



Pied Piper Activities Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122633
Inspection date	01 August 2006
Inspector	Joanne Lindsey Caswell
Setting Address	Copthorne School, Effingham Lane, Copthorne, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 3HR
Telephone number	01273 504485
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Registered person	Pied Piper Activities Ltd
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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pied Piper Activities Ltd has been registered under its current management since 1997 and provides children's camps during school holidays at venues in Surrey, Sussex and Kent. The company is managed by qualified and experienced teachers. The Cophorne School setting is registered to provide out of school care for 70 children aged from four to eight years. In addition, children aged between eight and 12 years attend the group and are offered appropriate activities. Children have use of the sports hall, gym, school theatre, TV room, toilets, woodland, sports field, covered swimming pool and tennis courts. The camp operates during school holidays from 09:30 to 16:30. Children can also attend for an extended day from 08:30 to 17:45.

There are currently 80 children, aged from four to 12 years on roll. There is provision in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

A team of qualified and experienced staff work with the children, under the direction of a qualified Camp Director. Children participate in a range of activities, including: art and craft, go-karts, team games, bouncy castle, drama, swimming and camp building.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. Staff give clear explanations and ensure children implement effective routines to promote their healthy development. For example, staff actively encourage the 'Slip, Slap, Slop' procedure, reminding children to wear sunhats, apply sun cream and take regular drinks. Children also understand the reasons for, and importance of, hand washing and there are reminder notices displayed around the premises. This ensures that children help to protect themselves from illness and prevent the spread of germs. Effective procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection. Staff ensure the premises are well-maintained and cleaned appropriately each day. Written policies are in place informing parents that their children cannot attend the camp if suffering from an infectious illness. This protects children against the spread of infection.

Children have many opportunities to participate in a wide range of physical activities. This encourages children to be active and promotes a healthy lifestyle. The daily timetable enables children to enjoy a very good range of sports, such as football, Dodge Ball, swimming and mini Olympics. Children enjoy many active games, such as 'Capture the Flag' and 'Forty Forty'. This enables children to run and move around freely which promotes their good health. The daily routine is planned very well to meet children's welfare needs. For example, children enjoy many physical and vigorous activities, combined with a good balance of calmer and more passive activities. All children have access to a quiet room with cushions and comfortable seating, enabling the younger children to take plenty of rests.

Staff are vigilant in meeting all children's individual health and welfare needs. There are effective procedures in place for the safe storage and administration of medication and staff demonstrate a good awareness of each child's personal needs.

Children's dietary needs are met well. Parents are made aware of the storage arrangements for packed lunches, ensuring they take appropriate action to keep food cool. All staff are aware of children's individual dietary requirements and ensure that these are met appropriately. For example, children are reminded that they must not share their packed lunches with one another, as some children may have food allergies and intolerances.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

There are excellent systems in place to protect children from dangers. Staff implement many precautions and carry out comprehensive risk assessments on areas of the premises and all planned activities to ensure there is minimal risk to children. For example, children learn the camp's swimming 'rules'. They understand that when staff blow the whistle three times, this indicates an emergency situation and children must implement emergency procedures. During activities in the adjoining woodland, staff are vigilant in protecting children. They maintain continual contact with the Camp Director via a radio and explain possible hazards to children to alert them to dangers. For example, children understand that they must always stay within sight and sound of their group leader and respond to the whistle when it is blown. During activities, such as go-karting, children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves, and others, safe. They wear protective clothing, such as safety helmets, and wait in a designated 'Safety Zone'. During swimming activities, children clearly understand the importance of not running by the side of the pool. These measures help children to recognise the importance of safety and the precautions they can take to keep themselves, and others, safe.

Children are kept safe as effective precautions are taken to ensure the premises are secure. Areas, such as the swimming pool, are kept safe and children cannot access these without the supervision of staff. Staff carry out daily risk assessments and ensure that any hazards to children are quickly identified and made safe. This protects children and helps to ensure their safety. Staff supervise children at all times and ensure that effective arrangements are in place during drop off and collection times. An accurate record of children's attendance is maintained and parents sign their children in to and out of the staff's care. There are safe procedures in place to ensure that children are only collected from the setting by authorised adults. This contributes towards children's safety and well-being.

Children use resources and equipment which are of excellent quality and are appropriate for their age and developmental ability. For example, the younger children use a smaller bouncy castle which is safer and more appropriate for their age and ability. There are effective procedures in place to ensure that all equipment is frequently checked to ensure it remains in full working order and is totally safe for children's use. This protects children from hazards and helps to keep them safe.

Children are extremely well protected as staff have a full understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection. This ensures that they recognise how to contribute towards children's safety and well-being. All staff have a thorough understanding of the procedures to follow, should they have concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are confident and extremely happy within the camp. There are extensive

opportunities for children to develop new skills and make new friends. Staff are extremely attentive to ensuring that older children play kindly and respectfully with the younger children and are mindful of their individual needs. As a result of this, the younger children enjoy the company of the older children and actively take part in the whole group activities. This develops children's confidence and contributes towards the very happy and fun camp environment.

