

Timbuktu Adventure Playground

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY222399
Inspection date	08 August 2007
Inspector	Maggie Thorp
Setting Address	Grenville Road, Hornsey, London, N19 4EJ
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Registered person	Timbuktu Adventure Playground
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Timbuktu adventure playground was registered in 2002. It is run by a management committee and is a community play project in the Tollington Ward area offering an open access service for children in the local community. The premises consists of a purpose built building with a playroom, quiet room, toilets, kitchen and office. Outdoors there are two play areas, an adventure playground and an area for ball games.

Timbuktu is registered to care for 25 children aged five years to eight years after school and during school holidays. There are currently approximately 45 children under eight on roll attending for a variety of sessions. Some children speak English as an additional language. Some children attending have learning difficulties and or disabilities. The opening hours after school are Tuesday and Wednesday 16:00 to 19:30; Thursday and Friday 16:00 to 18:30 and Saturday 12:00 to 17:30 hours. They are closed on Mondays. The opening hours of the holiday play scheme are 08:30 to 17:30 and on Fridays 08:30 to 16:30. The play project is also available for children aged eight to 14 years.

Timbuktu has a total of seven staff including the senior play leader of which four are qualified. The group receive advice and support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a generally clean environment. The toilets and rooms children use are cleaned daily but soap is not always replaced in the toilets so children can wash their hands properly. Children are encouraged to learn about how to keep healthy. They recently took part in a healthy eating project for which they got certificates.

The systems in place for children who have accidents or who need medicines are only partly effective. Children's medicines are well organised in plastic packs and are readily available should they be needed. Careful records are kept of accidents and parents' consent is obtained for children to receive medical treatment in an emergency. The first aid box is well stocked and there are two first aid qualified people on the staff. However, a first aid qualified person is not always on duty to ensure children who are hurt receive the appropriate care.

Children bring packed lunches. They eat together in friendship groups and sit comfortably at tables and chat to each other as they eat. Lunch boxes are kept on ice packs to help them stay cool until lunch time. Breakfast is served to children arriving early. They enjoy toast and cereals. Children help themselves to drinks of water from the kitchen whenever they are thirsty.

Children enjoy the many opportunities for exercise and vigorous play. They play enthusiastically on the large climbing equipment on one side of their premises. They leap on to rope swings, climb ladders and clamber across the walkways. Other children shovel and wheel the new delivery of sand to fill the sand pit, steering the wheel barrows very competently. Some children play ball games of rounders, cricket and football in the other outdoor play area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are not protected by staff as staff who are not checked are sometimes left alone with children. This is a regulation. Their safety is also compromised by comprehensive checks not being made on all staff to ensure they are suitable. This is a regulation. This open access play scheme has agreed to ensure some children stay on the premises until collected but registration system does not ensure staff are aware of which children are present and that they have responsibility for and visitors are not recorded. This is a regulation. Some children leave the premises for example, to visit the shop this is not recorded nor whether parents have given consent for this.

Some safety measures are in place. Staff do daily checks and any concerns are brought to the staff meeting each morning. Fire fighting equipment is maintained and emergency evacuation practices are carried out approximately three times a year. There is one person on the gate to supervise who comes and goes and to remind children to sign in. The group have a pond and wooden slats are in place to prevent children falling in. Staff are clear about what to do if they have concerns about a child.

Children have sufficient space indoors for play and children's artwork and photographs are displayed to create a child friendly environment. However, space for children to relax in comfort is limited. There is one adequately maintained indoor playroom but the other room for quiet games is not currently open and there are no floor cushions or soft seating for children to use.

Children have lots to do outdoors and really enjoy using the outdoor adventure play equipment which provides children with exciting and challenging play. However, they have a limited range of accessible play resources to choose from indoors. Sometimes only the television, a construction game, table football and the junk modelling area is obviously available for children and some find it hard to find an activity they enjoy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy the outdoor activities provided and they describe some of the indoor activities as fun. Children talk of enjoying art activities in the work shop area, they paint and make models out of recycled materials. However, the lack of available play materials indoors reduces children's wider choice and enjoyment. Children enjoy the wide variety of outings organised each week including horse riding and trips to the seaside.

Staff do not always maintain a good balance between supervision and play with children. Staff are often spread around the site supervising but much less time is spent actually playing with children, so some quieter children just sit on their own or watch television.

Staff plan an adult led activity morning and afternoon during the holidays. Some interesting activities are organised for children including jewellery making, wax sculpting and tie dying. However, some activities are not very stimulating or challenging for example, sticking torn coloured paper on cut out shapes of card. Moreover, some planned activities do not take place because the resources have not been obtained in time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Many children are happy and active at the play scheme, however this is less so for quieter less confident children. There is no one specifically responsible for the younger children so some younger children drift between activities and sit and watch others. Staff do not always notice this and encourage those children to take part.

Children have opportunities to explore their own and others' cultures and boys and girls are encouraged to participate in all activities. Children made an awareness poster of pictures and text that children had drawn and written showing different cultures. Staff organise barbeques and encourage parents to send food from different cultures. Boys and girls both enjoy doing art activities and participating in lively games together.

Many children with learning difficulties and disabilities are accepted, helped and included. Parents are consulted about their needs and up dated on how they are managing at the play scheme. However, time is not always taken to ensure that some children with such needs and who want to attend can be admitted.

Children are well behaved. They co-operate with staff and relate well to each other. Staff are clear with children about the behaviour expected of them and children sign a code of conduct agreement. However, how children's behaviour is managed is not always consistent and some staff do not ensure the sanction for not behaving is proportionate to the wrong done.

Children benefit from the partnership between parents and the staff. Parents are given information about the group and information is obtained from them about their child. Parental

consents are obtained for outings and medical treatment so that staff can meet children's individual needs. Parents chat to staff and they get involved by being part of the management committee.

However, clear information about parents' wishes is not always obtained to ensure children's well being. This is an open access scheme but some parents do not want their children to leave the site unaccompanied. Staff agree to this but there is no clear written information obtained from parents about which children this applies to as a reference point for staff. Therefore staff cannot be sure that they are respecting parents' wishes and ensuring children's safety.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The organisation of how staff are checked and deployed does not fully safeguard children. Adults who are not checked are sometimes on their own with children and senior staff are not clear about who is checked. This is a regulation. In addition, a comprehensive checking system is not in place to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. This is a regulation. Children are cared for by a sufficient level of qualified staff and the correct staff child ratios are maintained. However, the organisation of staff rotas does not ensure there is a qualified first aid person always on duty or on outings. Changes have been made to those who make up the registered person, that is the management committee, and the person in charge has changed from two co-leaders to one leader but the regulator has not been informed so that their suitability can be assessed. This is a regulation.

The registration system does not include recording the times children are present so staff do not know which children are on the premises and visitors are not recorded. This is a regulation. The setting is an open access play scheme but staff have agreed to ensure certain young children do not leave without their parents or carers. The group use a signing in book but this shows one number of children being present, the dinner register shows another amount and a head count reveals another number. In the event of an emergency evacuation or need for a clear record of who was in contact with children at a particular time this method of record keeping does not ensure children are accounted for and protected. The provision does not meet the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection both of the recommendations made have been implemented effectively, one regarding the level of qualified staff and one about staff obtaining parental consent. Children are cared for by a satisfactory level of qualified staff now as three of the six staff including the manager have appropriate qualifications. Children's health is protected by there being written consent from parents on file for children to be given medical treatment in an emergency.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that any person who has not been checked is never left alone with children
- develop an effective registration system for recording the times children and adults are on the premises
- notify Ofsted of changes to the registered person
- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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