



Mini-Madness

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106178
Inspection date	21 February 2007
Inspector	Anne Legge
Setting Address	Dawlish Leisure Centre, Sandy Lane, Dawlish, Devon, EX7 0AF
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Registered person	Teignbridge District Council
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mini-Madness was registered in 1999. It is a holiday play scheme, which operates in the Dawlish Leisure Centre from 9:00 to 12:00 and 12:30 to 16:00 daily, during the summer and Easter holiday, and during some half-term breaks. The play scheme has use of part of the main sports hall, an area of the cafe, and a nearby enclosed park, as well as the sports centre swimming pool. Children may attend one or both sessions in any day, and stay over the lunch period, if they wish. Mini-Madness is registered to care for up to 24 children, aged from four to eight years. It caters mainly for children aged from four to seven years, but older siblings may attend, at the discretion of staff. There are currently 20 children on roll, including 17 aged under eight years. There are three staff who work with the children, one of whom has an appropriate child care qualification, and the others have relevant experience.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

During each session, children enjoy plenty of physical activity, which effectively promotes their good health. They use a bouncy castle and play on climbing equipment or soft play materials. They run around the hall, play chasing or ball games and take part in parachute or team games. They benefit from healthy eating at snack time, when they enjoy fresh fruit. Most children eat nutritious packed lunches, but some buy less healthy meals or snacks from the café. Children have adequate access to drinks, as water and squash are provided with snacks and fresh drinking water is available for part of the session. However, they are not consistently reminded to maintain good fluid levels, whenever they undertake physical activity. Children's special dietary needs are recorded appropriately and met.

Children are well-protected from infection. The premises are kept very clean and children remove outdoor shoes, when playing in the hall. Staff carefully disinfect tables, before children eat from them. Children learn good hygiene routines, as staff remind them to wash their hands appropriately, before eating and after using the toilet. They use liquid soap and hot air dryers, to reduce the spread of infection. An effective sickness exclusion policy also helps to protect them. Children's care is appropriate, when they are unwell or injured. The play leader has a current first aid qualification, as do other staff within the centre. Records of accidents and medication are comprehensive and shared appropriately with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure area of the leisure centre, where they are well protected from unvetted people who use the facility. They have their own part of the sports hall, which is completely enclosed, and the door is locked and monitored, to prevent unauthorised access. Staff accompany children to the toilets and café area, ensuring that they cannot leave the premises unaccompanied, and that they are safe from harm. Children have plenty of space and they move freely between activities. They have access to an adequate range of resources, all of which are in good condition. Large equipment is checked regularly by staff at the centre, who follow clear guidelines about its safe setting up and maintenance.

Staff have a satisfactory understanding of safety issues and carry out appropriate risk assessments. During free play sessions, they monitor children's physical activities from a distance, while leading craft activities. They sometimes remind children to play safely, for example when climbing up the sides of the bouncy castle, but they are not always able to respond immediately to minor safety issues, such as when children push each other on climbing equipment. Children are reasonably safe in emergencies, as staff have a thorough knowledge of evacuation procedures, but these are not practised often enough for all children to become familiar with the routine. They are well-protected from abuse or neglect, as staff have undertaken relevant training and have a clear understanding of all safeguarding issues and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled at the play scheme and generally enjoy attending. They take part in a satisfactory range of activities, choosing freely between quiet or physically demanding tasks. They enjoy opportunities to develop their ball skills, while playing football or team games. They are physically challenged when using the bouncy castle or large climbing equipment, or when making dens and obstacle courses with soft play resources. Children develop their creativity, as they make model frogs or colour pictures, which they cut out and use in a game. They play imaginatively, using a puppet theatre.

Children can choose to read books or play quiet games, such as giant 'Connect 4'. There is a limited quantity of construction equipment, and a few toys, such as cars and puppets, are available. During afternoon sessions, staff organise team games, or use a parachute, to provide variety. However, the play scheme frequently offers the same activities throughout a week, and some children begin to show signs of boredom, during the long free play session in the morning. Children relate easily to staff and enjoy their company, whenever they lead activities or join in with games.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's care is consistent, as there are satisfactory systems for communicating with their parents. Carers receive concise information about the play scheme and its activities, and policies and procedures are available, if parents wish to read them. Staff exchange information with parents, before and after sessions and all records are shared appropriately. All children and families are welcomed and included. Staff try to meet children's individual needs, by offering them choices, listening to their preferences and providing appropriate support for activities. There are no children with learning difficulties or disabilities on roll, but staff have relevant experience and training in this area and are confident about including children with additional needs.

Children generally behave well. They know the routines of the group and they respond to the staff's calm and positive approach to managing their behaviour. They enjoy praise for their efforts and benefit from clear explanations of why some behaviour is unacceptable, such as when a hoop is thrown into the craft area. Children occasionally become slightly rough with each other, when they begin to lose interest in the activities provided, although they are usually able to resolve their differences independently.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children enjoy the facilities of a large sports hall, where the space is used effectively, to provide a satisfactory variety of activities, including physical, creative and quiet play. They are cared for by staff who have appropriate qualifications or relevant experience, and staff ratios meet and often exceed requirements. The environment is clean and secure, and staff have a reasonable

understanding of safety issues. Children are generally well-supervised and there are mainly appropriate routines for managing their safety. Children's health is well promoted, through access to physically challenging play and the provision of nutritious snacks. This is not extended into working with parents to help children make healthy choices at lunch-time, or to the constant provision of fresh drinking water.

Children's care is underpinned by most of the required documentation, although there is no statement of special needs and some policies have not been updated recently. Registers are appropriately detailed and the required records and consents are in place. There are appropriate systems for informing Ofsted of changes and for recording complaints. The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the play scheme was judged to be inadequate. Staff were required to meet their conditions of registration regarding children's ages and to make all documentation available for inspection. The play scheme was asked to make the premises secure, to carry out appropriate checks on all those working with children, and to ensure that there is at least one staff member present, who has a current first aid qualification. They were asked to implement systems for informing Ofsted of relevant changes. These actions have all been met.

Children's safety has been greatly improved, as the play area is now securely enclosed, and the door is locked and monitored. Staff do not allow children to leave the play area unaccompanied, so they are no longer able to be in unsupervised contact with members of the public and they cannot leave the premises unnoticed. They are better protected, as staff undergo appropriate checks and are not alone with children, before the checks are complete. There is at least one staff member with a current first aid qualification, ensuring that children receive appropriate care when they have minor accidents. Documentation is now available on site when needed, and there are appropriate systems for notifying Ofsted of changes in key personnel, so that checks can be completed and children suitably protected. Conditions of registration are consistently met.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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

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.

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 health by actively promoting healthy eating at lunch times, and by providing constant access to fresh drinking water, especially during periods of physical activity
- improve children's safety, by practising evacuation procedures regularly and by deploying staff effectively, so that children engaged in physical activities are always carefully supervised
- provide a wide range of activities and resources, so that children are always purposefully occupied and they enjoy variety within sessions and over time
- ensure that children's care is always underpinned by current and comprehensive documentation.

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