



Oscar Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	511435
Inspection date	22 September 2006
Inspector	Diane Mary O'Neill
Setting Address	Taywood House, At Clipstone Brook Lower School, Brooklands Drive, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU7 3PG
Telephone number	01525 376314
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Registered person	Oscar Club
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Oscar (Out of School Care and Recreation) Club opened in 2001 and operates from Taywood House, a terrapin building within the grounds of Clipstone Brook Lower School in Leighton Buzzard. A maximum of 24 children, aged from two to under eight years, attend the provision at any one time, using a combination of breakfast club, pre-school sessions, after school club and holiday care. A parent and toddler group also uses the premises.

The breakfast club operates each week day from 07.45 to 09.00, the pre-school is open each weekday during school term time only from 09:00 to 12.00 and 13.00 to 15.00, the after school club opens from 15.15 to 17.45 and the holiday club from 08.00 to 18.00 during school holidays only. The children come from the town of Leighton Buzzard, Linslade and the surrounding areas. All children share access to a secure enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 83 children aged from two to eight years on roll. Of these 20 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports children who have learning difficulties and disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The provision employs 17 staff. Of these, six staff members hold appropriate early years qualifications and six are working towards a qualification. The setting 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 thrive well because staff follow very good and effective procedures and practices which enable children's physical, nutritional and health needs to be met. Children gain a good understanding of hygiene and personal care as they become increasingly independent, such as, taking themselves to the toilet and washing their hands. Staff are always available to give positive support and guidance. Children's safety and well-being is well promoted by the staff who ensure cross-infection is limited by having very clear policies and procedures in place for the exclusion times for certain illnesses.

Children help themselves to easily accessible drinks throughout the day and enjoy fresh fruit at snack time. Staff encourage children to learn and talk about the fruit they are eating, where it might come from and whether they have these at home. All snacks are prepared freshly each day in the pre-school. Parents are encouraged to share their children's dietary requirements with the staff as well as being given information about healthy meals for their children's packed lunches. This ensures that suitable nutritional information is shared.

Children explore, test and develop physical control through stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences. They use the parachute for games outside, which causes lots of laughter and enjoyment for the children. Children confidently use the sit and ride toys, handling hoops to roll along to a staff member, bouncing balls and counting how many bounces the ball makes before stopping. Children are clearly confident as they try new experiences, such as rolling the hoops and are starting to learn some independence as they choose their equipment both when playing inside and outside.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The pre-school is situated in a portacabin in the grounds of a school. The main play room is spacious, bright and airy, with well-organised child height, age appropriate play materials and equipment. Some of these can be easily accessed by the children encouraging their independence, as well as learning about choice. The play room opens onto an enclosed garden and school playground enabling children to have good access to physical activities throughout their daily routines.

Children feel welcome in the pre-school where a homely, child centred environment is provided. They are confident and eager to attend. Children immediately settle into the pre-school routine of registration and chat time and then going to play with the equipment provided.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Fire evacuation plans are on display and fire evacuation is practised each half term, so children learn what to do in an emergency. All equipment used is checked daily as it is put out and packed away. Staff are very vigilant in making the outside space safe before children go out to play. They supervise the area when children are outside playing to ensure children's safety.

Children are very well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give priority to children's welfare. They endeavour to keep up-to-date with training and publications so they can continually protect the children in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the pre-school. They achieve well because staff are competent and use their skills, knowledge and understanding of early year's guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, to provide good quality care and education for children.

All children are confident in their relationships with staff. Staff are beginning to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework so they can build it into their planning for the younger children. They have a good understanding of the range of experiences which enables children to make greater use of their learning skills and abilities.

Most of the children within the pre-school are confident in their relationships with staff. Those who are new are given lots of reassurance to help them settle in. For example, a child is shown a clock and told that mummy will arrive when the hands reach certain numbers. Children play happily together and with the adults enjoying using resources such as pretend play in the home corner, puzzles, water play with coloured and sparkly water, and outdoor equipment, suitable to their age and stage of development. Early communication skills are extremely well supported through very good quality adult-child interactions. Children talk about the activities they are involved in, for example, making the 'Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary' collage and singing the words to the song.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The range of teaching methods have been hampered in the past through lack of communication between the staff team. The current staff team have worked very hard to ensure activities for the children are interesting, stimulating and fun. They encourage children to make choices from the activities available to help them develop their independence and social skills. Although the staff have worked hard on planning and assessment in a short space of time, these still lack some clarity. For example, it is not clear

how activities are linked to the early learning goals. The observations do not enable children's starting points to be defined, which makes it hard to see where challenge and improvement is required to help children's progression in their learning.

