



Mountbatten Holiday Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	151098
Inspection date	11 August 2006
Inspector	Helen Mary Ball
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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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mountbatten Holiday club opened in 1996 and operates from various rooms and halls at the Mountbatten School, Romsey. The holiday club offers an inclusive scheme and reserves some places for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is situated in a residential area of Hampshire. A maximum of 50 children may attend the setting at any one time.

The holiday club is open from 08:30 to 18:00 during school holidays, and children attend for a variety of sessions which are booked in advance. All children share

access to the school playing fields.

There are currently 74 children on roll, from 5 to 15 years of age. Children primarily come from the local area.

The club employs 34 staff. Two of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's welfare is underpinned as the setting appropriately maintains medication records, and relevant parental consents have been obtained. However, staff do not consistently ensure that parents countersign accident records which means that they are not always aware of accidents to their children. Children enjoy a range of activities that contribute to their good health. Each day there are planned physical activities and they enjoy playing in the fresh air.

Children are offered a daily snack, although this is not always nutritious or sustaining; biscuits or crisps are frequently offered. Children's health is safeguarded because staff are aware of children's individual dietary requirements and ensure that alternative foods are offered if necessary. For example, children with wheat allergies are offered wheat and gluten-free alternatives.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children feel welcome at the setting, as staff greet each child individually and tell them about the activities for the day. They have access to a variety of rooms and staff carry out daily risk assessments to ensure that the building is safe for children's use.

During free-play sessions, children play with a limited range of toys and games, some of which are broken or incomplete. The lack of quality toys and games leaves children with little interest or stimulation, which affects their general mood and behaviour. The poor condition of books and CD's does not motivate children to care for equipment and this results in resources being strewn around the hall. This creates an uninspiring and unimaginative environment. Children do enjoy using the IT suite, when they have use of computers for games and individual research, and they have access to some sports equipment. Children in the one-to-one group have access to soft play equipment.

Although staff show some understanding of safety issues, the lack of adequate play provision means that children experiment with their own games. Staff are not always aware that these games are not safe, and that children need some sensitive intervention and direction to produce mutually agreed outcomes. Some staff keep

mainstream children secure by monitoring children's movements around the setting. However, the club policy to use the main hall as their base means that children move freely around the school to access the gym and community lounge, with limited supervision. Doors to the outside are open and staff are not always aware of children's movements. This means that mainstream children can exit the building unnoticed during free-play times.

Children are effectively evacuated from the around the school site during a fire drill and they meet at the muster point without fuss. However, children are not all accounted for until staff re-enter the building to collect the register. This delay puts staff and children at risk in the event of a fire.

Children are protected because staff received training in child protection during the induction to the scheme. They are aware of the processes to follow in the event of a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Children take part in planned activities. However, the rigid routines mean that children's play is not freely chosen or motivated from within. This means that children do not benefit from choosing which activities they would like to take part in, or from opportunities to engage in free play with their friends when they wish. For example, during planned activities such as limbo dancing, children who do not wish to participate are not offered alternative choices. This results in children becoming unmotivated and bored. Children state that they would prefer to choose whether or not they take part, and how they spend their leisure time at the club.

There are limited opportunities for children to develop and explore during their free-play sessions. Although some activities are provided, these do not appeal to many of the children. This means that children become bored and this influences their behaviour and safety. For example, children rush around and play hide-and-seek among stacked tables and chairs. Most staff are inexperienced and the lack of leadership at the setting means that some staff do not have confidence in taking initiative to explore children's spontaneous suggestions, such as making dens. Children become frustrated and resentful when staff identify that aspects of building a den can be dangerous, but do not balance the risks involved with the benefits of challenge and stimulation; this does not help children to explore risks and find solutions.

Children have opportunities to take part in workshops, such as drama or pottery. Creative children benefit from these sessions. The club invites specialists to the setting and children enthuse about the recent visit by a professional storyteller.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive one-to-one support. This means that they can choose whether or not to join in with activities; they also have dedicated use of a small hall should they need play quietly.

Overall, although the planning shows that a range of activities is offered, these do not

start with the children's needs and are not sufficiently flexible to meet them. Play opportunities do not empower children, affirm and support their right to make choices, or allow them to develop at their own pace and in their own way.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff promote a positive awareness of diversity by helping children to explore the similarities and differences between each other; challenging discrimination consistently; and responding in a positive, informative and matter-of-fact way to curiosity children show about the world around them.

Staff are polite to children and act as good role models. Children are friendly and are interested in people around them. They are keen to talk about the club and are confident in doing so. However, children do become bored and frustrated when there is lack of challenge or choice. The setting has a written statement on behaviour management, but this does not include bullying.

Children's welfare is supported by a generally effective partnership with parents who are kept informed about club activities via the noticeboard. They are provided with a basic information pack prior to their child starting, and they share information about their children via the registration forms.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The holiday club has been through a period of instability and is now under new leadership; it is managed by the Childcare and Youth Activity Manager. Children are protected because the setting has thorough recruitment and vetting procedures. The staff team is young and friendly; they bring a range of experiences to the setting. However, lack of guidance means that they are not given the necessary direction to develop children's play. The majority of staff do not hold relevant childcare or playwork qualifications and this impacts on the quality of children's experiences at the setting.

Children have ample space to move and play freely. However, deployment of staff means that children are not always able to access all play areas which does frustrate them at times. Children are grouped according to age when taking part in activities; the organisation of groups is inflexible and this means that children are sometimes separated from their friends, causing some unhappiness.

Children's welfare is supported by the maintenance of appropriate records and parental consents.

However, the setting does not have policies for lost or uncollected children, a complaints procedure or a system to record complaints. These omissions constitute breaches of the regulations.

Overall, the setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, recommendations were made that accident records are kept confidential, and that visitors are required to sign-in. The setting now records accidents on individual sheets and maintains a register of visitors. This means that children's privacy and safety is further assured.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints to report 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

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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:

- develop an action plan that sets out how staff training and qualification requirements will be met
- produce a policy for lost children and uncollected children and share this with parents
- plan and provide activities and play opportunities which allow children to use their imagination and in which they have as much choice as possible
- provide an action plan which details how the setting will develop a range of suitable and well-maintained toys and equipment, which is suitable for the children's ages and stages of development
- review fire evacuation procedures to ensure that all children are promptly accounted for

- assess the risks to children with regard to free-play sessions and take steps to minimise these
- make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint
- keep a record of complaints relating to the national standards and any action taken.

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

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