

Universities' Holiday Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Veronica Sharpe

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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?

Universities' Holiday Playscheme at Chesterton Community College is one of two provisions run as a joint venture between Cambridge and Anglia Universities. The organisation provides holiday childcare mainly for the employees of both universities, with some places available to the local community. This play scheme first registered on this site in 2006 and operates from several rooms at the college, which is close to Cambridge city centre. Children have access to outdoor play areas.

A maximum of 100 children may attend the play scheme at any one time. Opening times are 08.15 to 17.45 each week day during all school holidays, with the exception of Christmas and bank holidays. There are currently 68 children on roll, 56 of these are aged under eight. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a small number of children who have English as an additional language.

A full-time coordinator is employed to organise the play schemes and this site employs 17 staff. Six of these, including the manager have appropriate qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children understand about the importance of personal hygiene and competently wash their hands before meal times and after using the toilet. Staff keep areas used by the children tidy and ensure tables and utensils are clean and hygienic. Appropriate consents are obtained from parents so staff can administer emergency care or give medication as necessary. Most adults have current first aid training, which ensures children receive appropriate treatment if they have an accident. Children with bumps or minor grazes benefit from attentive staff, who offer sympathetic support. Clear records are in place to ensure children's medical needs or allergies are known and understood, which promotes their health and well-being.

Children enjoy a very good range of physical activities indoors and out. They participate, for example, in bicycle challenges, use roller skates or blades and enjoy ball games. They benefit from fresh air and exercise as they can choose to play outdoors throughout the day. Creative activities, such as making jewellery help them increase their manipulative skills. A quiet room is available so children can choose to sit with their friends and chat, read a book or play board games. This ensures they have suitable times for rest and relaxation.

Children learn about making healthy choices at snack times as they choose from a good selection of fresh fruit and breads. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day and staff are pro-active in reminding children who have been active to help themselves. A healthy eating policy advises parents and carers about suitable foods for lunch boxes so children eat healthy food from home. At lunch time children sit together with staff in friendly social groups, which gives them opportunities to socialise and develop relationships. At snack times children choose their foods independently, but remain active, moving around with food in their mouths and hands, which means they are not developing good eating habits. Potentially, this also affects their safety as they are not concentrating on eating or being monitored closely by adults.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play safely in clean and suitable premises and learn to keep themselves safe as staff clearly explain boundaries to them. Daily risk assessments ensure any hazards are identified and minimised. Security is given a high priority; for example, visitors to the setting sign in and wear badges to identify themselves. Children respond quickly to the fire alarm and evacuate the premises efficiently, but systems to account for children and adults are time consuming, which means there is a delay in ensuring everyone is safe.

Children use a good range of equipment and resources that are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Resources and activities are readily accessible so children follow their own interests. Children's safety is promoted well as equipment and resources are checked regularly by the staff to ensure they are in good condition.

Staff attend training to ensure they understand their responsibility to protect children. Procedures, which are in line with those set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards are clearly displayed and shared with parents and carers. Line managers are secure in their understanding of the procedures, which means they confidently activate systems effectively to protect children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from a very good range of interesting activities, which enable them to learn new skills and follow their own interests. Activities are well balanced so children choose from active outdoor exercise, such as riding their bicycles, using hoppers and trying out roller blades, or they can experience an excellent range of activities indoors, such as board games and craft activities. Visitors are invited in to help the children learn new skills like jewellery making or tile painting. Outings, for example, bus rides to a local sports centre or to a bowling alley enable children to explore the wider world and enjoy new experiences.

Quiet areas give children excellent opportunities to sit together and socialise. They develop very good relationships, sharing their games and chatting together comfortably. They welcome the company of the staff, who show they are interested in what the children say and do.

The extensive programmes of activities is carefully planned to reflect the interests of the children on roll. Many children have attended the play schemes before and staff make sure new activities are regularly introduced to retain interest and excitement. All the children have their likes and dislikes taken into account and enjoy the free flow environment, which promotes their independence.

Older children benefit from additional freedom and responsibilities, such as participating in outings solely for them or choosing how to spend money on additional resources. This acknowledges their age and maturity so they continue to appreciate and enjoy attending the setting. All the children are asked about the activities so their ideas and opinions can be considered when planning for the future, which gives them a sense of ownership and belonging.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's needs are clearly understood by staff as the setting gathers comprehensive information from parents and carers to ensure these needs are very well met. Activities are very wide ranging so children have ample opportunities to follow their own interests. Free flow play is encouraged throughout the day so children mix freely and access resources independently.

Excellent systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. One-to-one helpers, who have suitable training and experience support children throughout the sessions, enabling children with complex needs to benefit fully from the activities on offer. Parents and carers are consulted about their children's needs to ensure they are cared for very well.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are confident, speak their minds freely and are wonderfully lively and boisterous at times, but they consistently show positive attitudes, good humour and tolerance towards staff and each other. They respect their boundaries and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. For example, they demonstrate their knowledge of physical boundaries and know why they should not access some areas of the school without supervision.

Children benefit from excellent relationships between staff and their parents and carers. Clear information is gathered from parents, which enables staff to provide appropriate care and this ensures that children feel secure and settled. Policies and procedures are shared effectively

with parents and carers and they receive very good information, such as a parents' brochure, which keeps them informed about the routines and activities. A prominent whiteboard is updated daily so parents know about any changes. Parents and carers are asked to contribute their ideas and opinions through regular questionnaires and have daily opportunities to discuss their children's welfare with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Rigorous recruitment procedures ensure staff are safe and suitable and have the appropriate knowledge and skills to work with children. Initial meetings at the start of the play scheme help staff to develop good team work and enable them to learn about the premises and routines. Induction is comprehensive and as a result all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Children's needs are met well by good adult to child ratios and they benefit from the individual care and attention offered by the key worker system. Consistency of care is given a high priority and children are mostly cared for by the same adults so they develop sound relationships.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of time, space and resources and they play happily and confidently in the well prepared environment. Staff work well together as a team and are enthusiastic about ensuring that positive outcomes for children are promoted. Overall children's needs are met. All required documentation is in place, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being. Policies and procedures are regularly updated so they remain relevant and comply with legislation.

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the first inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- improve the organisation of snack times to promote good eating habits
- improve the fire safety procedure to ensure children can be accounted for effectively.

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