Children have a positive attitude towards the activities they undertake and are eager and enthusiastic in their play. They are polite, well behaved and willingly help tidy away their toys when requested. Good relationships are in place and children's independence skills are being encouraged. For example, at snack time they are encouraged to pour their own drinks. Children are beginning to recognise their name during registration time and can discuss the days of the week. One group makes shapes of the letters with their hands and arms, which helps to reinforce their learning. Writing materials are made accessible to children. However, these are not always made inviting or interesting to the children. Therefore there are missed opportunities within everyday activities to challenge and expand learning.

Children have good opportunities to use maths in daily routines and activities. Staff reinforce this area of learning through counting the children at registration time, when lining up to go out to play and counting the plates in the home corner. However planning does not always show how activities are linked to maths and therefore it is not clear what the learning intention is.

Children are beginning to learn about their local environment and the wider world through topics, such as looking at other countries. However, knowledge of how things work is not sufficiently included in the children's learning. They talk about the weather they see during registration time, learning about temperatures and feeling hot and cold. Children have many opportunities to develop their imagination when playing in the home corner or with small world play equipment. Creative opportunities are very much enjoyed by the children as they help with collage work, and draw pictures with chalk, to show what they can see out of the window. They enjoy joining in well know nursery rhymes and songs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children attend from a variety of backgrounds and all children are warmly welcomed into the pre-school. They have access to a good range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity. Children take part in a range of activities of both familiar and unfamiliar festivals, such as, Halloween, Chinese New Year, Easter, Christmas and Diwali.

Children's behaviour can vary considerably within the pre-school, however good role models and staff support for the children ensures any incident is dealt with calmly and with consideration for all involved. There is a very good team spirit throughout the pre-school with children relating well with one another, playing happily together, being respectful of each other and sharing resources. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

All children are valued and respected as individuals and their needs are well catered for within this setting. Staff recognise that some children need extra help and that it is necessary to work closely with other agencies as well as parents.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are warmly welcomed into the pre-school where staff are on hand to discuss any issues and share information. Staff's friendly and open attitude promotes the positive relationships which impact on the children's sense of well-being and security within the setting. The availability of informative documentation extends the pre-schools ability in keeping parents informed. However, parents and carers do not have available information on the Foundation Stage to enable them to continue their children's learning at home. Therefore children's learning is not fully supported. There is a satisfactory procedure in place for the recording and sharing of any complaints with parents. The pre-school has a policy outlining procedures which are available to parents.

Children are beginning to learn right from wrong through positive interaction from staff. They are very familiar with the routines and have clear understandings of the rules. They are well behaved. Children receive praise and encouragement as they complete their tasks and enjoy helping staff to tidy away the equipment at the end of the session.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Planning, observation and recording systems incorporate resources and some areas of learning. However, it is not clear within the assessments how children's learning is challenged and extended. Therefore not all children's learning opportunities are being fully met. The premises are well-organised. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to ensure children obtain the maximum play opportunities that will incorporate all areas of their development and learning potential.

Appropriate recruitment procedures are in place which ensures that staff are suitably vetted and qualified to work with children. The manager ensures all staff read relevant documentation, policies and procedures. Some of these have changed with the new management structure being implemented. Staff are committed to on-going training, they work well together as a team to support children's individual needs.

All required documentation is in place to support the management of the setting. However some of this is not dated or reviewed regularly or shared with parents. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to review procedures for when an unidentified person comes to collect a child and for outings. The provision now has a clear policy in place and staff are always situated in the reception area to meet people ensuring children are protected.

The provider was asked to ensure that confidentiality was maintained and make the regulatory authority details available to parents. The provider ensures all documents are stored securely and only shown to the people concerned. There is an Ofsted poster on the wall of the provision giving parents details of contact numbers should they wish to phone the regulatory office. The

actions taken have improved the systems in place to underpin the quality and standards of care for children.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to continue to monitor and evaluate the quality of the nursery education. They were asked to use information gained from assessment to guide further planning and improve the programme for communication, language and literacy by developing the writing area and encouraging children to write for purpose as they play. The provider has taken appropriate steps to improve these requirements by having procedures in place. However, assessment procedures are not currently challenging children's learning sufficiently. Staff have developed children's play opportunities especially in the role play area to incorporate writing materials. On-going effective discussions between the children and staff help further children's communication and language skills.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted. The complaints related to the National Standards 2: organisation and managerial roles, standard 3: care, learning and play concerns, standard 4, physical environment, standard 5 :equipment, standard 6 safety concerns, standard 7: accidents not recorded or undersigned, standard 8: feeding concerns, standard 11; behavioural management concerns.

Eight actions were raised under standards 5 (equipment), standard 6 (safety), standard 7 (health) standard 8 (food) and standard 11 (behaviour management).

A satisfactory response has been received to these actions and the provider remains qualified for 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.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- ensure documentation is regularly reviewed and dated accordingly

- further develop the staff's knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop children's learning in the areas of communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world (in relation to mark making)
- continue to improve assessment and planning to further enhance and challenge children's learning within the Foundation Stage
- make additional information available to parents to enable children's learning to be progressed at home.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk