



## **Activate**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	260711
<b>Inspection date</b>	02 August 2005
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<b>Registered person</b>	Activate Town Close School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Activate is a holiday activity programme which opened in 1999. It operates from the pre-preparatory building of Town Close House School in the city of Norwich. The premises offer a sports hall, computer room, art and craft room, heated indoor swimming pool, playing fields and scenic woodlands. A maximum of 80 children may attend the facility at any one time. The group opens each weekday during 2 weeks of the school summer holidays from 08.30 until 17.30.

There are currently 97 children from 5 to under 8 years on roll. The activity programme also caters for children aged from 8 to 14 years in separate areas of the

school.

The facility employs eight staff. Four of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Four staff work with the children at any one time, supported by student team leaders.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are effectively helped to look after their health because they are cared for in a clean and well maintained environment. Children have a clear understanding of good hygiene practice because the staff remind them to wash their hands 'to protect you from germs' after using the toilet and before eating. Children are well protected from the spread of infection as the scheme does not provide care if children are unwell. The fully equipped sick bay ensures that children who become ill during the scheme are cared for separately to prevent possible cross infection.

Children are encouraged to take regular drinks as a way to maintain their health especially after physical play. As a result, children are becoming increasingly aware of the way that activity affects their bodies. Children understand the benefits of a healthy diet because posters are displayed within the school to remind them of the importance of eating five pieces of fresh fruit or vegetables per day. Children enjoy chatting with the staff as they eat their packed lunches and the adults seize this informal opportunity to reinforce how healthy food will help them to thrive.

Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their physical skills through the wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Each day there is a choice of team games and sports, such as cricket, football, or swimming, to challenge children to increase the control that they have over their bodies. They enjoy jumping on the inflatable castle and show spatial awareness as they dance around the hall without bumping into each other.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are emotionally secure because the warm and friendly welcome from the staff helps them to gain a sense of belonging. The child-centred classroom is set out with an excellent range of high quality resources that encourage new children to settle and to stay relaxed. Children are eager to play as all of the equipment is colourful, complete and safely maintained. The staff explain how the play materials should be used by telling children 'to use the plates to mix the paints because acrylic paint may stain your clothes.' As a result, children play with the resources appropriately and safely.

Children are kept safe whilst they are playing because all of the staff understand and implement the comprehensive health and safety procedures. Children are learning to

be responsible for their own safety when they play in the school grounds. The staff talk to the children about protecting themselves from harm and ask them to make sure that they can always see one of the distinctive, blue shirts that the staff wear. This allows children to explore the adventure play and woodland areas independently but within safe limits.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. For instance, children are neither left alone with persons who have not been vetted nor released to adults unless the scheme has written consent from their parents or a security password is known. Children are very well protected from risk of possible abuse because the staff are secure in their knowledge of child protection. The staff demonstrate that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of children at risk and keep local guidance to hand so that they may take action as soon as they have concerns about a child.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and have a strong bond with the instructors and group leaders who are consistently kind and friendly in their approach to them. For example, the adults and children support each other enthusiastically during team games and all show eagerness to win points for their key group. The staff display an exceptional vitality and commitment to working with children that ensures they maintain a vibrant and happy environment. As a result, children are eager to play and they have great fun.

Children are motivated to participate because they can independently select items from a comprehensive range of high quality equipment. They are encouraged to build on their existing skills because the staff provide an exciting programme of new and familiar experiences. For example, children relish jewellery making and cooking pizza but they particularly enjoy a visit from the children's entertainer, 'Johnny Jaffacake'. The staff continually obtain feedback on what the children like or dislike. Consequently, they plan flexible play opportunities that are not only extremely well matched to current trends and interests, but also help children to achieve as much as they can.

Children's imagination is extremely well fostered. They are inspired by the safari theme to express their ideas as they pretend to be jungle creatures and move to African music. Children show remarkable concentration skills whilst making and decorating salt dough models. For instance, one child carefully paints 22 sections of his 'Hungry Caterpillar' and others delicately mould individual letters to form name plates for their older siblings.

