

Dweezils Adventure Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	315218
Inspection date	27 February 2007
Inspector	Susan Patricia Birkenhead
Setting Address	Unit 14, Westbrook Centre, Westbrook, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 8UG
Telephone number	01925 415531
E-mail	enquiries@thedanleisuregroup.co.uk
Registered person	The Dan Leisure Group
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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 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?

Dweezils Adventure Centre has been open since 1992 and is one of 10 registered facilities owned by the Dan Leisure group. The pre-school operates from one room and associated facilities on the first floor and the creche and breakfast club use the room and associated facilities on the ground floor, where the soft play structure is in place. The centre is situated on the retail complex on the Asda store site in Westbrook, Warrington. A maximum of 40 children may attend the centre at any one time. It serves children and families who live across a wide area.

The crèche provides care for a maximum of 25 children from two to eight years of age and is open from 12.00 to 17.00 Monday to Friday, Saturday 10.00 to 18.00 and Sunday 10.30 to 16.30, all year round and there are 40 children of roll. The pre-school provides care for a maximum of 24 children between the ages of two and five years and is open from 09.30 to 12.00 Monday to Friday, during term time only and there are 22 children on roll. Of these six three year olds, receive funding for nursery education. The breakfast club provides care for a maximum of 25 children at any one time and is open from 08.00 to 09.00 Monday to Friday

term time only, there are currently three children on roll. The centre supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

The centre employs seven staff, of these five hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's good health is in the main adequately promoted within the setting due to the suitable practices and procedures the staff follow. All children wash their hands before snacks, after visiting the toilet and following some activities. They learn that using antibacterial soap 'makes them clean'. However, children are not provided with a plate at snack time. The cleaning rotas displayed provided sufficient information to reflect how often different areas are cleaned or checked. The detailed sickness policy and information displayed makes parents aware of the effective procedures followed and the necessary exclusion periods for illness. Therefore, sufficiently protecting children from the risk of infection. Consistent systems, which are shared with parents are completed for the recording of accidents, medication administered and a high proportion of the staff employed are qualified in first aid.

All children are provided with worthwhile opportunities to develop their physical skills daily. For example, they confidently climb over, crawl through and slide, developing balance and coordination over their bodies when using the soft play structure. They negotiate space in the ball pool and learn to control their movements to avoid collision with others. They develop their finer, physical skills as they manipulate the play dough and use one-handed tools on the workbench such as the hammer and the screwdriver. Pre-school children learn about the effects that physical exercise has on their overall well-being through the planned activities.

The pre-school children are provided with a choice of healthy drinks at snack time consisting of milk or water. However, children have little opportunity to develop their self-help skills by pouring their own drinks as this is done for them by the staff. Children attending the crèche can purchase iced drinks from the machine. However, drinking water is not readily available at other times to ensure they remain refreshed and hydrated. Staff follow good, hygienic procedures when preparing snacks because they wear protective clothing. They demonstrate a good understanding of food safety during discussion and a number of staff have completed basic food hygiene training. They discuss aspects of healthy eating with children and talk about foods that are good for them through the activities completed. Snack times are a socially interactive time for all concerned. Children sit in smaller groups and staff are on hand to offer support where necessary as they sit with them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for within a secure and welcoming environment. The tastefully decorated areas contribute to the bright and stimulating setting. The children's artwork is displayed throughout to promote their sense of belonging. A good level of information is displayed for parents to read, which reflects the practices and procedures followed. Appropriate use is made of the space available to meet the needs of the different groups of children using the facilities. They have access to an appropriate range of play materials and equipment. In addition, items

are rotated between other registered day care facilities owned by the provider. The storage of the play materials in the pre-school enables children to make suitable decisions and select for themselves, however, the cupboards are not labelled to reflect the content.

Children are cared for within a safe environment because the staff take positive steps to minimise risks to the children. For example, the radiators are guarded, entrance to the setting is secured, all visitors are monitored and hazardous materials are stored in a locked cupboard. Health and safety audits are completed on a regular basis for the soft play area and other areas of the building. Children learn to keep themselves safe because they are made aware of unsafe practices and staff explain the consequences of their actions. They take part in monthly emergency evacuation drills and practise road safety during activities by using good quality props in preparation for going out for walks.

Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded because the detailed written policies make staff aware of the signs to look for and the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child in their care, which they confidently recall during discussion. Staff have completed child protection training and a designated child protection officer is deployed within the group.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled within the day care environment and confidently separate from their parents on arrival. They quickly become involved in the play and activities accessible to them selecting for themselves what they want to play with from the choice available. They benefit from the appropriate range of play materials and planned activities, which in the main support and extend their learning and enjoyment. For example, the pre-school room is appropriately organised to provide different areas of learning, which include construction, imaginary, creative and reading-writing areas. However, due to the staff deployment, children are not always encouraged to make good use of all areas available and as a result, children show little interest in areas, such as, construction and jigsaws.

Pre-school children are familiar with the routine followed and know that after tidying toys away they wash their hands for snack time. They line up at the door towards the end of the session to play downstairs on the soft play structure. The routines followed provide structure to the children's stay, which include free play, creative activities, story and singing and physical play. The staff are developing their knowledge of 'Birth to three matters' framework and plans are in place to incorporate the areas of learning into the daily planning of activities. Children attend the creche for a maximum of two hours so there is no structured routine in place, therefore, providing free play opportunities for children to choose.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. All staff are actively involved in the planning of a broad and balanced curriculum of activities, which reflect all areas of learning and are linked to the stepping-stones. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. At times, they use their questioning skills to positively promote children's thinking. However, opportunities are missed to extend children's learning through staff interaction and deployment at other times. This results in children's thinking and learning on some occasions not being extended and challenged. Children's developmental progress is generally monitored well and the individual files in place reflect how this is achieved. Annotated examples of the children's work are included, although not always dated. Observations completed

on the children during activities are transferred to the children's assessment records and evaluations in place contribute to the next steps in children's learning. However, it is not clear from the planning how these are taken forward.

Children are developing good relationships with one another and adults. They positively recognise the need to share play materials, take turns and play cooperatively. Children are becoming confident communicators as they engage in conversation with the adults and other children. For example, they anticipate the next stage in the familiar story told. They show a positive interest in books and develop their understanding of new words such as 'author' and 'title'. Some children are confident to sing a song as others listen. Children have limited opportunities within the pre-school room to make marks and develop their writing skills. The provision of writing materials is basic, restricted to the writing table in place and not readily accessible to them in other areas of the pre-school room. Therefore, children show little interest in this area of learning. Some children, when asked are confident to write their names on their pictures and they recognise their name cards as part of the self-registration scheme.

Children are in the main developing a basic understanding of mathematics. For example, they count without prompting to nine when playing on the soft play structure and recall their ages when asked. They refer to the 'big and small' as they compare the size of the wooden flowers and fill different size plant pots with compost. Children use positional language as they act out the 'Bear Hunt' and use words such as under, over and through. However, spontaneous every day opportunities to enhance children's understanding of number and shape are not built on.

Children are involved in activities to enable them to explore and investigate. For example, they watch what happens when they place cotton wool into the seed trays and then add water, as part of the planting activity. Children are responsive to questions staff ask and talk about how the cotton wool feels, using words like 'squishy' and recognise that the water has been soaked up. Children develop their learning about the natural world as part of the spring theme they follow and recall that seeds and plants require water and sunshine to make them grow. Opportunities for children to visit different places within the local community such as the florist and the estate agents further promotes children's understanding of the wider world.

Children enjoy the role-play area, which sufficiently promotes their imagination and changes emphasis according to the current theme. For example, the garden centre created is associated with the spring theme. The children wear gardening gloves, fill the pots with compost and plant seeds. They imagine the soft play area is a ship and direct others as they shout 'come on people, come onto my ship and have a snack'. However, the provision of dressing up materials is not freely available. Children engage in creative activities using various materials, for example, children decorate paper plates and display them in the corridors to reflect their favourite foods. They complete observational drawings of flowers they buy on their return from the local florist. Therefore, sufficient techniques ensure that the children develop their creative abilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing positive relationships with staff and each other, where they are valued as individuals. Information recorded initially on the 'child entry form' contributes to the staff getting to know the children, therefore, enabling them to provide appropriate and consistent care. Children are developing a positive understanding of the wider world through the celebration of festivals and times of the year. Children sample cultural foods and complete associated creative activities as part of these celebrations. For example, they make lanterns when celebrating

Chinese New Year. Children have access to some resources, which reflect positive images of culture and race in the main. Additional resources, which represent positive images of disability are loaned from another nursery locally, owned by the same provider. Children who attend the pre-school go on outings to the florist to promote their understanding of the local community, associated with the themes they follow. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Staff demonstrate through discussion and the policy in place a sufficient understanding of how to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. They work with the area Special Educational Needs coordinator (SENCO) and designated staff are appointed within the setting.

