



Loddon Valley Leisure Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148614
Inspection date	14 February 2007
Inspector	Sheila Collins
Setting Address	Loddon Valley Leisure, Rushey Way, Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire, RG6 4GD
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Registered person	Leisure Connection Ltd.
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School care, Crèche

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?

Loddon Valley Leisure Centre provides Camp Energy for children in the school holidays and a crèche for parents who attend the leisure centre. The crèche and Camp Energy opened in 1995. The leisure centre is located in Lower Earley and serves the local community.

The crèche opens from 09.15 to 13.15 Monday to Friday all year round, with the exception of bank holidays. Camp Energy opens from 08.30 to 17.30 in school holidays only. Sessions run from 08.30 to 13.00 and 13.00 to 17.30. Children can attend for a variety of sessions or all day if required.

The crèche is registered for a maximum of 22 children aged under five years and the Camp Energy for 100 children aged between three and eight years at any one time. Camp Energy also takes children over the age of eight years. There are currently 56 children on roll in the crèche and approximately 75 in the play scheme.

Seven members of staff work with the children and babies in the crèche. Of these staff, one has NVQ level 3, one has NVQ level 2 and two are working towards an early years qualification at NVQ level 3.

Ten staff currently work with the children in Camp Energy, extra staff are provided for specialist activities and they have sports qualifications and experience. Currently there is one member of staff with an NVQ level 2 qualification and four staff working towards an early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff follow the children's own routines within the crèche, which helps the children to feel secure. Parents and staff exchange information daily about the children's individual requirements, for example, their sleep needs, which ensure that these are met. Parents bring the children's drinks and babies' feeds. Staff make sure that the children, especially babies, have these at times specified to meet their needs. Children are showing an awareness of their own needs and older children are independent when toileting; with staff on hand to help if needed. Staff use good procedures when changing nappies, which ensures little risk of cross infection for babies. Children's emotional well being is well supported, as staff know the needs of individual children well. Children who cry on separation from their parent are comforted, cuddled, and distracted on a one to one basis.

Children in both the crèche and play scheme benefit from the good procedures in place, which staff follow, for example, for first aid or when they are unwell, which also contributes to keeping the children healthy. Children's health is promoted because staff have knowledge of the children's health and dietary needs. Most staff are trained in first aid. All the relevant documentation is in place, to support the children's well-being. Parents give permission for staff to obtain medical care in an emergency.

Within the play scheme, children are independent in their personal hygiene but staff accompany and check the facilities as the centre is also open to the public. Staff remind the children to wash their hands after using the toilets, and before eating. Children bring their lunches and drinks from home and water is available at all times in the base room and at sports activities.

Children in both areas have opportunities for physical play indoors, which helps them develop their physical skills. Within the crèche, babies have the freedom to crawl and all children take part in a wide range of activities that help them to develop their fine and gross motor skills. Children in the play scheme benefit from plenty of exercise in the form of games and sports, as this is an integral part of the planned day. However, they have few opportunities to take part in activities outside, so do not benefit from fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The crèche is a welcoming, child-orientated environment, which has been laid out well to accommodate the different ages and stages of the children attending. Children use age and stage appropriate resources that they select for themselves from a range put out daily by staff. Toys and equipment for babies and children in the creche are regularly checked by staff so are safe for the children to use. The play scheme base room is also used by other users of the centre but staff endeavour to make it welcoming for the children by putting out a range of activities each day for the children to choose from. However, the range of non-sports based resources are limited.

The staff have procedures in place, which they follow to minimise risks for the children. The deployment of staff within the crèche ensures that the children are safe and secure in the environment. Staff in the play scheme carry out daily risk assessments to identify any hazards for the children and take steps to minimise these, for example, covering sockets. They are vigilant in their supervision of the children, when using different areas of the leisure centre, as the centre is both used by the public and the children. The children know the rules are in place for their safety. The children and staff take part in regular evacuation drills. However, those undertaken by the play scheme are not effectively recorded.

