



## **The Scout Hut**

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** EY320746  
**Inspection date** 14 August 2006  
**Inspector** Carys Millican

**Setting Address** Cockermouth After School Club, The Scout Hut, St. Helens Street, Cockermouth, Cumbria, CA13 9HX

**Telephone number**

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Cockermouth After School Scheme

**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](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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cockermouth Out of School Club is run by a management committee. It was registered in 2006 (the club was previously operating from within the TA Centre) and now operates from the Scout Hut, in Cockermouth. The club has access to a main hall, craft room and quiet room, kitchen and associated facilities. A maximum of 50 children aged three to eight years may attend at any one time. Children aged over eight years also attend and are included in these numbers. The out of school club runs a breakfast club, after school club and holiday play scheme. The breakfast club is open week days from 09.00 to 09.15 and the after school club operates from 15.10 to 17.45 during school term time. The holiday play scheme is held each holiday week

day from 08.00 to 17.45. Children access the outdoor play areas under supervision and as an outing.

There are currently 56 children aged three to eight years on roll. The club serves the immediate and extended rural community.

The club employs six staff who all hold appropriate early years qualifications. Additional temporary staff are employed during school holidays.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health within the setting is supported by staff that have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the after school club's health and hygiene procedures. Children begin to learn basic hygiene practices. They are reminded to wash their hands before eating, however, there is no soap provided in the girls toilets. Therefore, children are at risk from the potential spread of infection. Staff follow appropriate hygiene procedures as tables are cleaned before use and play areas are cleared before meals.

Children enjoy the free play and adult-initiated activities available in the spacious surroundings. They benefit from a number of indoor activities to engage in physical play. Children enjoy action games in the main hall where they develop upper body movements during the physical activities. They play outdoors on the adventure playground and on the rear grassed area using a full range of bikes, scooters, bats and balls. During the holiday play scheme several outings to adventure parks and places of interest are provided. Children enjoy the activities and their concentration and interest is maintained throughout the session.

Children enjoy the social occasion created at lunch time. Staff encourage social skills such as table manners as they sit together at this time. However, at snack time, children are not provided with an area to sit, to enjoy their snack and social interaction. Children's developing independence is not consistently applied. They do not hand out snacks or pour their own drinks. Fresh drinking water is not available at all times. Children explain that they enjoy the nutritious snack provided at the breakfast and after school sessions, such as sandwiches, toast, cereal bars and fruit. However, they are provided with a number of sugary snacks and sweets during the holiday play scheme. Children keep their packed lunch boxes in the cloak room. Perishable items contained in these packed lunches, such as yoghurts, are not stored appropriately before children eat them. Staff have not discussed healthy eating options with parents packed lunches.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally kept safe and secure when playing indoors. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because daily safety checks are completed each session. However, detailed risk assessments are not in place for the areas children have access to. Children are cared for in a spacious well maintained environment. They help themselves to a variety of safe and suitable resources and play opportunities provided by the staff members. The attendance of children, staff and visitors is recorded and there are secure systems in place to protect children from un-vetted persons. Documents are maintained and staff are aware of the procedures to follow to maintain children's safety.

Children understand how to keep themselves safe when walking to school or to the after school club and explain how they take care when crossing the roads. The fire fighting equipment is in place and checked and the evacuation procedure is displayed. However the evacuation procedure has not been practised with the children recently, and a recommendation made by the fire officer has not been completed, therefore children's safety is compromised. Children benefit from daily walks from school to the after school club. Procedures are in place for the safe collection and escorting of children to and from the local schools. The main entrance is kept secure and children cannot leave the premises unsupervised.

