



Allstars at Mablins Lane

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY280267
Inspection date	08 February 2007
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
Setting Address	Mablins Lane Community Primary School, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 3YR
Telephone number	07795498787
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Registered person	Pine Lodge Creche and Day Nursery Ltd
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?

Allstars Out of School Club opened in April 2004. It operates from the school hall at Mabllins Lane Community Primary School in Crewe. A maximum of 32 children may attend the club at any one time. It is open each week day during term time from 07.30 until 09.00 and from 15.00 until 18.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 84 children aged from four to 11 years on roll. Of these, 27 were present on the evening of the inspection. Children come mostly from the local catchment area as this is their school. The club is not currently supporting any children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or any children who speak English as an additional language.

The club employs five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is very well protected because staff employ good health and hygiene policies and procedures. They regularly check and ensure that toilet, floor and table areas are clean and ensure that there is sufficient toilet paper, soap and paper towels to last for the whole session. Staff complete daily checks covering items such as fridge temperatures, food storage, toilets, the first aid box and socket covers; these are signed off on a checklist each day. Staff also help children to learn and practice simple good health and hygiene routines for themselves by reminding them to wash their hands before snacks and after use of the toilet. They also ensure that children learn about the importance of physical exercise in all weather and encourages active outside or indoor physical play as part of every session. For example, children play out in the snow or dance to their favourite music indoors during the session being inspected.

Policies and procedures are in place to help to protect staff and children's health and these are used consistently and correctly. For example, accident and medication records are signed by parents to acknowledge every entry and full details and written permission is always gained before any medication is given. The detailed enrolment forms elicit information about medical and dietary needs, along with consents for emergency treatment, use of face paints and sun creams, to make sure that children are not allergic to these. All data about consents and individual health needs are then collated onto one sheet for staff reference to ensure that care is always given according to the wishes of the parents. There is also a clear sickness policy, the first aid box is suitable and most staff are qualified in first aid and/or food hygiene.

Children respond well to snack routines. They have some involvement in helping to lay the table, to serve their meal and clear it afterwards, learning valuable social skills. They observe that staff always wear aprons to serve food and to clean tables with antibacterial sprays before and after meals. On the day of inspection children eat crackers, cheese and fruit, with squash or water to drink. Children have their own place mat which they have made and always have their own plate. Some staff sit with children and the meal time is sociable, well organised and sometimes used as a time to plan and share ideas for the club. Children also enjoy very good opportunities to learn about healthy eating and have recently had a topic series on this. As a record, they have created an extremely attractive art display of their favourite healthy foods and their three dimensional 'Allstars kitchen', where their cooker, preparation, vegetable soup and fruit bowl are on display. In addition, children have an input into their menus, which are displayed too.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, suitable, secure and safe school hall environment with a lively out of school atmosphere. It is spacious, warm and clean, with cushions and mats to relax upon and curtains to dampen any echoes. There is also generous room, which is inspiringly used around the designated entrance and within the hall for displays of information, projects and art work. This gives the club a strong identity despite sharing room within the school itself.

For example, photos of all the staff and their key worker groups are displayed in the entrance, along with the 'policies of the month', recent newsletters and information about the activity themes. As a result, children enjoy a good sense of belonging in their club environment.

Children use a diverse and inspiring range of games and craft equipment and are knowledgeable about what is available. This is because staff introduce every session and encourage children to feel free to choose other equipment and toys if they do not want what is set out. The walk-in storage cupboard is tidy and accessible so that staff can easily get out what is requested and the school allows the club to utilise the hall's built-in sound amplification system. Role play, arts and crafts, construction, books, large floor games and electronic resources are all well resourced and efforts are made to provide new things following fund raising and child requests. Staff check and monitor the condition of resources to make sure that they remain suitable for use.

