

Barracudas Activity Camp

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY330767
Inspection date	07 August 2007
Inspector	Melanie Eastwell
Setting Address	The Dame Alice Harpur School, Cardington Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK42 0BX
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Registered person	Young World Leisure Group Limited
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?

Barracuda's Activity Camp was registered in 2007. It is one of 27 activity camps run by the Young World Leisure Group Limited and operates from rooms and facilities within Dame Alice Harpur School in Bedford. A maximum of 200 children may attend at any one time. The activity camp is open from 08:00 to 18:00 during specific weeks of the school holidays. There are currently 86 children from four to 12 years on roll. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. Barracuda's currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The activity camp employs 11 members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate qualifications and three are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's continued good health is promoted because the staff follow effective procedures to maintain a healthy environment. The setting is well maintained and cleaned regularly. Children are learning about the importance of maintaining effective personal hygiene because the staff

remind them to wash their hands before they eat and after using the toilet. Children wash the fruit they purchase at break times in a clean bucket of water before they eat it. Children who have accidents receive efficient, prompt treatment from staff who are sensitive and reassuring. A number of staff hold appropriate first aid certificates and a well stocked first aid kit is available in the office along with a bed and bean bag for the children to sit on while receiving treatment. The first aid trained staff carry small first aid kits in bags around their waist which ensures that treatment can be given as required during outdoor activities on the playing fields.

Children enjoy packed lunches provided by their parents. They have incentives such as a weekly certificate for the 'Healthiest Lunchbox' to bring in a variety of healthy foods. Parents receive written information encouraging them to provide a freeze block or frozen drink in their children's lunch boxes to ensure the food stays fresh until lunchtime. Children enjoy sitting together to eat in the dining hall and are supervised by staff which ensures that no food is shared. Staff are aware of any allergies or medical conditions the children have to make sure their individual needs can be met. Children do not become thirsty because they have access to bottles of water and cups in their base rooms and staff encourage them to take their own drinks with them for the organised activity sessions. Children's physical skills are promoted through the wide range of activities and team games provided at the setting.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given high priority by the staff who are vigilant in their supervision both when moving around the setting and during activities. Children are supervised at all times, they move around the building and grounds in groups with the staff. Some staff have completed 'Multi Activity Training' which covers activities such as archery, motor sport and trampoline and these staff always supervise such activities. Children stay safe in the swimming pool because a qualified life guard is present during every swimming session and children's confidence in the water is assessed. They are provided with appropriate floats and arm bands. Staff ensure that the children only have access to the shallow end of the pool by fixing a rope across to provide them with a visual barrier. Children have access to a good variety of specialised sports equipment for the activities and a range of art and craft materials, books and games in their base rooms. All equipment is safe, suitable and well maintained by the staff. Children are aware of the emergency evacuation procedures and practise these twice each week, once during a site tour and once unannounced later in the week. Children benefit from the staff's effective understanding of risk and respond to their instructions and demonstrations of how to wear the safety gear such as knee and elbow pads and arm guards and how to use equipment such as the aqua slide. This ensures that safe practices are maintained.

Children's welfare is safeguarded effectively because the staff understand the importance of reporting and recording all child protection concerns and of maintaining confidentiality. They are aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines and procedures and ensure these are followed if concerns are raised.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy attending and eagerly take part in the wide range of activities that are available to them. They have opportunities to try new experiences such as the aqua slide and archery as well as swimming, trampoline and team games. The variety of activities promotes children's

growing self-esteem and confidence and the staff are enthusiastic and energetic in the games. For example, during a game of dodge ball the member of staff calls the children to ask if they are ready to play. The children respond by shouting 'yes', the member of staff encourages them further by saying she cannot hear them to which the response from the children is laughter and even louder shouts of 'yes' before she gets the game under way. Staff recognise the children's efforts and achievements and give them plenty of praise and encouragement. Children benefit from the consistent members of staff who stay with their group for at least a week, this helps the children build up trust and get to know them which develops a sense of belonging in the setting.

Children make choices wherever possible about the activities, they often split into two smaller groups and children who do not enjoy particular activities are able to sit out and are provided with a drawing activity. The activities available are planned to be suitable for the children attending and a good balance is reached between physical activity and quiet times within the base rooms or art and craft room where children can be creative and prepare for talent shows by making posters or read and play games such as dominoes. Children have opportunities to draw and colour in the base rooms and many complete pictures of their friends and activities they have taken part in which are displayed on the walls for the duration of the summer camp. This demonstrates that children's work is valued and in turn promotes their self-confidence. Children speak enthusiastically and positively about the activities they enjoy and the new friends they make while at Barracuda's.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children generally get on well and co-operate effectively during the activities. They understand the boundaries that are in place for safety and generally listen to the staff's requests and instructions. Children benefit from the staff's consistent, fair approach because they take time to listen and explain why certain behaviour is unacceptable and to find out what may have gone wrong when children become upset. Staff remain calm and polite when speaking to the children and request that they are polite to each other. Generally children have their individual needs met. However, the way staff are deployed sometimes hinders their ability to manage children's individual needs. For example, a member of staff working alone with a small group of children during activities such as archery or tennis, the location of which are some way from the main building, is unable to manage children's individual needs for support such as going to the toilet. This deployment causes unnecessary disruption and distress to children.

Children are supervised at all times which enables them to feel confident to request assistance from staff to open food at lunchtimes and to request items they need in the base rooms. Children enjoy the choices that are available to them and benefit from the staff's involvement and sense of fun. For example, they make jokes, laugh together and have great fun in soaking the member of staff by vigorously splashing her as soon as she enters the swimming pool with them. Children build relationships with the staff and enjoy being with them. They benefit from the positive relationships that are in place between the staff and their parents. All parents and children are greeted when they arrive and are supervised carefully as they leave. Staff make themselves available to talk to parents and ensure that any general information or accident forms which need to be signed are recorded on a board which is displayed outside the doors during collection times to alert the parents. They receive written information about the setting before their children attend. A suitable system is in place to record any complaints which may arise from parents relating to the National Standards.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall children's needs are met. They generally enjoy attending and benefit from the wide range of activities and experiences that are available to them. Children's safety and welfare is given high regard by the staff and the management team work efficiently together. They ensure that children's attendance is recorded and any messages are passed on to the base room staff. Both the manager and assistant manager are supernumerary which allows them to cover for staff breaks or during activities requiring a higher ratio. Appropriate systems are in place to check the suitability of staff employed by Barracuda's. However, the company is required to provide evidence to demonstrate that their training and induction processes ensure that staff are trained in specific areas such as age- appropriate activities, behaviour management and safeguarding children. This ensures that the manager's qualifications, knowledge and experience are relevant and suitable for the ages of children attending.

All the required documentation, parental consents, policies and procedures are in place. The staff and manager's daily activity with the children is clearly reflected in the documentation and all staff understand the importance of sharing relevant information with the manager or assistant manager without delay. Staff are provided with copies of the policies and procedures along with a wide range of information showing ideas of games to engage the children between the activities or while they wait their turn. This ensures that children are occupied throughout their time at the setting.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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):

- ensure that staff are deployed so that children's individual needs can be met effectively

- provide an action plan to demonstrate the suitability of managers and staff through the internal training and induction procedures.

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