

Cambridgeshire Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Emma Bright
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Registered person	The Governing Body of Cambridge County Council , Cambridge Playschemes
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cambridgeshire Playscheme is one of five provisions managed by Cambridgeshire County Council. It opened in 2006 and operates from Highfield School in Ely, Cambridgeshire, offering a holiday playscheme for children with moderate to severe learning difficulties and disabilities.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the playscheme at any one time. The playscheme is open from 10:00 to 15:30 for two weeks during the school summer holidays. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 12 children aged from five to 12 years on roll. Children come from the local area.

The playscheme employs 25 staff. Of these, 13 hold appropriate qualifications and one is currently working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because they are very well cared for if they become unwell or in the event of an accident because clear information is gathered from parents and excellent records are in place to make sure that appropriate care is given. Children's specific medical needs are met as clear and detailed information is in place; this is updated regularly to ensure their ongoing health is very well maintained. Staff are well trained in administering first aid; they promptly and efficiently deal with emergency situations, putting their first aid skills to very good use whilst ensuring other children are not upset or frightened.

All children learn about leading a very healthy lifestyle through everyday, practical experiences which ensures they receive plenty of exercise to promote their growth and development. Children thoroughly enjoy energetic football games; they demonstrate good coordination to keep control of the football, whilst pretending to be 'Beckham' or 'Rooney'. Children relax in the sensory room, where they listen to music and watch light patterns on the wall, while staff gently massage their hands and feet with special lotion. This helps children to feel calm and enhances their sense of well-being.

Children are well nourished and staff help them to learn about making healthy choices through a range of practical activities, such as cooking or making fruit kebabs. Staff provide a good selection of food for snacks and ensure that there are alternative versions so that all children can eat safely. Both parents and children receive clear information about healthy packed lunches which further promotes children's good health. Children have plenty of water and juice to drink throughout the session so that they remain well-hydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is significantly enhanced by very good security procedures to restrict access to the setting and prevent them from leaving the premises unaccompanied. Staff are particularly vigilant in their supervision of children and consistently check that sufficient adults are present, both indoor and outdoors. Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff carefully explain the dangers to them, which help children to develop their understanding of hazards. A clear written emergency escape plan is in place and children regularly practise the fire drill so that they know what to do in an emergency and are familiar with the routine.

Children's safety is paramount within the setting. They are fully protected and kept safe from harm because all staff have an excellent understanding of their role in child protection. Staff regularly access training to ensure their knowledge is up-to-date and in line with local procedures. In addition, staff strictly adhere to the setting's 'lone worker' policy which means that children's welfare is fully safeguarded. Children play with a good range of toys and activities, which have been very well chosen to stimulate their interest and support their individual abilities. All resources are cleaned and checked regularly to ensure that they remain absolutely safe for children to use. All children have access to an extensive range of good quality, safe equipment; they move freely between indoors and outdoors, selecting resources to support and develop their play. This means children engage in a purposeful activity and safely choose items themselves which significantly enhances their independence.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the playscheme; they demonstrate great enthusiasm for the range of activities on offer and settle down readily to an activity of their choice. Children's communication skills are greatly enhanced by the range of additional strategies in place to help children communicate. For example, pictorial symbols are used to demonstrate the timetable so that children know about the structure for the day and this helps them to feel safe and secure. In addition, staff use excellent signing skills to encourage communication which means that children can understand and be understood.

Children's experiences are significantly enhanced because they form positive relationships with staff who are particularly caring and sensitive to each child's needs. Staff have an exceptionally good knowledge and understanding of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. They ensure that there is always an excellent range of activities which reflect children's abilities and interests. Staff work very well together as a team to support children's play and provide plenty of opportunities for fun and relaxation. Children choose how they want to spend their time and staff facilitate exceptionally well to ensure children are interested and involved according to their different needs. This choice and spontaneity contributes to children's sense of belonging and promotes their self-esteem.

Staff provide an excellent range of experiences and learning opportunities are planned for each day. For example, children thoroughly enjoy a visit from 'Shadow' the dog. Some children observe from a distance and others confidently stroke him. A wealth of art and craft activities captures children's imagination; they thoroughly enjoy making 'SpongeBob Squarepants' figures from kitchen sponges. They carefully draw on faces and very proudly show off their creations.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit significantly from the staff's experience and caring support. For example, when children become upset or distressed staff ensure that each child can work through their routines or coping strategies and this helps them to become calmer and reduce their anxiety. Staff are proactive in working with parents, carers and other agencies to support the children's needs and this ensures that they are fully included in the life of the setting. Individual behaviour plans are in place so that there is consistency between home and the setting. Children learn through purposeful routines and sensitive expectations. Staff are very consistent in their approach and establish clear boundaries so that all children are beginning to understand what is expected of them. Staff respect and value children's individuality and work extremely hard to ensure that the specific needs of all children are met. They actively seek the views of all children in order to ensure that the care and activities are of a very high standard. Children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging; they talk about 'their play scheme' and explain that 'everyone comes here because we're good'.

Children benefit from the setting's high emphasis of working with parents and carers. Excellent settling in procedures that are based around their individual needs helps to support children in the transition between home and the setting. For example, staff complete home visits before children begin at the playscheme, which enables them to gather good information to be used as starting points for care, teaching and learning. Parents receive clear and detailed information about the setting so they know about activities and events, and have daily opportunities to discuss their child with staff. A comprehensive written daily record is shared between staff and

parents, and this ensures parents have additional information about their child's day. This helps children to settle quickly and ensures their individual needs continue to be met. All documentation is in place to share information with parents and carers so that they know about the setting's policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from an exceptionally well prepared environment that promotes positive outcomes for all children and enables them to make decisions and pursue their own interests. This contributes significantly to their enjoyment at the setting. Children are extremely happy and settled because staff develop warm and caring relationships with them. For example, an effective key worker system ensures that all children's needs are clearly known and met. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that staff are suitable and have appropriate skills and knowledge to work with children.

Staff work exceptionally well together as a cohesive team and demonstrate great enthusiasm for creating an environment that stimulates and challenges children of all ages and abilities. Policies, records and procedures are clear and comprehensive, clearly underpinning the outstanding practice in promoting positive outcomes for children. The thorough induction procedure and a detailed operational plan, with up-to-date information for staff, ensures sure that all members of the team are secure in their knowledge of their roles and responsibilities. Staff's knowledge and understanding of these documents clearly contributes to their implementation to ensure that children are very safe and well cared for. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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