

Laser Summer Camp

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	105875
Inspection date	01 August 2007
Inspector	Carol Cox

Setting Address	Victoria Park Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4NS
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Registered person	Laser Summer Camp
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Type of inspection	Childcare
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Type of care	Out of School care
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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?

Laser Camp was registered in 1996 and operates from Exeter School, Exeter, Devon. The camp has full use of school facilities including the swimming pool and large secure grounds. A maximum of 200 children may attend the camp at any one time. The camp is open from 09:00 to 16:30 each weekday for four weeks during the summer holidays and for mini-camps during each half term. Before and after camp care is also available.

There are currently 279 children aged from three to seven years on roll. Children are organised in age groups and are offered a varied programme of activities. The camp has experience of supporting children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The camp employs approximately 55 members of staff each week. Of these, many hold child care, specialist sports or education qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a healthy environment where they participate in a wide range of physical activities. They enjoy fresh air and a sensible balance of energetic activities and rest. For example, all children spend time in the outdoor swimming pool everyday. Children learn about the effect exercise has on their bodies and staff encourage them to recognise bodily needs and how to address them. For example, on a hot day staff make sure all children take regular drinks of water, wear sun cream and put on hats. Younger children are encouraged to take rests and group leaders plan for quiet sessions during the day. Children are protected from spread of infection through sensible policies to exclude children when they are ill.

Staff have a good knowledge of how to safely administer first aid and medication when required and all records are clearly detailed and shared with parents. Medication is sometimes stored in containers other than original packaging, this could present a risk to children. Children are encouraged to bring healthy lunches, however, arrangements for the storage of lunch boxes are not ideal and some are stored in hot rooms. Staff sit with children at lunch times and all enjoy a sociable occasion.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe through clear procedures, for example, parents sign their children in on arrival and when collecting. There is a system in place should parents not be able to collect children, however, this is not yet fully secure. All visitors are required to provide identity and are recorded in the visitors' book. Children are never left with staff who have not been vetted and staff are well trained to recognise risks. All activities are very well supported, for example, there are always two members of staff with full lifeguard qualifications on duty whenever children use the swimming pool, in addition to their own group leaders. However, although staff ratios are not always maintained as children move from one activity to another, group leaders are always in contact with additional staff in the office who can quickly offer cover if needed.

Children access well maintained equipment which is appropriate to their stages of development and support activities on offer. Well qualified and experienced sports staff ensure equipment is set up safely and they help children learn safe practices, such as forming the 'laser chain' when moving from one area to another. This involves holding each other's hands with a member of staff in front and behind, in this way no-one can get lost!

Staff understand the correct procedures for reporting concerns and have the support of senior staff responsible for child protection. Although the child protection procedure is linked to that of Devon County Council it requires minor adjustments to give staff immediate and clear guidance. Children's safety is well safeguarded by staff's good knowledge of how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and action to take should they have concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident. They eagerly participate in an exciting programme of activities and are keen to try new sports and games. They learn about the importance of sportsmanship and fair play and are congratulated for their efforts as well as achievements. The very well qualified staff are young and enthusiastic and offer warm encouragement to children. Staff are sensitive to the needs of children and work flexibly within their programmes to ensure the needs of children are well met. For example, on a hot day staff adapt a drama activity to include a time for relaxation whilst listening to a story. Staff are experienced in using time well and always plan for quiet periods as appropriate.

Children enjoy the variety and challenge of the activities on offer and many attend for several years and remain enthusiastic about the camp. Some older children become helpers and progress to joining the staff group and use their personal experiences to enhance the relationships which they have with younger children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a sense of belonging and are proud to wear a club T-shirt or cap. They are encouraged to join in with activities and staff are able to make special arrangements or adaptations for children who have specific needs. Children are confident to ask for help because they know that staff will respond well to them. Children develop good relationships with each other and enjoy meeting up with friends and staff met during previous holiday schemes. Children respond positively to the high expectations of behaviour which are consistent through all groups; children behave extremely well and are engrossed in their activities. The behaviour management policy is made available to all staff at induction, however, training offered is not always consistent with the policy. For example, the policy mentions the use of restraint where appropriate, however, staff are not trained in the use of restraint.

Parents are given high quality written information about the scheme and meet with staff daily at collection time. There are details of the complaints procedure displayed for parents and a complaints record available, no complaints have been recorded. Parents are consulted at the end of each scheme and invited to evaluate the quality of provision. All comments are carefully considered and appropriate actions taken. For example, parents have objected to the availability of the tuck shop, as a result this has been discontinued. Parents are able to book individual coaching sessions for children and a bus service has recently been offered. The play scheme has a flexible approach and offers before and after camp care when needed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The scheme is well staffed by qualified and experienced people. Some staff do not have appropriate qualifications but the manager is encouraging them to complete play work courses before the beginning of the next scheme. Managers support staff with clear recruitment procedures and offer an induction programme before the start of each scheme. Children are organised in small groups based on age with a group leader assisted by monitors and supplemented by specialist activity staff. Staff based in the office offer immediate cover or support as it is needed, group leaders keep in contact via mobile phones. However, at times

groups do not meet their required ratios for short periods and may be at a distance from the main office.

All documentation and records are maintained and stored securely, there are clear systems in place to share records in confidence with parents. The registration system records the actual times of children's attendance but does not clearly show the date or names of staff caring for children at any one time, although this information can be accessed through staff rotas. There is a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the scheme detailed in parents' information packs. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to address the following recommendations: to devise and implement a policy about the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious and make sure parents are aware of it; to encourage children to eat healthy meals and snacks; update accident records to include parents' signatures; to update the child protection policy to include procedures to be followed if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff; and to update records of significant issues to include parents' signatures. The provider has ensured that all policies are updated in line with current guidance and are shared with parents. All records include parents' signatures and parents have been given clear information about healthy eating. Children are encouraged to drink regularly during hot weather and between exercise periods and their lunch boxes show a good awareness of healthy eating.

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 staffing ratios are maintained at all times to meet children's needs
- devise a system to ensure that only authorised people may collect children
- ensure that registers clearly identify the names of adults caring for children

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