

Smarties

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 316787 |
| Inspection date | 22 October 2007 |
| Inspector | (Kate) Kathryn, Jane Ryder |
| Setting Address | St. Margarets C of E Primary School, Heywood Road, Prestwich, Manchester, Lancashire, M25 2BW |
| Telephone number | 0161 773 1432 or 07779 966357 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Smarties |
| 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Smarties Out of School Club opened in 1998 and is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from the large hall and library in St Margaret's Primary School and there is a safe and secure playground and playing fields for outdoor play. The setting is situated in Prestwich, a suburb of Bury. The club offers places to children who are pupils of St Margaret's School and it opens term time only from 08:00 to 09:00 and 15:30 to 17:30.

A maximum of 56 children may attend the club at any one time. There are currently 96 children between the ages of three to eight years on roll although children up to eleven years may attend.

There is a staff team of nine, six of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification. The majority of staff also work within the school as special support assistants, lunch time organisers or classroom assistants. The group are members of Kids Club Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of good personal health and hygiene issues through the well established daily routines. They know, for example, that as they leave their classrooms, en-route to the after school club they must wash their hands in preparation for the evening snack. Staff frequently remind children to wash their hands as they visit the bathroom independently. There are clear guidelines for protecting children from infection and sick children are comforted in a quiet area until their parent arrives. Children's health and safety is well promoted by a staff team with up to date first aid certificates and there is always at least three first aiders on duty at each session. Good standards of hygiene are maintained through the school's caretaker service and staff carrying out regular tasks, such as cleaning tables with anti-bacterial wipes.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for physical exercise. They have continuous access to the outdoor area and use a variety of equipment, for example, balls, bean bags, hoops and walking stilts. All children have opportunities to use the fixed play equipment in the school grounds, enabling them to develop balancing and climbing skills. Children particularly enjoy the wooded area, where they run around and crouch under the hanging branches. This contributes to children's general well-being and helps develop physical skills.

Children benefit from being provided with a variety of healthy snacks, such as sandwiches, bread products, such as toast and crumpets and fruit. They enjoy the choice of apples, oranges and melon. Snacks comply with special dietary requirements to ensure children remain healthy. Children are provided with a drink during snack time and are able to refresh themselves at other times from the water drinking fountains. Snack times are social events where children choose who they want to sit with.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a child centred play environment which is safe and secure. It provides ample space, enabling children to play and eat in comfort. Staff organise the two play areas very well, allowing children to move independently and safely. The many displays of children's art work raises their self-esteem and provides them with a strong sense of belonging. Routine risk assessments are frequently carried out and as a result, potential hazards are identified and effectively minimised. Children experience regular fire drills, ensuring that they become familiar with the evacuation procedures of the building. Good standards of staff deployment ensure children are kept safe, particularly outdoors where staff have a large area to supervise.

Children benefit from a broad range of resources and equipment which reflects their age and interests. Staff set out a very wide selection of activities and toys which children are able to make independent selections from. Children are involved in tidying away play activities and there is sufficient storage space for resources. Play materials are regularly washed, resulting in clean, hygienic toys for children to play with.

Children are well protected with regard to child protection. The manager has attended training and consequently has developed her knowledge about child protection issues. She cascades

information to the staff team, during staff meetings, ensuring that they have up to date knowledge related to safeguarding children's welfare appropriately.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff identify a different interest topic every six weeks and plan weekly activities to reflect the theme. For example, the current focus is all about bugs and a broad range of activities has been planned around mini beasts. Children have been busily engaged in making different insects using a wide range of media, including paint, collage and edible materials. They have constructed insects using model magic material, made butterfly pictures and ladybirds. Staff interact positively with the children, giving good levels of care and attention. They question children to make them think, for instance, they ask children what a caterpillar will turn into and what would they find in a beehive.

Children are happy and relaxed on arrival. They approach the play activities with enthusiasm, making independent choices from the wide selection of activities and equipment that staff set out. Children spend their time purposefully and enjoy the opportunities for creative activities. They concentrate for long periods of time making cake spiders, carefully constructing a body and adding legs. They enjoy the opportunity of free expression as they create a spiders face with coloured icing tubes. Other children paint pictures and use a range of media to make collage pictures. Some focussed activities tend to be adult led and impede on children's natural creativity. Children often choose a friend to play games with. Younger children engage in role play and enjoy pretending to be different animals as they dress up.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have some opportunities to develop awareness about diversity issues through a variety of activities. They explore culture through the celebration of festivals and food tasting. For example, children enjoy the experience of having their hands painted with Mehendi patterns. Staff treat children with equal concern and respect their decisions about what they want to play with. This establishes a sense of security and fosters trusting relationships. Good systems are in place to care for children with learning difficulties or disabilities, with clear links to parents, key members of staff within school and other professionals.

Children are very well behaved and polite in response to the expectations of practitioners. Children learn to act responsibly as they take turns waiting for the electronic games and ask for permission to play outdoors and wait to be escorted indoors. The use of reward systems, such as star of the week positively reinforces good behaviour and children look forward to seeing their photograph displayed. Children with worries about the group or other children can share their concerns anonymously by writing them down and posting in the 'worry box'. Strong liaison between parents, teachers and outside professionals help staff support children with challenging behaviour. This consistency helps positive patterns of behaviour to develop.

Partnership with parents is appropriately fostered. Staff gather and share information through a variety of different ways. For example, individual information is recorded and reviewed annually to ensure staff are aware of any changes, informal discussion takes place regularly and newsletters are issued each term. However, the complaints procedure lacks all the required

details and the person in charge is unaware of the requirement to keep a complaints log. This is a breach of regulations.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from an environment which is welcoming and suitably organised to promote independence. Practitioners organise their time well and are actively involved in the activities. This enhances children's enjoyment and promotes their sense of achievement. Procedures for vetting are secure and all staff caring for children are cleared through the school. Adult visitors to the group are not left alone with children. The majority of staff have suitable childcare qualifications and are also employed by the school in other roles, such as classroom assistants or special support assistants.

Documentation is generally maintained in good order to promote children's welfare. Policies and procedures work in practice to ensure there are positive outcomes for children. The registration method clearly details the children present and the time that they leave but times are not recorded for children arriving late, who have stayed behind in school for choir practice or football for instance. The registration and public liability insurance certificates are prominently displayed.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the setting was required to clearly identify the procedures for uncollected children, add Ofsted's details to the complaints procedure and develop staff's knowledge about child protection issues and review the statement to reflect current legislation. The procedures for uncollected children does not wholly address the issues and as a result, parents remain unclear about the solution. The telephone number of Ofsted has been added to the complaints policy but it lacks the address. The child protection statement has been appropriately reviewed and staff have developed their understanding about child protection issues by attending training and cascading the information to the staff team. This action has improved children's safety.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- provide more opportunities for children to develop their own creativity and make their own creations
- improve knowledge of and develop a system for the recording of complaints, in line with regulations
- make sure the registration system clearly shows the time children arrive in the group.

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