

The Old Quarry Adventure Playground

Inspection report for early years provision

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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?

The Old Quarry Adventure Playground has been registered since 1998. It is an open access facility, which is situated in Knottingley, West Yorkshire. The provision is owned and managed by a voluntary committee. The premises consists of a large enclosed outdoor adventure play area with swings, slide, dens and a wide range of other climbing apparatus. Indoor facilities consist of a single story building with main hall, kitchen, office storage and toilets.

The adventure playground opens three days each week on Monday, Thursday and Friday. Session times are currently from 15.30 until 17.30. The open access scheme supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and there are currently no children attending who speak English as an additional language. The provision is registered for 40 children and there are currently 36 children aged under eight years on roll, however, children over the age of eight also attend the setting. Due to the open access nature of this facility the children can arrive and leave the setting at will; they do not need to be accompanied by an adult.

There are four members of staff who regularly work with the children and over half of the staff team hold an appropriate qualification at level 3 or above.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises and the equipment are clean and staff ensure that the children attending the setting follow the policies and procedures, which are designed to prevent the spread of infection. For example, the lavatories are clean, hand washing facilities are readily available and the large sandpit is covered to avoid any incidents of contamination. There are clear systems of recording any accidents that occur on the premises and most staff have attended first aid training, consequently, the children's good health and safety is maintained appropriately.

Fresh drinking water is available to the children at all times; staff recognise the importance of this especially when the children are involved in high levels of physical activities. The children are not provided with food as part of the service but they are able to purchase a range of snacks from the tuck shop. However, the selection of snacks are mostly crisps and sweets, there are few healthy alternatives.

The children using the adventure playground benefit from accessing a wide variety of physical activities that enhance their levels of fitness and assist them to gain control over their bodies. The broad range of stimuli helps the children to improve their coordination and ability to climb, balance, swing and slide. The children are able to successfully negotiate space, avoid obstacles and manage their speed as they move freely around the playground. They are extremely energetic and thoroughly enjoy the opportunities that they have to explore their surroundings.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children have use of a large outdoor adventure playground and the adjacent community centre. The children freely flow between the outdoor play space and indoor play areas, where they have access to a range of arts and craft activities along with a designated space for quiet times and resting. The premises are maintained in a good state of repair and the children have some ownership of the environment because their art work is prominently displayed.

The safety and welfare of children is given a high priority within the adventure playground. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure that the children are supervised and monitored at all times. Robust risk assessments are completed monthly and action plans with timescales identify any measures to be taken. Staff have a good understanding of the health and safety requirements for the adventure playground. For instance, daily safety checks of the premises and the equipment are completed, however, the selection of large logs that children use to build are not stacked securely at all times. Fire safety procedures are good; equipment is frequently serviced and fire drills are practised frequently and recorded and evaluated, as a result the children remain safe.

Children are safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection. All staff are vetted and approved and they have frequent opportunities to update their skills and knowledge in this area by attending training. Staff are prepared to report any child protection concerns quickly because contact numbers for the local investigating agencies are recorded and stored on file. In addition, they are supported by a robust policy, which contains all of the necessary information, such as what to do if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children attending the setting have many opportunities to enjoy practical activities using natural materials along with a range of exciting climbing apparatus, which enables them to practise and refine their physical skills. The children are supported by staff to take low level risks as they use resources that stimulate their curiosity and offer different degrees of challenge. Staff work closely with the children; they provide encouragement and introduce some new activities into the adventure playground, for example, the children happily cooperate with staff to erect a tree swing. This is an extremely enjoyable activity for the children who demonstrate an ability to work together and follow the instructions and the safety precautions implemented by the vigilant staff.

The children have a strong sense of purpose and they feel secure to work with adults and other children to explore and experiment with ideas and activities. The children enjoy participating in a range of well planned creative activities, which are interesting and suitable to address a wide range of interests and needs. For instance, the children are involved in painting, printing, making jewellery and decorating trinket boxes. In addition, the children are supported to plan for popular festivals by dressing-up, carving pumpkins and using their imagination and creative skills to design pieces of art work and paint pictures. They show great pride in what they make and items are displayed around the provision to celebrate their achievements.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Members of staff work closely with the children and provide a consistent approach to managing any challenging and difficult behaviour. The children are encouraged to conform to the rules; these rules are devised in consultation with the children and displayed for all to see. The children are encouraged to recognise the needs of their friends and the older children have a caring approach to the needs of some of the younger ones. Similarly, they are able to share the equipment and there are some very positive examples of children cooperating with each other and taking turns.

The activities and resources are not gender stereotyped and some project work is completed to help children understand the cultures of other children around the world. Provision is made for children with learning difficulties and disabilities because the staff operate an inclusive provision and support all children as appropriate to their individual needs.

Members of staff are keen to ensure that parents remain informed of any issues affecting the care of the children including the operation of the setting. They have produced policies and procedures, which parents are free to access and legal information, such as the certificate of registration and the insurance details are openly displayed. Additionally, staff ensure that they display the contact details of the regulator and they have produced a comprehensive complaints procedure. Parents are welcomed into the setting and greeted warmly by the staff who are willing to share information and offer feedback about the children's time in the adventure playground.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The premises are suitably organised to promote children's safety and the staff team are committed to the welfare of the children. They skilfully interact with the children and provide a good variety of play experiences and opportunities to children to explore within safe surroundings. Vigorous safety checks and risk assessments are documented and evaluated in order to maintain the safety of the children. Good systems are in place to recruit and complete the required background checks on staff, consequently the children are safeguarded.

The systems for maintaining the required records relating to children who attend the setting and their parents contact details exceed regulatory requirements and are meticulously organised. In addition, the systems used to visitors to the setting, accidents and incidents successfully meet national requirements. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004, Ofsted has received two complaints about the provider. Both complaints involve the failure to notify Ofsted of a significant event. The provider took action to ensure that systems were put into place to notify the regulator of all issues affecting the service. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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):

- increase children's access to healthy food types
- ensure that the logs situated in the adventure playground are safely stacked.

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