



Active Learning Childcare (Guernsey) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY339441
Inspection date	21 November 2006
Inspector	Philippa Clare Williams
Setting Address	The Hornsey Club, Tivoli Road, LONDON, N8 8RG
Telephone number	0208 3415069
E-mail	info@active-learn.co.uk
Registered person	Active Learning Childcare (Guernsey) Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Active Learning Childcare (Guernsey) Ltd is run by the Active Learning Childcare company. The group was first opened in 2005 and re-registered in 2006. The group operates from purpose built premises within the grounds of a tennis club, in Crouch End, in the London borough of Haringey. The setting is open from 07.30 to 18.30 for 51 weeks of the year. Children have access to two fully enclosed outdoor areas. The group nursery employs 20 members of staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications, two staff hold teaching qualifications and three staff are unqualified.

There are currently 97 children under five years on roll, of these nine children receive funding for nursery education. The group supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The group receives support from the Local Authority

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from good hygiene routines to help them learn about personal care and the importance of a clean environment. For example, children help to set up and clean tables after meals, they wash their hands before lunch, brush their teeth after eating and fetch a tissue by themselves to wipe their nose. Children are well protected from cross infection because staff follow rigorous procedures to ensure this. For example, they wear aprons and disposable gloves when handling food or changing nappies, and use colour coded clothes for different cleaning tasks.

Relevant paperwork is completed if children have an accident or need medication. First aid boxes are readily available and most staff hold suitable first aid certificates. This ensures that children's health needs are well met.

Children thoroughly enjoy meals that are freshly prepared each day by the nursery cook and served in their organic café. These are planned to provide a variety of organic, nutritionally balanced meals, such as Bahia fish in coconut milk, lasagne, cod in white sauce, vegetable stir fry, salmon and cous cous, roast chicken, potatoes and vegetables. There are four week menus that take account of the different age groups and varying dietary needs, for example, there are vegetarian alternatives and weaning babies are offered puréed vegetables. Babies and young children are actively encouraged to feed themselves; small forks and spoons are provided to assist their independence in this area and they are carefully monitored by the staff who sit at the tables with them. Babies are fed comfortably and benefit from lots of physical and facial interaction.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and vigorous play to maintain health. Children enjoy a range of physical activity to help them learn about what happens when their bodies are active, such as yoga, ballet, and music involving stretching and movement. Children use a varied range of equipment including pencils, paint brushes, cutters, rolling pins, and scissors which help to develop their hand eye coordination. Babies learn to move about independently with staff support, they respond well to staff encouragement with early walking and crawling skills. In addition children enjoy regular sport activities including cricket and tennis.

The children's rest and sleep needs are met by the staff because they know and follow children's individual routines well and older children are encouraged to rest after lunch.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's art work and photographs are displayed within all rooms and the hall areas, this makes the nursery attractive and helps children to have a sense of belonging. Children are kept secure due to excellent systems such as web cams, external CCTV, alarms, buzzer and coded security locks on all internal areas. Staff complete hand over sheets as children move between activity studios which ensures their safety. Although most areas of the nursery are safe and

free from hazards staff do not carry out regular formal risk assessments as a result children can access a hazard of trailing wires in the sensory room, this compromises children's safety. Children in the toddler and pre-school rooms are learning to keep themselves safe, by gentle reminders and helping to tidy up.

All areas of the nursery are welcoming, colourful, with lots of natural light. Children stay in their groups and move around the activity studio throughout the day experiencing a range of different activities, where they can access to a wide range of good quality resources. Staff check these regularly to ensure that they are clean and safe for the children to use. Toys in the baby rooms are sterilised regularly. Children access resources easily as in all rooms these are stored at child height.

All staff have a knowledge of child protection issues and management are clear on the routes of referral, which contributes to keeping the children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and younger children engage in some well planned activities which give them very good sensory experiences. For example, they explore painting, water, collage, musical instruments, bottles of sparkling liquid, colourful lights and textures in the sensory room. They are supported well by interested staff who make good eye contact and use simple words or phrases to communicate with them. Younger children settle well because the staff are experienced and very caring, being aware of children's routines and particular needs. Those that are distressed are cuddled appropriately for reassurance. Relationships are warm and friendly and children throughout the nursery respond well to the staff's good humour and positive attitudes. Organisation of staff may lead to babies being cared for by several different staff; as a result this could impact on the continuity of care. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Children enjoy their time at the setting and achieve well because mentors working with the children have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning. Children experience a balanced curriculum covering all areas of learning as they move around the different activity studios throughout the day for art; maths; literacy; sports; music; drama; science and discovery; IT; and the sensory play areas within the nursery. Plans are themed based, with focus activities for the week for each area. Staff skilfully set different children challenges according to their capabilities through appropriate questioning. For example, during a music session they explore different musical instruments while staff ask them to listen, describe the sound and to name the instrument which helps to build on their vocabulary and challenges their listening skills. Staff use innovative ideas for activities, for example, children participate in experiments that assist their learning and stimulate their interest in science. During a project on water they measure the rain fall and record their findings, they grow their own cress and bake bread and observe the changes. Creative arts is a strong feature within the nursery and children enjoy regular yoga, ballet, drama, music and art sessions. Staff use very good observations on the children, which clearly show what they can do and the staff know the children very well. Some activities are evaluated well to improve the provision and make changes. Although individual learning targets are in place these are not yet used consistently in planning.