Children benefit from personal attention to help them to be patient and to take turns. For example, the staff remind children to share the resources, such as the boats in the swimming pool, 'to make sure you all have a go.' Children particularly enjoy counting down as they wait for their turn to bounce on the inflatable. Consequently, children work extremely well together, take turns and show that they are aware of each other's needs.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

All children feel a sense of belonging and play a full part in the holiday scheme. The staff work closely with parents to ensure that the needs of children from a variety of cultures are met. As a result, children from all backgrounds and of all abilities are made to feel welcome.

Children's behaviour is exemplary throughout the scheme. The staff have high expectations of the children and work with them to set clear, consistent boundaries such as 'Have lots of fun; be kind; think of others.' Consequently, children take responsibility for their own behaviour because they have helped to create the rules. The older children act as role models for the younger children who are guided by their pleasing responses and reactions. Positive actions are quickly rewarded to encourage children to behave well. For example, children earn points for their team by collecting rubbish or by being kind and helpful. The staff recognise if children are restless and quickly intervene to divert them to another activity. As a result, children behave extremely well because they are always fully occupied in meaningful play.

Children with special needs integrate especially well within the scheme. The school provides suitable facilities and resources whilst the staff work closely with parents and other agencies to ensure that all children receive appropriate support to help them to participate to the best of their ability.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being within the scheme. Parents are warmly welcomed and fully encouraged to be involved with their children's play. For instance, parents are invited to an open evening where they are shown a video of previous schemes to explain the care that is provided for their children. Parents' views about their children's needs and interests are actively sought before children attend and whilst the scheme is operating. Consequently, the staff are able to provide care that is current to children's individual requirements. Parents state that they feel fully informed of their children's care. Their comments show that they particularly appreciate 'the excellent, really enthusiastic staff' and 'the good, wide ranging activities that my children thoroughly enjoy.'

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's well-being is supported because the staff are suitably trained and the instructors are experienced as teachers. All adults have a sound understanding of how young children develop and the recruitment procedures ensure that they are appropriately vetted.

Children are safeguarded by a range of policies and procedures that are understood by the staff and consistently applied. Policies are shared with parents to keep them informed about the scheme and their child's activities. The appropriate aims and objectives enable staff to provide a safe, caring and supportive environment in which children enjoy themselves. The established daily routine not only helps children to

settle but also gives the staff opportunities to monitor provision and to adapt activities. Consequently, children's care is suitably supported.

Most of the legally required documentation is maintained to promote children's well-being. However, parents are not asked to sign to the entries in the accident and medication book to ensure that they are aware of, and can respond to, injuries that their children have received and medicines that have been administered. As a result, children's welfare could be compromised.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The previous inspection required the scheme to show how records of fire drills are kept to the satisfaction of the Fire Safety Officer and to develop a procedure to detail actions that would be taken if children are lost, uncollected or missing. The scheme was recommended to become familiar with the National Standards and associated guidance for out of school care, to ensure their behaviour policy is positive and to obtain written consent from parents as to who can collect their children.

Records of fire drills show the number of adults and children involved, the location of the fire, the duration of the drill and any problems encountered. The staff are guided by an emergency policy, developed in consultation with local police, that details procedures if children are lost, missing or uncollected. Parents give written consent to authorise who can collect their children and include a password that must be used. As a result, children are kept safe in an emergency and their welfare is safeguarded because the staff have the required paperwork in place to prevent children from being collected by an unsuitable person. Copies of the National Standards and associated guidance are used by the manager and staff to prepare the holiday scheme. As a result, children benefit from an improvement in the quality of care that is provided. The positive behaviour policy ensures consistency within the staff teams who are excellent role models to the children. Consequently, children learn right from wrong as evidenced by their exemplary behaviour.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report.

## **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.
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## 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 record keeping to ensure that the written records of accidents and medicines given to children are signed by parents.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)