximum of 28 children may attend the

service at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:30 to 13:30 term time only. The after school club is open from 15:00 to 18:00 term time only. There is access to a secure enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 21 children aged from two to under five years on roll in the pre-school. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. There are 41 children aged from four to under eight years on roll in the after school club. The children come from the local community. The service currently supports children with learning difficulties.

There are four staff employed in the pre-school. They all hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are four staff employed in the after school club. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Records are not maintained consistently, for example, about all accidents that have occurred. This means that information about children's health is not effectively shared with the parents and it is a breach of regulations. The pre-school have written consent from parents to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. However, the after school service do not, which means parental wishes are unknown. The service keeps satisfactory records about children's health needs and dietary requirements including any allergies. These are complied with to help keep children healthy.

Children are encouraged to develop healthy eating practices by being offered fruit for snack, such as strawberries and bananas. Water is available at all times in a jug on the side and children are offered milk at snack time. The dental nurse visited the group to tell children what foods to eat for their teeth to stay healthy. This helps children to make healthy choices.

Children are encouraged to wash their hands helping them to develop good personal hygiene habits. The use of liquid soap and paper towels helps to prevent the risk of cross contamination. Children are excluded if they have an infectious disease or are unwell, this helps to restrict the spread of infection.

Children are involved in physical activity on a daily basis. They visit the outdoor area where they are encouraged to run around and let off steam. They have opportunities to climb and slide. The older children play team games such as football and visit the local adventure playground. This has more challenging equipment to experiment on. This satisfactorily promotes the children's physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Ineffective risk assessments compromise children's safety. For example, proper precautions are not in place to prevent children having access to areas of the building that are unsupervised and potentially hazardous. There is no evidence that electrical items have been checked for safety so the risk to the children is unknown. Children are at risk of accidental injury in the garden as there are accessible plants that if fallen on would cause serious injury. Some measures are in place to keep children safe, such as fire prevention equipment and arrival and departure systems. Fire prevention is satisfactory and regular fire drills help children become familiar with the procedures, so they learn how to leave the premises quickly and safely.

The staff have aimed to create a welcoming environment by displaying children's artwork, pictures and posters around the hall. The after school service make good use of the areas of the community centre to provide eating, art and craft and physical activities. The layout and large space available enables children to move freely between activities. Equipment is developmentally appropriate and safe as it is bought from reputable sources. However, broken equipment is accessible to the children which means they are at risk of injury. Children are protected as the staff are aware of their responsibility to the children in their care. The manager has recently attended training in child protection which means her knowledge is up-to-date.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

The children are confident in their relationships with the staff. They quickly settle to activities that are waiting for them when they come in. Staff are working within the 'Birth to three matters' framework by providing activities that encourage children to explore with paint, dough, corn flour, wet and dry sand. This helps children to represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. Activities such as singing and experimenting with musical instruments contribute to children's developing communication skills.

In the after school club the activities are well organised and interest the children. The children get on well and when questioned said they like coming because they have fun and staff make them laugh. Children were observed making art and craft items with staff and confidently following instructions. Children are involved in everyday routines, such as helping to dry up the dishes after tea. The children choose what they want to play with. There are art, craft and board games in one room, floor toys in the hall and children playing organised games in the outdoor area. Children were observed playing football with a member of staff. They played cooperatively with the staff's supportive guidance. The children visit the adventure playground next door and local parks where they can be challenged physically. They practise their performances which they put on for the parents e.g. 'strictly salsa dancing', and 'Pied Piper of Happy Days.' The children learn about road safety from a local police officer and it is brought to their attention on outings.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. The staff have an insecure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Plans lack detail and activities are repetitive.

Although staff record activities under each area of learning, not all aspects are covered sufficiently to promote children's learning. Staff use the stepping stones to identify children's achievements through recorded observations. However, they are not used to plan the appropriate next step in their learning. This means the activities provided do not have clear learning outcomes and experiences are not well enough matched to children's needs to provide a suitable level of challenge.

