

Acomb Out of School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY286437
Inspection date	16 August 2007
Inspector	Diane Lynn Turner
Setting Address	Acomb Primary School, West Bank, York, North Yorkshire, YO24 4ES
Telephone number	01904 798453
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Registered person	Acomb Out of School Club
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?

Acomb Out of School Club was registered in June 2004 and is run by a management committee. It operates from Acomb Primary School, which is situated on the outskirts of York. The club is based in the school hall. It also has use of the computer suite and the junior school classrooms if the hall is unavailable, and the school field and playground for outdoor play.

The setting is registered to care for 30 children at any one time and there are currently 150 on roll. Opening times are 07.45 to 08.45 and 15.00 to 18.00 Monday to Friday during term time, with a holiday club operating Monday to Friday during all school holiday periods from 07.45 to 18.00. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are welcome to attend.

There are four members of staff regularly working with the children. Of these, one has level 3 in play work, one has level 2 and is working towards level 3, and one is qualified to degree level in education and counselling. In addition, three students are employed in the school holidays. The club is currently working towards a recognised quality assurance award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy because staff follow effective practices which help to prevent the spread of infection. For example, they ensure tables are cleaned with anti-bacterial products before and after food is served and that the toilets are cleaned each day. There is a clear policy for the care of children who are ill, which is fully implemented when necessary. For example, if children feel unwell whilst at the club they are made comfortable and monitored by staff who contact their parent to collect them early if necessary. Children are fully aware of the need to implement good hygiene practices in their personal care. For example, they know they need to wash their hands after using the toilet, and they routinely use anti-bacterial gel to clean their hands before they eat and when on outings.

Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. For example, all staff are trained in first aid, the contents of the first aid box are checked regularly and prior parental consent is obtained for the use of plasters. Staff also ensure they find out about children's individual health needs and any dietary requirements before they start at the club. Detailed healthcare plans are then drawn up if required, in consultation with parents, to ensure these needs are met.

Children learn the importance of eating healthily. Staff discuss the importance of eating a balanced diet with the children and why particular food is good for them, which enables them to make informed choices. This is particularly evident as they help to draw up the monthly snack menu, when they request cheese and crackers, fruit, yogurts and more unusual items, such as raw broccoli and cauliflower with dips be included. They are offered a choice of drink with their snack and are able to access drinking water throughout the session as and when they become thirsty. Children sit together with staff to eat their meals, which offers them valuable opportunities to develop good social skills and manners.

Staff give high priority to supporting children in learning about the importance of physical exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. For example, they provide them with regular opportunities to use the outdoor area where they are able to play football, parachute games and organised team games. During the holiday playschemes they take part in more unusual and challenging activities. For example, photographs show them having lots of fun using a climbing wall and sliding down the grassy mound on the school field in the snow. In addition, children excitedly describe a recent outing to the Dome where they took part in swimming and ice skating activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall, children are cared for in a safe environment, which has good areas of space. Staff organise this well to provide both table-top and floor-play activities, and they offer a range of well-maintained toys and resources that are suitable for the age and stage of development of the children attending. Children are able to choose freely from the resources set out and can also request additional items they would like to play with.

Staff carry out regular risk assessments on the premises, both indoors and outside, and take appropriate measures in most areas. For example, they check the outdoor area before children go out and ensure electrical equipment is professionally tested on an annual basis so children can use equipment, such as the games console safely. Any outings are thoroughly risk assessed

and recorded in detail and there are two designated members of staff who have attended approved training courses to qualify them to drive a minibus. Staff do not, however, ensure unused electrical sockets are made inaccessible to the children or that the premises are kept secure at all times. For example, on the inspection visit the door to the hall was left open for ventilation, which means children could leave the area unsupervised.

Children understand about following safe practices. For example, they know they must tidy the toys away after use to prevent trips and falls and that they must ask staff before accessing the toilet so they know their whereabouts. Staff ensure the children understand the importance of wearing seatbelts when travelling in a vehicle and why they must wear a badge with the club's name and telephone number during outings. They also explain what the children should do if they become separated from the group at this time. Children are also familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures for the premises as they practise these on a regular basis.