The daily routine is planned extremely well, offering a diverse range of both structured activity and free play. Children enjoy frequent breaks and their care needs are consistently met. For example, the younger children have regular toileting and hand washing breaks and all children benefit from frequent breaks for drinks.

Children and staff play happily together and enjoy very close, warm relationships. Staff actively get involved in all children's activities and, as a result, children enjoy their company and close interaction. Children approach staff happily and the gentle and sensitive approach of the staff ensures that all children benefit fully from all activities on offer.

Children clearly enjoy their time at camp and excitedly discuss their favourite activities and games. For example, they talk happily about the 'Capture the Flag' game and 'Forty Forty' and have confidence to request their favourite games, confident that staff will listen to, and value, their ideas. Children have excellent opportunities to develop new skills and broaden their experiences by undertaking new activities. For example, children enjoy building camps in the woodland and challenge staff members to spontaneous juggling and 'hula hoop' competitions. This demonstrates how comfortable, settled and secure children are and reflects the very happy and fun atmosphere staff create.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are met in full. Staff seek extensive information from parents, to ensure they are fully aware of each child's personal needs. Comprehensive information is obtained regarding each child's medical, welfare and dietary requirements and further information is obtained regarding each child's special friends and developmental ability. This enables staff to plan for each child's individual needs fully and tailor the planning and organisation of each day's activities to meet all children's personal needs. Staff demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and full understanding of all the children they are responsible for, enabling them to provide suitable care and treat all children fairly.

Children use resources which are safe and appropriate for their age and ability. This ensures that all children are challenged fairly and realistically. The effective organisation of groups of children enables staff to effectively plan appropriate activities for each age group.

Children develop a very strong sense of belonging within the camp. This enables them to develop high levels of self-confidence and promotes their self-esteem. Children receive high levels of praise, positive interaction and plenty of reassurance

from staff and their personal needs and achievements are fully recognised and celebrated. All children are personally welcomed into the camp each day and staff are attentive in greeting each child personally on their arrival. This enables children to feel valued and recognised as an individual.

Children play a full part in the planning and organisation of the day. They devise their own 'camp agreement' and are fully involved in contributing their own ideas and expectations of behaviour boundaries. This enables children to feel listened to and demonstrates that staff value and respect all children.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very well. There are comprehensive written policies reflecting staff's commitment to addressing all children's personal needs.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They fully understand staff's expectations and staff treat children with courtesy and respect. Children respond positively to staff and are extremely clear about the organisation of the day. For example, when children hear the whistle blow, they fully understand this indicates the end of an activity session and immediately start clearing away, with little prompting necessary from staff. Children of all ages play harmoniously together and the older children are kind and respectful to the younger children. In turn, the younger children gain much from playing with the older children and this is closely supervised by staff to ensure the younger children's safety. Staff are confident in addressing any unacceptable behaviour and use the '3-strikes' policy, providing children with plenty of explanation. As a result, children are totally at ease in the staff's care and fully understand acceptable behaviour levels.

There are excellent partnerships in place between staff and parents/carers. A wealth of written information is provided and all new parents are invited to an Introductory Session on their child's first day. This enables parents to meet the Camp Director and staff, understand company policies and have a tour of the premises. Staff actively work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure consistency of care for children. For example, staff obtain extensive written information from parents regarding each child's individual needs, to enable staff to meet these fully in all areas of camp practice. All necessary written parental consent is maintained, enabling staff to carry out appropriate care practices, such as seeking emergency advice or administering medication.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The staff team consists of dedicated and professional staff, many of whom have worked for Pied Piper for several years. The Camp Director provides clear leadership and is extremely competent in her role. All staff have a thorough understanding of the National Standards and ensure the conditions of registration are adhered to at all times. Staff deployment is good and full use is made of all the school's facilities, offering a very good balance of activities both inside and outside.

The daily routine is planned extremely well around the needs of the children. Activity

sessions are well-designed to maintain children's interests and concentration, with plenty of short breaks in between for children to rest and have drinks and free play.

Staff benefit fully from the comprehensive staff induction programme. As a result, staff are fully conversant with all company policies and procedures and implement them in daily practice.

Regulatory documentation is maintained. However, the current format for recording children's accidents does not ensure confidentiality. All other records are maintained in full and include parental signature and consent, wherever necessary.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, a recommendation was raised relating to the recording of accidents. Staff have addressed this by ensuring that all children's accidents are now fully recorded in the accident book and parents sign each entry. This now ensures that parents are made fully aware of all accidents. However, the format of recording accidents does not ensure children's confidentiality and this remains a weakness.

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 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):

- review the format of recording accidents to ensure children's confidentiality

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