



## **Barracudas**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	259646
<b>Inspection date</b>	01 August 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Veronica Sharpe / Heidi Falconer
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Barracudas Summer Activity Day Camp is located at Hinchingsbrooke School, near Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. It is open each weekday during Easter and for five weeks of the school summer holidays. Core opening times are from 09.30 to 16.30 with optional early or late starts offered by prior arrangement. Facilities include a heated swimming pool, sports hall, gymnasium, outdoor tennis courts and sport fields.

The camp is registered to accept up to 220 children from three years to under eight years of age. The age range of children attending is from four years to 16 years of

age. There are an estimated 500 children on roll, aged between four and 15, around 40% of these will be aged under eight years. There is a small number of children attending who have learning difficulties or disabilities.

There are 24 staff on roll, some of whom are qualified teachers or are training to be teachers. Five members of staff have specialist training for specific sports.

Barracudas is a privately owned chain owned by Young World Leisure Group. There are currently 28 settings located across the south east of England.

The camp has achieved Level 3 of the 'Aiming High' quality assurance scheme.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children develop good hygiene practice as staff remind them, for example, to wash their hands before meals. Their welfare is promoted well by rigorous systems to record any allergies or special medical requirements, including any medication which is needed. Accidents and incidents are appropriately recorded and countersigned by parents or carers so they are fully informed. Staff practise an emergency plan, which ensures children will be well cared for if an accident or emergency occurs. Safety in the sun is given a high priority, for example, notices ensure parents provide hats and sun cream and children are reminded to wear their hats outside.

Children enjoy a very good range of activities that promote their good health and physical fitness. They take part enthusiastically in activities that include swimming, archery, dance, drama, tennis and trampolining. Children confidently put their physical skills to the test as they learn to bounce tennis balls on a racquet or balance and jump on a trampoline. Staff respond well to the weather conditions, enabling children to rest quietly when it is hot and offering frequent cold drinks.

Children bring packed lunches and snacks from home and parents and carers are informed about suitable foods to bring, which ensures children are adequately nourished. At lunchtime staff and children sit at tables together to enjoy a relaxed and social occasion. This enables them to eat their meal in a calm atmosphere and develop relationships with each other. Children are offered ample drinks throughout the sessions so they are well hydrated. The daily 'tuck shop' enables children to buy additional drinks and snacks, however there are few healthy options as the choices mostly consist of confectionary and fruit drinks, such as sweets and blackcurrant squash. As a consequence children's nutritional needs are not fully met.

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

The provision is good.

Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff give clear instructions and explain potential hazards, for example, before using the bouncy castle or going into the

swimming pool. To further promote children's safety specialist skilled staff lead activities that might present additional hazards, such as swimming or fencing. Children are generally supervised conscientiously by staff to keep them safe, particularly when moving around the site. However, when young children are preparing for swimming staff do not always supervise them adequately to fully ensure their safety and well being.

Most aspects of fire safety are promoted well as children are informed about the evacuation procedures at the weekly induction and practise the drill twice weekly. Lack of a fire log affects children's safety as there is currently no means to record and evaluate any possible problems with the procedures. The evacuation procedure is part of a wider emergency plan, which ensures children and staff know how to respond in the event of an emergency. Children are instructed in the use of the equipment, which is safe and suitable and takes into account different ages and abilities. Other resources, such as arts and crafts, are plentiful and organised so children access them in safety.

Children have their welfare and safety ensured because staff have a sound understanding of the child protection procedures. In-house training takes place so that staff know how to record and refer any child protection concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children develop their sense of achievement, self esteem and confidence as they participate enthusiastically in the activities. Skilled staff adapt the activities so that all the children take a full and active part, regardless of their age or stage of development. Children benefit from warm and positive relationships with staff and each other. They have fun together, share jokes and sing out the group chants with cheerful enthusiasm.

Children are organised into groups according to age, although some exceptions can be made if friends wish to stay together. Each group chooses from a good range of activities each day, some of which are sports related, such as swimming, tennis, cricket or football. Intensive coaching in some sports, such as archery, enables older and more able children to further develop their skills. Arts and crafts, drama or motor-sport provide interesting variety and children discuss their choices happily, such as making costumes for 'superhero' day.

Routines are clearly explained to the children and their timetables are displayed in their bases, visual prompts help younger children identify their own choices, which promotes their independence.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being able to feel part of a group and their sense of security is

developed well because they are cared for by consistent adults. Their base groups remain the same throughout the period of the camp and key staff, such as the team leaders, stay with them. Children in each base have an individual song or chant, which they sing with enthusiasm as they move around the site.

Children and their parents and carers are made welcome by notices and posters in the registration area. Children display their art work in their bases, which fosters their sense of belonging. Planning of activities, which includes contingencies for inclement weather, ensures children make good choices and have their needs met. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities have activities adapted so they take an equal part.

Children develop their self-esteem as they participate in activities that are varied and interesting. As a result they are cheerful and happy and behave well. Children mostly receive positive praise and encouragement and work well together, for example, they negotiate independently for resources in the arts and craft room. Older children are encouraged to develop their own positive code of behaviour. Staff are clear about any action to be taken if children's behaviour is unacceptable. Parents and carers are consulted about strategies that will help children's understanding of the codes of conduct.

Parents are well informed about the activities and the overall provision. A clear and detailed brochure is given to all parents when they register for the camps. This gives comprehensive information about the programme of activities and the ethos of the setting. Flexible attendance options meet parents' needs and ensures children are well cared for. All necessary documentation is completed before children attend the camp, which means staff have a good understanding of their individual needs, for example, medical or dietary requirements. Although there is a detailed complaints policy in place, it is not compliant with recent changes in legislation. This means parents are not fully informed about how the organisation will respond to any concerns they may have regarding their children's care.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Effective organisation ensures children's needs are met, for example, the environment is prepared before children arrive so they feel welcome. Activities are well planned so children are purposefully occupied throughout their time at the camp. Children are well supported by staff, who mostly have appropriate skills to lead the children in the activities.

Comprehensive induction ensures staff are well prepared before children arrive. A well written and informative handbook takes staff through the requirements of the National Standards and ensures they have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Rigorous recruitment processes ensure staff are safe and suitable to care for the children and supervision is arranged for those who have not completed all the necessary checks.

Documentation is well organised and held securely with due regard to confidentiality.

Necessary information, such as emergency contact numbers, is easily available so parents and carers can be contacted promptly. Statements about the policies and procedures are shared with parents in the Barracuda's brochure and full information is available on request. Overall, children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the management was asked to develop a strategy to avoid situations where staff work alone with children; to reduce the risk to children's safety when hand washing as temperature of the water was too high and to improve the recording of information regarding the administration of life-saving medicines.

The camp has developed strategies to ensure staff are not left alone with children. Indoor activities are always conducted by two members of staff. When outside groups are always in sight of one another so they remain in contact. Staff who have not received all of the necessary checks are supervised by staff who have their checks completed. This promotes children's health, safety and welfare and ensures staff keep themselves safe from any allegations.

Children are no longer at risk from hot water as this fault has been corrected by the school

Children are protected by effective systems to record details about the administration of life-saving medicines, such as Epipens. Information is collected from parents, who provide full written instructions prior to the children attending. Senior staff receive training in applying the medication from an experienced professional so they are competent and confident.

### **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.
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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 children's opportunities to make healthy choices at snack time
- improve children's safety by ensuring that they are under the direct supervision of staff at all times
- improve children's safety in a fire by developing a log, which identifies and resolves any problems
- clarify the complaints procedure to ensure it complies fully with the National Standards.

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)