Children are well behaved because the staff use appropriate methods for the management of their behaviour. Minor disagreements are managed well and situations are approached calmly by staff to reach a successful conclusion. Children learn to respect each other as they apologise to those affected by their behaviour. As a result, children learn to play cooperatively and are very responsive to the tidy up times promoted within the routine. Children's good behaviour and achievements are recognised through regular, verbal praise. This, therefore, contributes to the development of children's confidence and successfully fosters their self-esteem.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children benefit from the appropriate exchange of information between the staff, parents and carers. Sufficient information is in place for parents using the crèche or the pre-school relating to practices and procedures. In addition parents using the pre-school are provided with a prospectus outlining the Foundation Stage curriculum and details of the policies. Information relating to the children's areas of learning is on display around the pre-school room, which informs parents of children's intended learning. On occasions parents are involved in the children's learning, for example, they provide family photographs when the 'all about me' theme is followed. Parents receive verbal feedback on collection of their child informing of their well-being and activities completed. They can request to see their child's developmental records at any time within the pre-school, however, no formal system for the sharing of children's developmental progress is in place. The manager sees this as a development opportunity for the future. Parents are satisfied with the communication systems in place and feel they can discuss any aspect of the children's care and development with the staff.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are in the main protected as a result of the necessary systems employed when selecting and recruiting staff. The introduction of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance form ensures all staff complete the necessary clearance. However, such procedures relating to the appointment of senior staff has not yet been completed. This, therefore, is a breach in regulation, although staff are aware that persons employed and going through this clearance cannot have unsupervised access to children. Staff complete an induction period and have access to the written policies and procedures, which they sign against, to familiarise themselves with the practice and procedures followed. A good ratio of qualified staff is employed and others are in the process of working towards recognised training. In addition, staff are committed to attending additional training to further develop their knowledge and skills.

The written policies and procedures in place contain detailed information relating to the creche and pre-school practices. These are reviewed annually and dated to reflect when changes were last made, therefore contributing to the operational plans in place. All legally required

documentation that contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being is in place and consistently completed by staff and available for inspection. Records are shared with parents who acknowledge entry by signing against the details recorded.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. The managers and the registered person are clear about their individual roles and responsibilities are delegated to the managers employed. They recognise the importance of continuous development, have systems in place for monitoring the education provision and attend local cluster meetings. They value the support they receive from the Early Years consultant and act on the advice and support they receive. Staff are supervised effectively as they receive appraisals regularly throughout the year, their training needs are identified and staff meet regularly to discuss the planning of activities and general aspects.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the registered provider was asked to demonstrate how the qualification requirement of the manager would be met, to develop practices and documentation regarding children's health and review the staff deployment and induction procedure. Since the last inspection, necessary attention has been given to address most of the previous recommendations raised. Both managers employed hold recognised early years qualifications, therefore, meeting the necessary criteria and benefiting the children's care. Information regarding the procedures followed if a child becomes ill whilst in the crèche is displayed for parents' information. This makes them aware of the practices followed and exclusion periods, therefore, protecting children from the risk of infection. Good ratios of staff are maintained at all times to ensure children are well supervised and child protection takes priority during the staff induction, therefore, safeguarding children's welfare. However, the recommendation regarding the provision of drinking water being available to children at all times remains outstanding. Therefore, this recommendation is further raised to ensure children remain refreshed and hydrated at all times.

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 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 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):

- further promote hygiene practices during snack time and ensure children have access to drinking water at all times
- ensure planning incorporates components of the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- ensure all staff complete the vetting procedure appropriate to their position.

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 enhance children's self help skills and independence at snack time
- ensure mark making materials are made interesting and readily available for children to access in other areas of the pre-school room and further promote children's understanding of mathematics during every day situations
- ensure copies of the children's work is dated to further enhance the systems in place for monitoring their progress.

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