The older children know the rules, which are in place for their safety. Children are well protected by staff most of whom have a clear understanding of safe guarding procedures so ensuring the children's welfare. However, the policy in place does not include the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy in the crèche and are keen to take part in activities. They are helped to settle in well by staff who support them until they feel confident in their environment. Through praise, encouragement, and support of the children's efforts and achievements, the staff boost the children's self-esteem and confidence. Each child is able to choose activities that they would like to take part in and staff understand that if a child says 'no' that they do not put pressure on that child to take part. Older children are confident communicators and share their ideas for their play. Babies enjoy a variety of activities and receive a lot of one to one support, which helps them to achieve. Staff know children's individual needs, and discussions at each session with parents ensure that these needs are met. The staff plan effectively for the children, however they are not using a format in line with 'Birth to three matters', although they are developing their knowledge of the framework.

The children in the play scheme enter confidently and exchange greetings with each other and staff. They are able to self-select activities from those put out by the staff on arrival. During the day, they take part in a series of pre-planned activities. The programme is in place before the start of the scheme but staff have a system whereby suggestions made by the children are recorded and put into place for the next holiday/week if practical. Children take part willingly in activities and those who cannot, for example, medical reasons are offered alternatives.

Changes in the activities throughout the day, sustain the children's interest. They enjoy physical activities such as swimming, jumping on the trampoline and the bouncy castle. They also take part in less physical activities such as craft and have opportunities for quieter play such as reading, colouring and playing Lego.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

In the crèche, the children's individual needs are met well as staff have clearly taken the time to get to know all the children present and this is reflected in the type of individual care given to the children. All the children have similar opportunities to take part in activities that are appropriate to their age and stage of development, which means that any child with a learning difficulty is included. Children's individual needs and continuity of care are further supported by a good partnership with parents and good communication between staff and parents at the beginning and end of each session the child attends. The children behave well and are supported well by staff that have good knowledge of appropriate behaviour management strategies, such as distraction.

Children's individual needs are known to staff within the play scheme. Children relate well to one another and to staff. However, there are few opportunities for siblings attending the play scheme but in different groups to meet up during the day. All children take part in the activities with both boys and girls participating in mixed age and ability groups, for example, when on the trampolines. The children have access to a wide range of sports facilities but non-sports resources are limited. Children feel a sense of belonging as they are welcomed by staff on arrival. Most children co operate well with each other, for example, helping to tidy up, taking turns, patiently lining up and waiting for others. They know the simple rules in place for their safety as these are discussed daily. Staff praise the children for their efforts and achievements and are consistent when managing unwanted behaviour. However, not all staff give clear explanations as to why some behaviour is not acceptable. There is an effective system in place for sharing information verbally with parents. They receive a brochure giving details of the schemes but are not advised in this of how they can obtain a copy of the policies and procedures that the play scheme follow.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Both the crèche and the play scheme are well organised. All children are well occupied and involved in the activities on offer. Staff are effectively deployed during the sessions. Children benefit from a good registration system, which is in place to ensure their safety.

Although not all staff currently hold suitable childcare qualifications, members of staff in the crèche are currently undertaking NVQ level 3 courses. The play scheme staff have an action plan in place to get appropriate qualifications this year.

All the required documentation for the safe day-to-day management is available when the crèche and play scheme are operating. Records of the children and the required parental

consents enable staff to act in children's best interests. The required policies and procedures ensure the effective promotion of children's welfare and care. However, some policies do not contain current information and the child protection policy lacks the detail of the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last visit, six recommendations were made. These included devising and implementing an action plan to show how staff training and qualifications will be met including behaviour management and child protection training; to ensure that Ofsted are informed of staff changes and significant events; to keep a record of incidents and to make the policies and procedures available to parents.

Since this inspection, there have been staff changes which have been advised to Ofsted. These changes have meant that there is a revised action plan in place for staff to gain qualifications and an ongoing programme of other training, including behaviour management and child protection. Incident records are now in place but there have been no significant changes or events which have had to be notified. Policies have been made accessible to the parents of children attending the

crèche but not yet for the play scheme.

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 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):

- explore the options for children attending the play scheme to go outside for fresh air during the day

- ensure that the evacuation drills undertaken by the play scheme are recorded in a log
- extend the initial information given to parents to ensure that they know how to access policies and procedures
- review and extend the non sports resources available for the children attending the play scheme
- implement the action plan which is being drawn up to ensure that staff in the play scheme gain appropriate qualifications, in particular the completion of a level 3 qualification by the play leader and the completion of level 2 qualifications by half the staff
- review and update the policies and procedures especially the safe guarding policy to include the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

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