



The Gap

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY317663
Inspection date	31 July 2006
Inspector	Patricia Dawes

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Registered person	Christian Youth & Community Service
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Type of inspection	Childcare
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Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care
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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?

The Gap Out of School and Holiday Play scheme is a committee run group. It opened in 2005 and operates from one room within a community centre. It is situated on the outskirts of West Bromwich near Birmingham. A maximum of 20 children may attend the provision at any one time. The provision is open each weekday from 15.00 to 18.00 during term-time and 09:00 to 18:00 during school holidays.

There are currently 23 children aged from five to under eight years on roll. Children up to 11 may also attend. Children come from the local catchment area, as most of their parents travel to work in or around the town.

The provision employs 2 members of staff. Both of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The provision receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where their individual needs are well met. They are protected from illness by the staff's pro-active approach of consistently encouraging children to become proficient in their own personal care routines. Most written policies and records are available which demonstrate how hygiene and health standards are maintained within the group; however entries in the accident record are not signed by parents to show they have received the information. The impact in the delay of relaying information compromises children's health and well-being.

Children benefit from an effective, planned daily routine which allows time for exploring, testing and developing physical control. They experience a broad range of exciting physical activities that promote their understanding of how to stay healthy and active, such as using outdoor play equipment and practising indoor games ready for sports day. Children know when they need a drink or a rest.

Children take pleasure in developing their social skills during snack time because time is given for them to enjoy their food and interact well with staff and other children talking about 'good' and 'bad' foods, likes, and dislikes. Children help themselves to easily accessible drinking water throughout the session and enjoy fresh fruit and cheese as a healthy alternative to crisps and biscuits at snack time. Packed lunches are provided by parents and these are appropriately stored.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, environment that helps them to feel settled and confident. Security of the premises is good and there are effective procedures for the collection of children at the end of a session to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded. Regular risk assessments are conducted to ensure building and outdoor areas used by the children are safe. Fire procedures are displayed and evacuations are practised regularly; however the fire evacuation record lacks sufficient detail to enable children and staff to improve their practice. This means children's health and safety is at times is compromised.

Children use high quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. It is easily accessible, checked thoroughly to ensure it meets safety requirements and cleaned regularly. There is adequate space within the room to provide children with a stimulating range of activities which promote their development. All children have equal access to resources which are not restricted.

Children are well protected by staff that have a clear, focused understanding of all aspects of child protection. A written policy is in place which is shared with parents; however the policy and procedure has not been reviewed and updated to demonstrate how staff ensure children's welfare is fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children arrive happily and settle very quickly into the environment showing confidence and eagerness to play and have fun. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Children enjoy their time in the play scheme, they relax, develop friendships and have fun because staff are highly skilled and use their broad ranging knowledge and own life experiences to provide high quality care.

Children's use of creative materials enables them to develop a wealth of imaginative, exploratory and sensory experiences such as making post bags and post boxes, and writing letters to send home. Staff plan activities on a weekly basis which is linked to festivals or themes such as The Post. These contribute very well to children's progress, fun and learning helping develop encouraging social skills and involvement in the wider community.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is enhanced by the consistent quality of staff interaction. They are listened to and their communication skills are well promoted as staff positively respond to their questions. They are confident to try new experiences due to staff having a very good understanding of how to motivate children by ensuring all activities are adapted so all children can participate.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are made thoroughly welcome and staff have a high regard for each child's individual needs and ensure their time is spent purposefully. They make choices in their play which ensures that they are interested in what they do and are able to choose activities which promote their independence. Each child is valued and included in every aspect of the daily routine and activities are meaningful, stimulating and fun. Children have a wide range of opportunities to learn about themselves and others in the wider community. Imaginatively planned activities help children gain a very good understanding of their environment.

Children's behaviour is well managed due to the clear boundaries and positive role models set by the staff. Effective strategies and written policies are in place, which are displayed and discussed with parents to promote consistency. Children are beginning to understand the difference between right and wrong and this is continually reinforced through daily routines and practices such as showing care and consideration for others and helping to tidy away toys after use.

Children's individual needs are well met because staff are positive, professional and friendly. Systems are in place to develop positive relationship with parents to encourage involvement and information sharing, such as a key working system and parental consultation, however records of incidents regarding behaviour, and complaints are not individual entries and do not ensure confidentiality is maintained. This compromises how children's needs are effectively met, and parent's wishes are respected.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of routines and activities are well-planned and well-organised in order to ensure children's needs are met. There are rigorous and robust recruitment procedures which ensure staff are appropriately qualified and vetted. The manager ensures there are the required levels of qualified staff working with all children. Children are given acceptable support as staff are adequately deployed and space and resources are well organised.

Children benefit from the care of staff that are motivated, helpful and recognise the need to continually update and increase their knowledge of good practice. Adequate systems are in place to ensure parents are well informed about the service. Policies and procedures are in place which has a positive impact on children's safety and well-being. All documentation is regularly reviewed and updated. Adequate systems are in place to ensure parents are well informed about the service.

Overall the provision meets 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.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the accident procedures by ensuring that all are formally recorded, with entries countersigned by parents
- review the system for logging fire evacuation practices to ensure that the record clearly demonstrate how practice is improved
- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- Review the system for recording accidents, incidents, daily activities and complaints to ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times.

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