Staff have a sound knowledge of child protection procedures. For example, the designated member of staff has a good understanding of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse, knows the club's prime concern is the welfare of the child and that confidentiality must be respected. All other staff are made fully aware of safeguarding children because this forms part of their induction and they are encouraged to attend further training. The club has clear procedures for the safe collection of children. For example, during the before and after school sessions staff collect and deliver the younger children to and from their classrooms and parents sign their children out on collection and record the time they leave.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the club and are keen to attend. For example, they enthusiastically talk about the activities they have been involved in, such as outings, and what aspects they have enjoyed in particular. Staff endeavour to make the club as different from school as possible and encourage the children to take ownership. For example, they discuss the programme of events with them and welcome their suggestions, particularly venues they would like to visit during the holiday playscheme. There are good settling-in procedures for children who are new to the club. For example, they are allocated a buddy who shows them round, encourages them to join in with the activities, and get to know the other children.

Staff provide a good range activities for all ages who attend. For example, the children enjoy a wide range of outings during the holiday sessions and are able to take part in interesting art and craft activities. They learn techniques, such as marbling, 'wax and scratch' and how to use modelling clay, and they thoroughly enjoy making their own bracelets and necklaces, when they show perseverance as they thread their chosen beads. They also make wooden animals from kits and have opportunities to plant and take care of seeds in the garden area and use the lavender which grows there to make various items.

During the inspection children were able choose freely from the activities available. For example, some chose to play quietly with small world toys or board games or rest in the book corner, whilst others used the games console and computer and joined in outdoor activities. The children have good relationships with all staff and it is very evident that they feel very comfortable in their care. They are all very well occupied and a very harmonious atmosphere is evident throughout the sessions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued as individuals. Staff work very closely with their parents and use discussion and detailed registration forms to find out as much as they can about the children before they start at the club. The registration form also includes a page for the children themselves to detail their interests, likes and dislikes. Children have good opportunities to learn about the wider world. For example, they learn about different cultures and festivals, discuss historical events, and have access to resources, such as dolls, books and small world toys that help raise their awareness of diversity. They learn about the local community as they visit the nearby park and enjoy many outings further afield. For example, photographs show them having lots of fun playing on the beach, observing the birds at Lotherton Hall and playing in the stream at Dalby forest. Children who use English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are very welcome to attend and are very well supported. The club has a designated member of staff with responsibility for this area, who has attended training, and all staff fully understand about adapting activities and working closely with parents to ensure the children's particular needs are met.

Staff develop very good relationships with the parents. They receive an informative prospectus when their child joins the club, which includes a number of policies and procedures for the service. Newsletters are sent out on a regular basis and parents are able to have copies of photographs showing the activities the children have been involved in. Staff make themselves available for discussion at the end of the session and friendly relationships and good communication are evident as staff discuss the children's day. Parents spoken to at the inspection were keen to express their satisfaction of the setting. From their comments it is evident they value the staff and that they are confident their children are safe and well cared for.

Children are effectively supported in learning to behave well. Staff are good role models for them to follow and children know what is acceptable in the club because they have helped to draw up the codes for working together. Staff have high expectations and encourage the children to take on responsibility. For example, the older ones have the opportunity to be junior leaders and organise particular activities. All children play very well together. They are polite, and help and support one another during activities. The atmosphere throughout the inspection visit was calm with no incidents of unacceptable behaviour observed.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well-organised environment where best use is made of the available space to maximise play opportunities. There are clear recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure children are cared for by suitable adults and for their induction. Staff are aware of their responsibilities. They work well together as a team and share any particular skills they possess. Their personal development is monitored through annual appraisals, which are also used to identify any training needs they may have.

Policies and procedures are in place, which cover all areas of the provision, but some lack detail. Staff are, however, in the process of reviewing and updating these. All the necessary documentation, which contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being is in place, such as child records, accident and attendance records. The system, however, for gaining prior written parent consent to administer medication is not clear. Documents are stored securely,

updated regularly and confidentiality is respected. The registration certificate is displayed and the conditions adhered to.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the club improve the information about the setting for parents, the programme of activities and the safety in relation to practising the emergency evacuation procedures.

The recommendations have been addressed successfully. The prospectus now includes detailed information about the operational procedures for the club, and statements regarding the complaints procedure, sick child policy and child protection policy. Staff now include children in the planning of activities to ensure these are of interest to them and they practise the emergency evacuation procedures with them on a regular basis to ensure they know what to do in the event of a fire. A detailed record is kept showing the time taken to evacuate and the children's responses.

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 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 the premises remain secure at all times and that any unused electrical sockets are made inaccessible to children
- improve the procedure for gaining written parental consent to administer medication.

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