

St Chad's Out of School Care

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY240122
Inspection date	04 April 2007
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Registered person	St Chad's Community Project
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 Chad's Out of School Club was registered in 2002. It is part of St Chad's Community Project, a voluntary organisation which provides full day care and crèche facilities as well as out of school care. It is located in Bensham, Gateshead and is close to other facilities including local schools and nurseries. A maximum of 50 children may attend at any one time. Children are based in two play rooms and they occasionally use the sports hall for group activities. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The club opens all year round, Monday to Friday. Opening hours are 08.00 to 09.00 and 15.00 to 18.00 in term time. In holidays the club operates from 08.00 to 18.00. Children who attend live and go to schools in the local and surrounding communities. There are currently 150 children on roll. The club supports children with disabilities and learning difficulties.

The out of school club employs nine members of staff. Six of these work directly with the children at all times, with the remaining staff group on site to offer additional support when needed. All staff hold appropriate qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Worthwhile and interesting activities offer children good opportunities to learn about nutrition and its effect on their health. For example, they study and talk about a range of food and think about whether it is high, low or medium risk. This helps the children to understand the importance of making healthy choices. At snack times the children eat packed lunches which they bring from home. Sitting together during this time encourages the development of good social skills and lets the children see how enjoyable mealtimes can be.

Effective routines promote good personal hygiene, for instance, before eating, the children automatically wash their hands. This, alongside sensible arrangements for sick children, minimises the spread of infections and common illnesses. Priority is given to the children's dental health. Children brush their teeth at the out of school club if their parents request that this takes place and there are regular visits from dentists, who talk to the children about related issues. This raises the children's awareness of oral hygiene.

Energetic team games, such as hockey, netball or football, offer the children excellent opportunities to be active. Vigorous activities like these let the children see that exercise is fun, and boost their fitness and stamina levels. The ready availability of popular pieces of equipment, such as hoops and skateboards, encourages the development of good hand-eye coordination and balance.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move easily and safely in the very well organised, well maintained and well lit setting. Thorough daily risk assessments minimise the chance of accidents indoors and out, external doors remain locked for the duration of the sessions and visitors are logged. These arrangements keep the children safe during the time that they spend at the setting and monitor the people that the children come into contact with. Regular fire drills take place. These equip children with the knowledge they need to cope with an emergency.

An excellent range of developmentally appropriate, good quality toys and resources helps the children to make progress in all areas of their development. Toys are stored in a way that allows children easy access, which encourages them to make choices and exercises their initiative. Ongoing cleaning and checking ensures that items are hygienic and safe for the children to use.

Very well thought out arrangements keep the children safe as they are escorted to and from school. For example, pre-planned routes, outlined in clear written policies, stipulate staffing ratios and the use of pedestrian crossings. En route to and from school, the children discuss important subjects, such as road safety and 'stranger danger'. This, alongside staff's sound understanding of child protection issues, helps to protect the children from dangerous situations and people.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Outstanding and unusual activities keep the children motivated and interested. For example, they make superb papier-mache models, which familiarises them with size and proportion. They sculpt soap and engrave glass. This enables the children to express their creativity and to experiment with form and design. All of the children, but especially those with specific needs, love to use 'Lulu', a sensory centre which stimulates the children's senses and helps them to relax and calm down.

Children have very good opportunities to take part in reflective activities. They write about private thoughts and feelings, which enables them to explore their emotions. An excellent range of books encourages the children to develop a love of reading. Several texts, such as 'My Parents' Divorce' and 'Moving House', deal with sensitive issues and help to reduce the trauma that many children experience at times like these.

Excellent relationships exist between children and staff. The children receive the staff's complete attention and benefit from their good guidance. Consequently, although they are lively, the children are fully engaged and engrossed in their chosen activity. The children have good opportunities to make suggestions, such as when they help staff to plan activities. This gives children confidence in their own opinions and fosters a sense of belonging.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children have excellent opportunities to learn about difference. For example, they play alongside children with differing physical and cognitive abilities and with children who come from differing cultural and ethnic backgrounds. They celebrate a wide range of festivals including Easter, Purim and Chinese New Year, which increases their knowledge and understanding of the world. All the children have equal access to the full range of equipment and activities available. These factors encourage the development of positive views of equality and diversity.

Excellent strategies are used to help children behave acceptably. For example, they follow clear and appropriate house rules, which insist on 'no bullying' and encourage children to 'be helpful and kind'. Staff are particularly good at reinforcing boundaries. Children are asked discreetly to consider the effect of their actions on others. This helps the children to understand right from wrong and teaches them that their actions have consequences.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Daily discussions, a dedicated notice board, regular newsletters and an annual report keep parents fully informed about their children's experiences and about the latest developments within the setting. Parents whose children have specific needs are invited to participate in relevant training courses, along with key staff, so that together they are able to meet the children's needs as fully as possible. Parents have highly positive views of the staff and the service that they provide. They describe staff as 'friendly, helpful and trustworthy'. As well as this, they think that their children have benefited a lot from their attendance at the club.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Records are very well organised and readily available. They are stored securely on site to protect confidentiality and are reviewed regularly to keep information up to date and relevant. All written parental consents are in place. However, the wording of the consent relating to emergency medical treatment is misleading and too restricting. Policies and procedures are excellent. They are clear, easy to understand and provide an accurate reflection of what actually happens in practice. The registration certificate is displayed prominently.

Staff are well established and work very well as a team. They have a sound understanding of registered numbers and the importance of never exceeding these. All staff hold appropriate qualifications and participate in ongoing training. Recent courses include child protection and health and safety at work.

Staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. As a result the group operates smoothly and efficiently on a day to day basis. Regular staff meetings and appraisals give staff the opportunity to have influence over what happens in the club and to have a say in their own professional development. Staff put children at the heart of what they do and work hard to ensure that the children enjoy their time at the out of school club.

The children do enjoy the club. They say that it is good, and identify the range of activities available and playing with their friends as the things that they like most about attending.

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 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 that written parental consent is in place allowing staff to seek any emergency medical advice or treatment.

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