There is very good security to the rear entrance door used by parents. This automatically closes and locks and a doorbell alerts staff in the hall that a parent is waiting. At the end of the school day, younger children are always collected from their classrooms and escorted to the school hall club base. Computer generated lists show staff exactly which children are expected to be coming on each session and from what class, including whether they may first be attending another school activity. Security is continued within the base room as staff are vigilant to ensure that children move about the setting safely and with increasing responsibility for themselves. For example, they ask that children put their coats onto the rails and stow their school bags safely underneath where they do not pose a tripping hazard. Numbers of children outside are always known by all staff and appropriate ratios maintained. Likewise, parents are asked to give details and passwords for any different persons coming to collect their child and staff must be made aware of these in advance. In ways such as these, children's safety is assured in the setting.

Children's awareness of how to keep themselves safe outside is progressing well because staff talk to children as matters arise and raise them in the meeting time at the beginning and middle of sessions. For example, they talk about the need for care when throwing snowballs or tasting the snow because of the grit, dirt and stones that are likely to be scooped up in it from the playground. Occasionally, the club has speakers from the local road safety unit. On these occasions, role plays, use of real props and photographs help children to learn about road safety in a fun yet meaningful way, which can be rehearsed on other occasions through discussion and reference to the photographs. Children from the club also often attend the holiday club run by the provider at another venue. There are frequent day trips and suitable risk assessments and safety procedures are undertaken for these, so that children enjoy themselves within a suitably safe environment.

Children are well protected from abuse because staff have sufficient understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff are aware of what to do in the event of an allegation being made against them and know who to contact if they are concerned about a child. Child protection information is displayed for parents and staff have access to update training and direct support from the provider.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children quickly settle into their club room and are happy to meet their friends. Staff greet children warmly and organise a group session to hear children's news and find out what they would like to do, utilising areas which they have already set up with crafts or construction. Sessions have a simple timetable, but the snack time is usually about one hour into the session. The atmosphere is very friendly and caring because staff and children know each other well and staff work together well as a team, sharing themselves between groups of children and ensuring that most of the time only one staff member is away from children undertaking food preparation or parent liaison. Children enjoy the opportunity to be creative and play games, making Valentines cards or bead designs, swapping their cartoon collection cards, or constructing a deluxe village using the wooden block and shapes set.

Children are independent, interested and involved. They can use their own initiative and are creative and imaginative because they feel comfortable to ask for resources or staff help if they need them. For example, a child asks a staff member to play floor Ludo with him, while others are quite content to sit and look at magazines. Most children want to spend the evening playing outside in the falling snow and staff make sure that they are able to do this with as much protective clothing as they can muster. Others enjoy telling me all about the photo evidence of events they have enjoyed over the past year, including sports days, leavers parties, Halloween games, fund raising through carol singing and growing their own vegetables. In these ways, children can both make their own entertainment and enjoy a strong group identity.

Children have high levels of confidence and self-esteem because they are listened to and involved in all aspects of the club. Staff are interested in their day and how they are feeling about things and ask them about these things as soon as they are collected or arrive. Children have opportunities to give written feedback on questionnaires to air their views and wishes too. They can be involved in forming the plans for the club and lists of their key worker groups and activities are on display for them to refer to at any time. As a result, they are enthusiastic about the club and enjoy their time there.

Children respond and interact happily together because they are with their friends, peers and siblings. Staff are warm and patient role models, moving between and helping children to make the most of their play. They tactfully diffuse tensions and create opportunities for each child to take part. For example, when numbers are too high for going outside, staff quickly re-group the children into two halves and ensure that those who are waiting are happily occupied indoors until it is their turn to go outside.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children join in extremely well and play a productive part in the setting because they are familiar with the staff, setting and know the basic session routine and where resources are kept. Staff involve them fully in planning, using questionnaires and a 'feedback tree' to make sure that the stimulating and diverse choices planned are being enjoyed. Children of all ages feel at home from the outset because staff make sure that everyone who wants to, has a chance to talk

about their news. In addition, plans facilitate opportunities for children to talk about feelings, likes and dislikes, and issues about friendships. Displays of their work and photos of them in action, all support an excellent sense of ownership and belonging in the club.