Children settle well and are forming positive relationships with adults. They show care and concern for one another, for instance, when a younger child becomes upset, an older child expresses his concern. The staff ensure that children can accomplish many tasks independently, they encourage them to put on their own shoes and aprons, to use the toilet independently and to help set the table at lunch time.

They are developing good communication skills, they are confident in speaking within a familiar group. They are eager to share their experiences with the adults, they talk about their families and weekend events. Children enjoy sharing discussions about occasions when they have been 'brave'. Staff ask questions which promote children's thinking, for example a staff member asks a child how he thinks he might stick an item to his rocket. Children confidently recognise their names and regularly link sounds to letters. For example, a child comments that her mother's name starts with the same letter as another child. Children proudly show how they can write their names with recognisable letters. They regularly select books to share and listen attentively to stories in small groups. Children have good mathematical skills and are consistently encouraged to use these in everyday experiences and their play and learning. They count how many children are in the group, talk about the shapes they draw and use pegs to create patterns.

They have a good understanding of the changing seasons and associated climates, as they sing songs about the seasons and talk about the weather. They listen to music from a range of cultures, listening and moving to the beat of African music. They show good understanding of the concepts of time as they are able to talk about days of the week and times different children attend. They discover how magnets work and enjoy experimenting with them. Children use the computer equipment on a planned basis to support their learning.

Children show control and co-ordination as they experiment creating shapes with their bodies during the performing arts session, as they pretend to be trees, and the wind. They enjoy outside play where they have access to equipment which extends their physical development as they learn to climb, balance and pedal bikes. Children eagerly develop their ideas in the art zone. They chat happily about their ideas, such as making their own rocket from junk, and show delight as they discover how their painting on a board is printed onto paper. They use their imaginations well during art work. A child who made a model said 'it's a rocket flying over London bridge'. However there are some occasions during performing arts when adults over directed the activity which lead to some children not fully participating.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and included in the setting because staff know and value them. Staff are skilled at knowing who may need extra attention, for example, by encouraging shy children to join in discussions at circle time. They experience the value of their own culture and those of others, through books, resources and by participating in various activities. These include listening to a wide range of music from other cultures and acknowledging festivals such as Divali, Hanukah, Eid, and St Patrick's Day. Children show a sense of belonging as they enjoy looking at their photos displayed around the nursery. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities receive good support and their individual needs are clearly identified as they work towards specific targets.

Staff provide positive role models for children, they are polite and respectful in their approach, for example, they are thanked for listening well. Staff prompt good manners, giving children praise for their achievements, which helps boost their self-confidence and self-esteem. For example, children are very proud of receiving a 'high five' for their achievements. They are encouraged to take turns and share, for instance, two children work well together as they paint each other on the magic board. Children understand what is expected from them in the way of behaviour, as a result children listen well, sit quietly at circle time, line up and are very well behaved.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are warmly greeted. A wealth of information is provided to ensure that the parents know about the provision for their children. For example, the plans are displayed in corridors and each room, childcare information is displayed in the entrance hall and the parents' pack includes information about the curriculum. Children's developmental records are available for parents to view upon request outside of the twice yearly parent meetings. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the nursery, for example, they are asked to bring in items for topics, they attend outings, and a parent has been asked to play his guitar to the children. Parents receive daily information about their child's care, as staff pass on information from detailed records of their food intake and sleep. Most personal information kept on children is stored securely and confidentially, however some information is displayed and therefore accessible to others. Although the nursery have a clear complaints procedure this has not been updated in line with the revisions to the National Standards.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Good procedures are in place for the recruitment of staff, which ensure children are protected. A comprehensive induction programme, ongoing in-house and external training courses ensure staff keep their knowledge and skills up to date. Staff benefit from good support in the form of one to one supervision meetings, monthly staff meetings and regular room and planning meetings. Therefore, the provision is constantly monitored and supports the good outcomes for children. All regulatory documents are well maintained to safeguard children. Good ratios of staff to children are maintained, which enables individual needs to be met. Staff follow comprehensive operational procedures which, on the whole ensures the safe management of the setting and promotes the welfare, care and learning of all children.

The leadership and management is good. Staff are led by a highly committed manager who is a cheerful and positive role model. As a result, staff work well as a team to provide a stimulating and challenging environment for children. They meet regularly to ensure that policies reflect the working of the nursery, evaluate their practice and identify areas for improvement. Staff training is ongoing and relevant short courses have been undertaken by various staff, which include training on the Foundation Stage. The staff are open and receptive to support from various professionals within the Local Authority. This ensures that the provision is highly developed for the children's benefit.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- carry out regular risk assessments and ensure that hazards to children are minimised with reference to trailing wires in the sensory room
- ensure confidentiality of records and children information
- improve the organisation of staff deployment to ensure younger babies have opportunities to interact with a consistent adult at frequent intervals throughout the day

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):

- continue to improve the process of identifying children's individual learning targets, across all six areas of learning to ensure these are used to inform future plans

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