

Bandley Hill Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	146456
Inspection date	21 August 2007
Inspector	Susan Parker
Setting Address	Featherstone Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG2 9PP
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Registered person	Stevenage Borough Council
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?

Bandley Hill Playscheme is managed by Stevenage Borough Council and is held in a local council purpose built play centre situated in Featherstone Road, Stevenage. The areas used are the main hall, small room, kitchen, toilets and outside play space. Opening times are 09.00 to 12.30 and 13.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday, school holiday only.

It is an open access facility which enables children aged between five and 14 years to attend and leave as they please. Children under five may attend provided they are accompanied by an adult. There is a staff team of seven adults working with the children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment. Their health is promoted as there are effective procedures to ensure that any accidents are dealt with. All staff members hold first aid certificates and the first aid box is well stocked. Any accidents are recorded and any risks are assessed. The children have access to appropriate toilet and hand washing facilities, however,

they do not always wash their hands before eating. Staff discuss individual dietary requirements with parents and keep records of these, ensuring that any special diets are observed. Children are offered a range of snacks including fresh fruit, and home grown vegetables which helps to promote their growth and development.

Children are given many opportunities to enjoy physical play and exercise because the staff encourage them to fully develop and explore a wide range of physical movements through daily outside play. Children have access to a wealth of outdoor physical activities which are not restricted by poor weather. This encourages children to try out new skills which promotes their physical development and confidence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is well promoted as the staff have a good awareness of possible risks or hazards and take steps to minimise these, for example, the garden is checked prior to use for sharp objects. Risk assessments are regularly carried out ensuring that children can play with the toys and resources in a safe environment. However, during the inspection some electrical sockets were accessible to the children which could be hazardous. Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe as the staff remind them about how to play with the resources safely. For example, children are aware of how far the tyre swing swings out so they don't stand close to it, not to swing pool cues or run with scissors.

The play scheme have clear written evacuation procedures in place which are regularly shared and practised with children. Emergency exits are clearly marked.

Children are able to independently select activities from a wide range of toys, activities and equipment. The staff supervise the children ensuring that they are safe and are using the equipment appropriately.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as all staff have attended child protection training and have a clear understanding of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled within the play scheme, confidently choosing toys and activities. They communicate well with the staff, discussing the equipment they use and asking for help when needed. Children are offered a variety of activities which help to promote their development. These include playing with play dough, imaginative play, reading, gardening and craft activities including painting and baking. Children are able to independently self-select from a range of age and developmentally appropriate resources inside and outside offering children different options for play.

The staff are able to use their knowledge and understanding of child development to adapt activities to suit individual children. When participating in craft activities, older children are encouraged to do as much for themselves as possible, whilst younger children are offered more support and encouragement from staff. The staff team thoughtfully plan activities and show genuine enthusiasm for these activities and all areas of play. For example, the children enjoy planting vegetables, regularly watering and watching them to see when they are ready to eat, then they cook and eat them. Children spend their time purposefully, their self-esteem and

confidence is promoted through the staff's eagerness to provide suitable and stimulating activities which interest the children and support their play and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are able to feel valued and respected because the staff make sure that they are aware of their individual needs and beliefs and are able to meet these consistently. Children are always treated as individuals and are encouraged to respect each other and work together. They benefit from the way in which the play scheme staff work in partnership with parents, ensuring that parents and carers are fully informed about the open access play scheme, and the activities the children participate in.

Children play well together and are learning about sharing and turn-taking. Their behaviour is good and they have a clear understanding of the ground rules, developed by the children, and respecting the boundaries which are consistently applied by the staff. Children are encouraged to respect and appreciate other cultures and ways of life through a good range of resources such as books, dressing up clothes, dolls and activities which are well planned to help increase children's understanding of their community and the wider world.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Resources are effectively and imaginatively organised which enables the children to determine their own play. The individual needs of children are met as the staff ensure that they have all the necessary information about the children and that this is shared in a confidential way.

Children's play, learning and development is promoted through the staff's effective organisation of daily activities. Staff make sure that there is time to offer children a range of stimulating activities and to ensure that they have regular access to a wide range of outside play.

The children's overall welfare is safeguarded as the staff have all the required documentation in place which is stored securely and confidentially. This documentation includes clear working policies and procedures which are shared with parents. The play scheme staff are well organised to ensure that children are supervised at all times.

Overall, the range of children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider agreed to ensure that staff are deployed effectively within the sports area. Staff have now ensured that the pool table and table tennis table are set out at different times. This ensures that children have enough space to use the resources with ease and staff can monitor this area effectively.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain certain 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):

- encourage children to wash their hands before eating
- ensure that all electrical sockets are inaccessible to children.

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