Children have good opportunities to become aware of wider society and are helped to consider and value diversity because they are regularly involved in fund raising for local good causes and because they have themes and events which focus upon the traditions, crafts, foods and costumes of various cultures and festivals. For example, they have recently completed a month theme on the Chinese New Year and they went carol singing to raise money for toys for the casualty unit at a local hospital. In addition, there are dolls, play figures, books, puzzles and some dressing up clothes, which show positive images of other cultures.

Children behave very well and understand responsible behaviour because staff are motivated, vigilant and interested in teaching children how to behave well and consider others. Children share, treat resources well, conform and speak nicely to everyone, following the displayed ground rules of the club, which they have helped to evolve themselves. Staff speak positively and politely to children and always address them using their names. At times, they are firm in insisting that children wait for others to speak or wait quietly while register is completed, but this ensures that younger children feel secure and heard within the large group. Incident recording is fully understood by present staff and significant incidents of behaviour are being recorded and discussed with parents on the day. This promotes effective behaviour management by staff and supports good partnership with parents.

Children receive a high standard of consistent care in the setting because staff welcome parents warmly and provide a flexible, friendly service. Staff are approachable and interested and make sufficient time to speak to parents, particularly at home time as well as making sure that useful and up to date information is prominently displayed for them. Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the club through recent questionnaires. They particularly like the standard of communication through newsletters and letters and also the variety offered to children in the holiday club based at the provider's main base. A complaints system has been set up and parents are made aware of how they can see the club's policies and procedures or make representations to Ofsted. However, details of an anonymous concern raised has not been logged in the complaint record or any comment upon what action was taken as a result. This means that parents requesting to see the complaint record would assume that no concerns have been raised. Nevertheless, staff know that the complaint is logged at the provider's main base and will make this available to a parent upon request.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well protected and cared for by sufficient numbers of staff who have suitable qualifications, experience, knowledge and understanding of child development. All staff complete Criminal Records Bureau checks and other references. Staff development and improvement is always on the agenda, so that the setting has become accredited to a quality assurance scheme in 2006. Staff are regularly attending relevant ongoing training and well organised staff meetings, both of which push up staff's expertise and the standards of care for children. Staff files are kept on the premises, which means that evidence of vetting and qualifications are available for

inspection. However, staff contact details are not readily available for use in case of an emergency. This impacts upon adults if there is an emergency and it is unclear what adults are on the premises or how to contact their next of kin.

Staff deployment in the setting contributes well to children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability, to take an active part in the setting. Staff-to-child ratios are satisfactory and staff use their time productively, getting alongside children and concentrating upon them. They rotate tasks and duties between them for mutual responsibility and variety and ensure that they spend as much time as possible in direct contact with children, for example, by starting early to set up activity areas before children arrive.

The setting wants children 'to have fun!' They want children 'to assist us in the formulation of timetables, so that they are keen, interested and having a great time'. The setting's policies and procedures are working well in practice to support these aims and to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. This is because the policies and procedures are kept up to date, thoroughly understood, followed by all staff and made available to parents. For example, child details and consent forms provide sufficient information to enable good individual care to be given and the daily attendance register is also accurate and up to date, reflecting what children are in the building at any one time, should there be an emergency. However, staff and visitor attendance is not always kept with this, to ensure that there is a record of who is in contact with children on any given day. Nevertheless, the manager organises paperwork well, making reference to information easy and quick. For example, she encourages parents to read the policies by putting two 'policies of the month' on display. She also puts collated details of all children's consents and care needs onto one form for easy reference by staff.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were four recommendations made at the last inspection of care in April 2004. These have all been completed to improve the safety and care of children in the setting. All children now have a key worker, based upon their age and this helps to ensure that the care of those under eight is not adversely affected or dominated by the numbers of children over eight. Other improvements to the policies and procedures mean that these are now personal and relevant specifically to this setting, address the methods for dealing with any bullying, and ensure that necessary contact numbers are available on the child protection policy, should they be needed in an emergency. Overall, improved organisation and supporting policies and procedures benefit all children attending.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 complaint 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):

- ensure that the complaints record shows all concerns raised and the action taken regarding them, and ensure that this is available for parents to see upon request
- ensure that accessible contact details are kept for staff and children which can be used in case of emergency and ensure that a record is kept of visitors.

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