Children are eager to play and are confident. Their independence is promoted when staff encourage them to do things for themselves such as cut up fruit for snack or put on their coat. Children happily tidy up and are proud of their achievements. The children care about each other and are praised for being kind. Children behave well because of the staff's gentle and supportive guidance. They are attempting to write and visit the graphics table regularly. However, this is not extended to encourage them to write for a variety of purposes. Children learn to recognise their name when they self register and listen well at story time. However, there is no plan to encourage sounds, the meaning of words or to introduce new vocabulary. Children take part in discussions about simple pre-school rules and keeping safe. They develop an initial sense of time and place, and gain some knowledge of their environment. They do not however, increase their understanding sufficiently because the staff rarely plan experiences for children to observe, explore and investigate the world around them.

Children use their imagination in play when using media such as sand and dough to pretend. For example, using the sand to make chocolate cakes and searching for golden nuggets. However, the lack of planning and resources in the role play area, mean children are not inspired to visit the area very often. The repetitive nature of the activities provided mean children are not being encouraged to be fully creative. Children draw pictures to relate how they feel, for example, a child described her picture as "this is me, I am happy". There is a mathematical area in the pre-school with numerals displayed at child height. However, this is not used well and mathematical opportunities are limited. Children learn about capacity and volume in the sand and water when they experiment pouring water into various containers. There is no clear planning and staff were not observed to ask children mathematical questions to make them think or solve simple number problems in everyday activities.

Children's physical development is satisfactorily promoted. The hall is spacious and children move freely with control. They learn to climb and balance and skilfully manoeuvre large equipment, such as the sea-saw. They have daily opportunities to use the outdoor play area and enjoy playing games such as, 'what's the time Mr Wolf'. Children learn how to handle a range of small equipment, such as, scissors, glue sticks and pencils and have good hand to eye coordination. They learn about how to look after their teeth with help from the visiting Dental Nurse.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children show a sense of belonging. They talk about their friends, family and staff and follow the daily routines. Children are helped to develop a positive attitude to others. For example, with play resources that represent the children who attend as

well as individuals from the wider community. Children with learning difficulties are well supported in partnership with their parents and by liaising with outside agencies.

The staff encourage the children's good behaviour by their friendly, polite and gentle support. The staff in the pre school and after school club have realistic boundaries and encourage desirable behaviour. They do this by praising behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share. Good relationships are fostered and the children are happy and secure. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. Children settle well because of the consistent staff team and their flexible approach. The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. The children benefit from a two way sharing of information between parents and the child's key worker on a regular basis. Parents are encouraged to borrow pre school books to read them with their children. Parents interviewed were very satisfied with the service provided and commented on the approachability of staff and that they were well informed about their child's progress. The information given to parents about the Foundation Stage is not well understood and one parent when questioned did not understand how her child learnt through play.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children are cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been appropriately vetted, due to effective recruitment procedures. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child development and are a consistent staff team. However, a lack of clear communication channels between the manager and the provider mean staff are unclear about their roles and responsibilities.

Although some policies and procedures are in place in booklet form for parents, they are not always effective in promoting children's health and safety within the setting. For example, there is no operational plan with the relevant service's policies and procedures available for staff. Some policies and procedures are not in place.

Leadership and management of nursery education is inadequate. Although all staff are qualified, little is done to ensure that staff working with children in receipt of funding for nursery education have sufficient knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. The lack of clear direction and planning of teaching and learning means gaps in children's learning continue unnoticed.

Risk assessments are ineffective as there are hazards present that put children at risk of accidental injury. These have not been addressed. Most records are maintained to a satisfactory standard. The exception to this is the documentation relating to the recording of accidents and complaints. Documentation is not organised effectively to fully support the children's welfare and safety. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- keep a written record of all accidents and ensure the policy reflects this
- ensure risk assessments are thorough and when there are identified risks to children's safety action is taken to minimise these
- ensure there is an operational plan with the relevant service's policy and procedures. Make sure that it is available and understood by all staff
- devise a lost child policy

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance for the foundation stage to improve the quality of teaching and learning

- improve the planning to include all areas of learning and to have clear learning outcomes for activities provided
- improve the assessment of children by including their next steps for learning and using these to inform the planning

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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