

Camp Energy Harpenden

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 123627

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Inspector Suman Willis

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Registered person Leisure Connection Ltd.

Type of inspection Childcare

Type of care Full day care, Out of School care, Crèche

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 - enforcement action. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Camp Energy takes place at Harpenden Sports Centre, Harpenden and is managed by Leisure Connection Limited. It provides a crèche and a holiday playscheme. The children that attend come from Harpenden and the surrounding area. The crèche facility consists of a large playroom with a kitchen and toilets off it. Children have access to a small outside play area. The holiday playscheme has the use of the gym, two dance studios, the swimming pool and they also use the outside playing area.

The crèche is registered for 25 children aged under five years and is open Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 15:00 and 09:00 to 12:00 on a Saturday. The holiday playscheme is registered for 96 children aged between five and eight years and is open from 09:00 to 17:00 throughout the school summer holidays.

The inspection visit took place in the playscheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children participate in a wide range of sporting and physical games which effectively promote children's physical development. For example, children swim every morning, play in the park and take part in circle games in the afternoons. Therefore, children are developing their physical skills. There are no set areas for quiet activities and children sit in their small chosen groups in the main hall between activities and use this time to rest.

Policies and procedures are in place for the monitoring of children's health. A record of any accidents is appropriately shared with parents and parents are called out if the children are not feeling well. Permission to administer emergency aid and medication is obtained. Children learn to manage their basic hygiene as they are reminded to wash hands before meal and snack times. They independently take themselves to the toilet and are supervised for safety. Consequently, children stay healthy and free from infection.

Children's individual dietary needs are generally met because parents provide packed lunches. They are also given money to use in the vending machines during snack times should they wish to purchase snacks, such as crisps or chocolate bars, therefore, children's understanding of healthy eating is not promoted. Children have regular access to drinks and are reminded to help themselves to water.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are generally kept secure as visitors are signed in at the reception desk although this is for the whole centre and staff within the playscheme do not question visitors as to their reason for visit. The children are familiar with areas they use. They have access to a section of the large hall, two dance studios and the swimming pool. They are also taken to the playground within the park. Staff are generally well deployed to monitor children's safety and carry out regular head counts. However, risk assessments are not carried out specifically for the playscheme and areas, such as the playground, are not risk assessed. A fire drill, two weeks into the scheme, has not been conducted. Consequently, children's safety and security is not fully maintained and therefore children are at risk.

Children learn to keep themselves safe as they form lines when moving to different sites or halls, and when children are being grouped together staff tell the children to stay within certain boundaries. However, boundaries and how to move safely when using the playground are not explained before hand, so children are not familiar with the boundaries. Therefore, children are not clear of where the risk areas are, which puts them at risk. Children participate in a wide range of physical games and sports which are pre-planned and risk assessments on the equipment are carried out as part of the centre's procedures but not specifically for the playscheme. Children do not have access to table top activities, therefore, children do not have a choice between sporting or quiet creative activities.

Staff are given information on safeguarding children prior to the scheme starting and procedures for protecting children are in place. However, contact details for staff to refer to should the need arise have not been completed. Staff do not challenge adult visitors around children. Therefore not effectively protecting children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Children participate in a range of sporting activities and are engaged during the swimming activity. They enjoy playing freely in the playground and have access to other circle games using resources such as a parachute. All activities and play opportunities are organised the day before, but these do not include any imaginative play, table top activities, art and craft or board games. Resources to promote independent choices are not available. On occasions some children walk around aimlessly in the hall and are not engaged in activities. At certain times there is no activity or resources out for children to play with. Therefore, lack of resources and poor organisation of activities encourage children to display negative behaviour such as pushing boundaries and challenging staff. Most children have developed positive relationships with their peers and other adults and enjoy sharing information informally about their likes and dislikes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

All children are encouraged to participate in all activities and staff are at hand to offer support. Children confidently ask for staff to teach them how to use the swing when playing in the park. An equal opportunity policy is displayed in the hall, thus effectively shared with parents and staff. However, although all children are treated equally children do not have access to resources which promote positive images. Therefore, they have less opportunity to value and respect the differences in people and cultures. Staff demonstrate a positive attitude to working with children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children generally behave well and staff have a kind approach speaking softly and in a friendly manner. However, staff are not given guidance on dealing with children with behavioural difficulties and therefore, constantly refer to the manager. Parents are informed of children's negative behaviour, however this is not recorded and therefore, difficult to monitor. Therefore, children are developing a negative image of positive behaviour.

All information about the children's day is shared verbally between staff and parents. A complaints procedure and a comments box is kept in the reception area and this is used by the whole centre. Ofsted contact details are displayed in the reception area; this informs parents of the registering body, however this information has been out of date since April 2006. Consequently, parents are not fully informed of who to contact should they have any concerns.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

All staff have attended training prior to the playscheme starting and some have completed the National Vocational Qualification at level two. They are supervised by a member of staff who has completed a degree in early childhood studies. All staff are made aware of the group's procedure for safeguarding children, however, information is not up to date, and staff do not approach visitors to check their authorisation for being there. Consequently, children are not effectively protected. Although the group maintains a high ratio of staff to children, the group is poorly organised. Children are offered a limited range of activities which contributes to children being bored and staff struggle with ensuring that they do not push the boundaries; which impacts on their ability to take an active part in the setting. The group encourages all

staff to work with all children and they are allocated different groups on different days, this does not help to promote children's care, as they are not encouraged to develop a strong relationship with one main carer.

Children's care is compromised because the management team have failed to inform Ofsted of the changes to supervisor and therefore, their suitability to work with the children has not been ascertained. This was a previous action, where Ofsted requested that they be informed of any changes to senior staff; this has not been met. The new manager was not informed of the previous inspection and was unaware of what was expected of her. Therefore, procedures to provide support for staff is inadequate. Consequently, staff do not feel valued and are not fully prepared to promote children's care. The supervisor is not aware of who her deputy is, therefore a member of staff is not trained to fill the supervisor's role should the need arise.

Overall, children's needs are not met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group agreed to implement the following actions: ensure that there is a clearly defined procedure to be followed in the event of a child being lost or not collected; develop a system to provide staff with support and self-development; conduct regular risk assessments of the premises and carry out a fire drill periodically (refers to the after school club); obtain written permission from parents to transport children in taxis; request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment; produce an equal opportunities policy and a special needs statement which are consistent with the current legislation; make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint; and ensure Ofsted are informed of any changes in supervisory and management staff.

The group has a procedure to be followed in the event of a child being lost or not collected, however, the non collection of children policy is not clear as to what staff should do other than contact social services. The complaints procedure has not been updated since April 2006 and a system to provide staff with support and self-development has still not been implemented. Ofsted are still not informed of any changes in supervisory and management staff. Therefore, the registered person is not ensuring that children are cared for effectively. Although the risk assessments of the premises was referring to the after school club, that is no longer in operation, the playscheme is run by the same senior team and children's safety is compromised because all areas used by children are not risk assessed and a fire drill up to the time of inspection had still not been carried out. Written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatments is now requested to ensure that children stay healthy. All children are supported by the playscheme in line with their equal opportunities policy statement, however, children do not have access to resources which promote positive images. Permission to transport children in taxis is no longer relevant as it was only applicable to the after school club which is no longer running.

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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

Ofsted is taking **enforcement action** to safeguard the welfare of 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