Children are protected by staff who have a satisfactory understanding of the child protection policy and procedures and give priority to children's welfare. Children are kept safe by the collection procedures in place. Documentation, policies and procedures are maintained, however the name of the designated contact person is not recorded in the child protection policy. Children are kept safe on outings as risk assessments are maintained and procedures are followed to keep children safe from harm. Children are cared for by suitable adults who are vetted and have the relevant experience, knowledge and skills.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time spent at the out of school club. They are happy, contented and settle well. Children are enthusiastic and self-assured in their play, helping themselves to the interesting activities provided. Children are eager to take part in activities. They listen to instruction as the manager shows the children what to do for the craft activity. Children remain interested and their concentration maintained throughout as they cut out triangular shapes to stick onto their card. Younger children are well supported and staff encourage older children to help guide the younger ones taking part. Children play board games on the floor or sit together at the tables and colour in pictures. Children develop self-esteem and respect for one another as they become aware of their own needs and the needs of others. They rest in the quiet area and read books or play on the floor with the K-nex construction materials. Children benefit from a suitable range of outdoor activities. They visit the adventure playground opposite, and use a range of outdoor physical play resources on the grassed areas.

Children benefit from the close and caring relationships formed with staff which

increases children's sense of trust and helps them develop a strong sense of self. Adult-child interactions are very supportive of communication skills and extend experiences. Children relate well to each other and socialise well, building up good relationships with each other. They begin to distinguish between right and wrong and learn to take turns and share resources. A flexible approach to planning and a good balance between adult and child-led activities allows children to make choices and decisions and acquire new skills. Children are involved in decision making by devising their own rules and become involved in deciding if they would do the activity again in the future. Extensive planning is in place to ensure a good balance of activities is available to children. Children benefit from regular weekly outings to local places of interests, parks and play grounds, and special attractions.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents are made welcome. Children's individual needs are known and met by staff in discussion with their parents. Their understanding of equality is promoted through activities that encourage equal play as older and younger children play together and support each other. Children's awareness of diversity is promoted through celebrating festivals, however, access to resources that help children's understanding of diversity of the wider world is limited.

Children behave well. They begin to distinguish between right and wrong and understand responsible behaviour. Children discuss the club rules, which are clearly displayed on the notice board. The children generally respond well to the staff's effective behaviour management strategies. Staff give time to listen, praise achievements and provide individual support. Procedures are followed to record behaviour incidents, which fully maintain confidentiality. Children enjoy mutually respectful relationships with the staff and each other. They develop self-esteem and confidence as they voice their opinions, and make choices and decisions. Equipment, resources and activities are adapted to ensure all children are able to participate. Children respect and understand that some children need extra help and willingly support those who do.

Children benefit from the sound relationship and partnership with parents. Information is shared daily. Policies and procedures are displayed on the notice board and regular newsletters detail the activities to be provided for the children. Parents obtain detailed information when registering at the club. The complaints procedure is displayed for parents, however it has not been updated in line with recent changes and a system for recording complaints has not been initiated. Parents are happy with the service provided and express a high regard for the staff and care provided for their children.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The registered person uses robust recruitment procedures and appropriately vets

and checks that staff have suitable qualifications. The manager and staff hold current first aid certificates and appropriate early years qualifications, however, they are not available for inspection. Children are cared for by experienced staff who work well together as a team. Staff are experienced practitioners, however, they have not undertaken any recent training in order to update their knowledge and understanding of key issues and changes in legislation. Staff work well together to promote children's health, enjoyment and achievement. The adult-to-child ratio fully supports children's care, learning and play.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and well-maintained environment. They confidently move around the spacious room and help themselves to suitable age-appropriate resources and activities. Staff change and rotate the available resources from a central store allowing children to access different games and activities. The premises are well-organised and indoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children. Children feel at home and at ease within the environment. This means they are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning during child-initiated play and planned activities. Although, the key worker system is used by staff during before and after school sessions it is not applied when operating the holiday club. Staff support children in activities and are well deployed to ensure younger children's needs are met.

Most documentation, policies and procedures are in place which enables the smooth running of the after school club and helps promote children's health, safety and welfare. Information is shared with parents on a daily basis and parents are kept informed about the after school club activities through regular newsletters. Children's individual needs are known and all children are included.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the 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.

## **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
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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 arrangements for storing perishable items in children's packed lunch boxes
- make sure the fire evacuation procedure is practised regularly with the children and all recommendations made by the fire officer are completed
- make sure records are always available for inspection.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)