



St Matthew's Link Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 315279

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Inspector Sheila Iwaskow

Setting Address St. Matthews Church Hall, Stretton Road, Stretton, Warrington, Cheshire, WA4 4NT

Telephone number 01925 730832

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Registered person Joyce Kernahan

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?

St. Matthews Link Club was registered in 1994. It is one of five out of school clubs owned and run by Joyce Kernahan. The club is based in St. Matthews Church of England school located in the Stretton area of Warrington.

The provision operates Monday to Friday and includes a breakfast club from 08.00 to 09.00, an after school club from 15.00 to 18.00 and play schemes in the Easter, summer and half term holidays from 08.00 to 18.00. It closes only for public holidays and the Christmas school break. Children attending the clubs have access to two infant classrooms, two junior classrooms, the school and church halls and associated

facilities. An attractive area is available for outdoor play. There are currently 36 children on roll who attend on a variety of placements. The setting supports children with learning difficulties.

Children accessing the breakfast and after school club attend of St. Matthews Church of England school. Children from the wider communities of Warrington, Halton and Cheshire access the holiday play schemes.

A complement of five staff work with the children, of these, two are fully qualified and another two are working towards a recognised qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well protected from infection and cross contamination through good hygiene routines, which are clearly established and consistently followed by staff. Children receive good levels of care if they have an accident as staff hold first aid certificates and a first aid box is within easy reach. An effective sick child policy is in place, which excludes children who are ill, stopping infections being spread. If children become ill whilst at the setting they are comforted appropriately by staff and parents are contacted straight away. Children learn about personal hygiene as they independently wash their hands after toileting and before snack time. Posters in the toilet areas, hand washing demonstrations by staff and explanations about germs raise children's awareness of the underlying concepts of good hygiene routines.

Daily access to a wide range of outdoor play equipment provides opportunities for children to have fun whilst developing their physical skills. Activities are varied and enable children to gain confidence as they learn to move with control and use their bodies in different ways. Children have lots of fun as they run around in the fresh air, do cartwheels and practise their balancing and climbing skills in the adventure playground. Interactive games such as tennis and football provide children with the opportunity to work as a team, learning to follow defined rules.

Snack times are relaxed social occasions where children sit together and talk. Children enjoy choosing from healthy options, such as toast, apples and pears. Children are encouraged to try out new textures and tastes as they are given a choice between white or brown bread and the opportunity to taste a range of tropical fruit at the holiday club. Monitors are appointed on a daily basis to accept responsibility for collecting snacks from the kitchen and handing them out. Drinks are easily accessible, ensuring that children are well hydrated. Staff ensure that children are encouraged to increase their fluid intake after energetic play outside.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children and parents are warmly greeted by a member of staff when they arrive at

the setting. Rooms in which the children are for cared benefit from natural sunlight and are well ventilated on hot, sunny days. Space is made available where children can simply relax and enjoy some quiet time, either watching television or reading a book. There is a good selection of furniture which allows children to play, rest and eat in comfort. A wide variety of resources and play materials are available and meet the needs of all the children who attend. Staff check the toys and equipment on a regular basis to minimise the risks to children.

Close attention is paid to safety. Regular risk assessments are carried out both indoors and outdoors. Children are well supervised when playing outside, and when they are escorted from their classrooms to the club. Fire drills are clearly displayed and fire evacuation procedures are carried out on a regular basis. This ensures that children are able to follow defined procedures in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation. Children are learning about personal safety as staff gently remind children taking part in an embroidery activity to set aside their sewing needles before eating.

Children are well protected as staff have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and procedures to follow.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and enjoy being together in the relaxed and friendly environment. They talk positively about the club and enjoy attending. Children know each other well and clearly get pleasure from unwinding together after a day at school. They share warm, close relationships with staff and talk freely to visitors. Children are secure in the routines of the club. Coats are hung up on pegs, bags are put tidily away and children happily sit together waiting for their snack. Such routines encourage tidiness and a respect for the environment in which they play.

Children are actively involved for the planning of the activities at the group. Regular discussions and questionnaires given to the children ensure their ideas are acted upon. As a result, children are contributing and taking ownership of the group. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and planning is clearly displayed, keeping parents fully informed about the range of activities in which their children participate.

All children are purposefully engaged in a range of exciting activities which they clearly enjoy. Individual preferences are recognised and acknowledged as some children choose to rest whilst others play after a busy day at school. Computer activities provide chances for children to explore new challenges and practise their technology skills. Creative opportunities allow children to develop their imaginative skills as they think carefully about the pattern they want to create during an embroidery activity and paint pictures of their summer holidays. Role play in a variety of situations gives children the chance to initiate their own ideas as they dress up as chefs, fairies and Batman. Staff deploy themselves effectively to enable them to offer good care and support for the children. They interact well with the children, taking an interest in what they do and say.

Children attending the breakfast club are offered a range of quieter activities, giving them time to reflect and prepare for a day at school. At the holiday club children enjoy a thematic approach, which encompasses a range of worthwhile activities which meet the needs of all children who attend.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Cultural diversity is well promoted as children learn about countries around the world. Children raise money for charitable events, such as Sports Relief and Children In Need, and research how this money is used to help other less fortunate children. They also have the opportunity to taste a variety of food eaten by people abroad and to celebrate cultural festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Divali. Lessons in Italian give children an appreciation of the languages spoken in other countries. Staff appreciate each child's uniqueness and ensure that their individual needs are well met. The setting has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and understands that they should be welcomed into a sharing and inclusive environment.

Children are exceptionally well behaved, polite and friendly towards each other. Club rules are displayed, which set out staff's expectations of the children. Staff set themselves as positive role models and treat each child with individual care and respect. Children efforts are praised and their contributions valued, which helps to make children feel good about themselves.

Parents are made to feel welcome and staff establish open and friendly relationships. A comprehensive handbook informs parents of all policies and procedures that operate within the club. Verbal feedback, regular newsletters and a notice board keeps parents informed about the provision. Questionnaires allow parents to express their opinions and provide feedback for staff. Parents expressed their overall satisfaction with the service provided.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Acceptable recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure that children are safe and secure. However, although evidence was available on the day of inspection of CRB clearances for all staff, these details, together with staff's individual qualifications, are not recorded in staff files. A good induction programme and probationary period promotes a firm basis for staff employment. Staff are experienced, qualified and work as part of a team to ensure continuity of care. Space is maximised to its full potential to make sure that children are provided with a balanced range of activities. High staff-child ratios are in place, affording children with the best possible care. The registration certificate is clearly displayed, keeping parents fully informed about the provision's conditions of registration.

Most documentation relating to the continuity of care of the children is in place, up-to-date and organised to respect confidentiality. However, a minor omission has

been identified; the complaints procedure does not reflect recent changes to the National Standards.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that the child protection policy is adequately covered within the first week of employment. This issue has now been addressed, which ensures that staff act in the best interests of the children with regard to this aspect of their care

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints, 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):

- update complaints procedure in line with changes to the National Standards and ensure that staff's qualifications and CRB details are recorded appropriately.

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