

St Matthias After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	119619
Inspection date	01 August 2007
Inspector	Chris Banks
Setting Address	St Matthias School, Bacon St, London, E2 6DR
Telephone number	020 7739 8058
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Registered person	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
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?

St Mathias out of school provision for children aged between five and eleven years was registered in 1999. The after school club and holiday play scheme based in St Mathias School E2 is organised and managed by Tower Hamlets Council.

There are currently 100 children on roll. Of these, 42 are aged between five and eight years. The after school operates between 15:00 and 18:00 during term time. Summer holiday play scheme opening hours are between 09:00 and 17:00.

A team of 20 staff work with the children, over 50% of whom hold qualifications in either early years childcare or play work. The play scheme supports children with a range of disabilities.

The setting may care for a maximum of 42 children aged between five and eight years at any one time.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright, well maintained school setting with easily accessible outdoor play facilities.

Children understand simple hygiene practice and are familiar with daily routines that include hand washing before lunch. They are well protected from the risk of infection because there is a clear sickness policy and staff act decisively if children become ill in their care.

Eight members of staff hold valid first aid certificates which means they are well prepared in the event of an accident or an emergency. Staff also act in the best interest of children with allergies or particular medical needs and one is trained in administering specialist medication.

During particularly hot weather, good precautions are taken to protect children from the effects of the sun. This includes encouraging children to drink fluids, wear hats and use sunscreen. Arrangements for the storage of packed lunches in hot weather requires some improvement.

Children enjoy good opportunities for outdoor play and physical exercise. Adventure play structures are well used by children who also invent their own physically challenging games. There is also a good choice of adult led sporting activities and team games.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure setting and are very well supervised. They play safely because staff positively encourage them to behave in a responsible way and consider others.

Children benefit from the overall good safety practice of staff. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out and recorded before the scheme begins and positive steps are taken to minimise any potential risks. All required safety procedures are in place and fire drills are practised with children on a weekly basis to ensure new children become familiar with the procedure. There is also a system to ensure equipment used by children is clean and safe.

Staff describe good safety practice for outings which includes a safety talk with children before they leave. In the unlikely event of a child becoming separated from the main group, staff have a clear process to follow. This is shared with parents in writing. They are also advised of the procedure should they fail to collect their child.

Children are further protected because staff are well informed about their role and responsibility in safeguarding their welfare. They are clear about the process for monitoring, recording and reporting child protection concerns and are guided by up to date written procedures. These include the action to take if any allegations are made against a member of staff but do not mention the role of Ofsted. Parents are advised in writing about the role of staff in protecting the interests of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children receive a very warm welcome from staff, some of whom already know children well from their term time work in local schools and after school clubs. This helps reassure children and also provides some consistency of care in the large setting. Younger children are well integrated with mixed age range and are warmly supported by staff allocated to work with them.

Space is well prepared in advance of children's arrival and they are eager to participate in activities. They enjoy a good range of planned, spontaneous and free play opportunities that includes art projects and sports programmes. Younger children also enjoy some activities and outings planned specifically for their age group.

Children are able to freely choose the activities they take part in and have access to good quality resources. This includes art and craft materials, sports equipment, board games, construction toys and books.

Children are already comfortable with their routines and listen attentively to staff as they consult them about arrangements for lunch. Children's request to eat outdoors is agreed and they form small companionable groups as they enjoy the friendly and sociable atmosphere.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a relaxed and very friendly atmosphere. Parents are warmly welcomed each day and a well organised notice board keeps them well informed about how important policies and procedures of the play scheme are put into practice. It also outlines a very clear process for them to follow if they have a complaint about the service.

Children with disabilities are well integrated. Close partnership working with parents and other agencies helps ensure information is effectively shared and used to promote children's welfare and their ultimate enjoyment of the five week holiday play scheme. Their progress is closely monitored to help ensure they receive appropriate support in the large, lively setting and parents receive daily feedback.

Provision of a satisfactory range of diverse play materials encourages children to explore difference through their everyday play activities.

Behaviour is managed according to each child's individual circumstances and the code of conduct agreed between children and staff at the beginning of the scheme, gives children a voice in how the play scheme is run. Children enjoy making friends and new children are quite confident because caring staff take time to help them settle in.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by a well qualified and experienced staff team who create a very welcoming and friendly atmosphere for children. Staff are well deployed and good levels of supervision help ensure children can safely explore and enjoy their temporary play setting.

Children greatly enjoy playing in the outdoor space and also benefit from having the choice of using three classrooms which have been effectively adapted for play scheme use. If children become ill or tired there is also a small quiet comfortable space for them to relax under supervision.

Very well documented attendance records and registers help ensure all children are safely accounted for. Other documentation is well organised and overall there are good record keeping arrangements in place. Written proof of staff qualifications are, however, not made available for inspection as they are held at sites where staff normally work during term time.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, the provider was required to develop a contingency plan to ensure ratios are maintained at all times. There is now an effective system in place to cover unplanned staff absences.

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 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 the role of Ofsted is included in child protection procedures
- ensure perishable foods in packed lunches are suitably stored in hot weather
- ensure proof of staff qualifications are made available for inspection

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