



Alexandra After School Care Scheme

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	116249
Inspection date	13 June 2006
Inspector	Christine Bonnett
Setting Address	Alexandra Schools, Denbigh Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, TW3 4DU
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Registered person	Alexandra Afterschool Scheme (Alexander Schools)
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?

Alexander After School Care Scheme is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children who attend Alexander School and the head teacher. It opened in 1990 and operates from several rooms within Alexander Infant and Nursery School, in Hounslow, in the London Borough of Hounslow. A maximum of 30 children may attend the after school club at any one time. It is open each weekday from 15:30 to 17:45 during term time. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 27 children from five years to under eight years on roll. Other

children, up to 11 years of age may also use the club. It is available for children who attend the Alexander School.

The nursery employs seven staff, of whom three, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being in premises that are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness. Effective policies and procedures are in place for the administration of first aid and medication, thereby helping to ensure children are well looked after. However, children are not able to develop their self-care skills, as hand washing facilities are not available to them at the beginning of the session when the meal is served. Consequently, the importance of adopting a good hygiene routine before eating is not being reinforced. In addition, when access is available to the cloakroom, approximately ten minutes into the session, soap is not always available.

Children enjoy a variety of freshly prepared hot or cold snacks. They are nutritious, and take account of their individual dietary needs. The manger has recently reviewed the menus to include more healthy options, such as raw vegetables and fresh fruit. Through project work carried out at the club, children are developing an understanding of the importance of eating a healthy diet. Drinks are readily available at all times throughout the session for children to help themselves.

Children have great opportunities to enjoy energetic physical exercise in the fresh air, which contributes towards a healthy lifestyle. They have fun practising their balancing and running skills, as well as joining in group games, such as football and hockey.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move around freely in a spacious environment that is free from obvious safety hazards. The community room is light, bright and decorated with the children's craftwork. The safety of children is important to the staff and any potential dangers are identified and quickly reduced through regular risk assessments and safety checks. High priority is also given to making sure children will be safe in an emergency. The emergency escape plan is practised regularly, which should ensure that all children are escorted to safety quickly, should the need arise. Security of the premises is good which also helps to protect children from possible harm. For example, staff monitor all the exits to the premises to ensure a child does not leave unnoticed.

Children have good opportunities to exercise their freedom of choice and independence by being able to self-select much of the equipment available for them. The abundance of play resources are displayed attractively and appealingly. All

furniture and equipment is clean and in good condition.

Children's welfare is also safeguarded by the staff's knowledge of child protection matters. They understand the signs and symptoms a child may exhibit that could indicate they were being harmed and are familiar with the procedure to follow to report such concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the club. They arrive happy and confident and quickly settle into the routine. They benefit from the close relationship they have with staff. The interaction is warm and friendly. Staff laugh and have fun with them as well as giving support and encouragement, such as praise for good collage work. Consequently, children are confident to approach them and express their needs. Children also play cooperatively together and form significant friendships with others.

Children enthusiastically explore the wide range of play equipment available for them, both indoors and out, such as musical instruments, dough, sand and books. Boys and girls can also increase their cooking and sewing skills, as well as indulging their imaginations through a wide variety of art and craft activities, all of which are fun and stimulating. As the outdoor play area is easily accessible, children are able to go outside at will, and make use of the equipment provided for them. They demonstrate good concentration as they persist at their chosen activity. Overall, children spend their time purposefully as they are able to engage in activities that interest them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are greeted warmly by staff on arrival at the club and are given appropriate praise and encouragement to enhance their self-esteem and confidence. Children are learning to be kind and respectful towards each other because the staff are appropriate role models and set good examples. This helps children develop a sense of security and belonging within the club.

As children are engaged in meaningful play, their behaviour is generally good. Age-appropriate and positive strategies are used to manage any difficulties that may arise. Children listen to staff with respect and follow instructions as requested.

Children with learning difficulties are welcome to attend. Staff have a positive attitude towards this area of childcare, and some have attended Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) training to support children effectively.

Children are learning about the world in which they live as they have access to resources that promote positive images of diverse cultures, ethnicities and abilities. They develop an understanding of cultures and traditions other than their own through the acknowledgement of different faith festivals, such as Diwali and Easter.

Information about the club is made available to parents to ensure that they are aware of policies and procedures, and how their child is spending their time. They have the opportunity to share any relevant information about their child with staff on a daily basis to ensure their needs are met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children profit from a staff team that work well together to deliver a stimulating and fun experience for them. They have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and their deployment around the premises is good. They ensure that all children are happily engaged in purposeful activities.

Children's welfare is also safeguarded as appropriate policies and procedures are implemented effectively by staff, which successfully promote positive outcomes for children. All required documentation is maintained to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the scheme. However, the accident book lacks the necessary detail.

Children feel comfortable and at ease at the club, as they settle into the routine well and benefit from a well-organised, safe and clean environment. Good use is made of space, and activities planned to give children a choice of active or quiet play, indoors and out. This means that an individual child can find something to interest him or her throughout the session.

The setting is meeting the needs of all the children for whom it provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, several staff have obtained relevant childcare qualifications to meet the required standards and enhance the quality of care provided.

At the last inspection, the scheme was required to develop a complaints procedure which included contact information for Ofsted. This has now been devised, and informs parents about the procedure for passing on concerns and contacting Ofsted, if necessary.

The group was also required to obtain parents signatures in the accident book, to ensure that they were informed of any accidents involving their child. This is now done, however, other details need to be recorded.

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):

- improve hygiene standards by facilitating children to wash their hands before meals, and by ensuring the cloakrooms are suitably equipped
- ensure the surnames of the children are recorded in the accident book.

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