

The Little Gym

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY347308
Inspection date	13 August 2007
Inspector	Maxine Williams

Setting Address	The Little Gym, Festival Way, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST1 5PU
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Registered person	Flic Flac Ltd
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Sessional 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?

The Little Gym is run by Flic Flac Ltd. It opened in 2007 and operates from a large gym room and side room in a purpose-built building on a large commercial estate in Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire. The Little Gym comprises of an out of school holiday club that focuses on sports skills development for up to 24 children aged from three to under eight years. The Little Gym also provides parent and child classes and gymnastic based classes for children aged up to 12 years old. It is part of a world wide organisation which has a large number of franchised groups that provide sports activities for children. The provision currently has approximately 250 children on roll.

The club is open for morning and afternoon sessions during school holidays. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The Little Gym employs four members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications, one is working towards a qualification and two have sports related qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged to engage in a variety of stimulating physical activities which contribute to their good health. The children are able to use a very good range of high quality physical exercise equipment such as balance beams, swing bars, parallel bars and soft play resources. This encourages children to gain awareness of their bodies, as well as the development of a positive attitude to exercise and also promotes children's physical development. All children are able to rest and be active according to their needs.

Documentation to support children's health is in place and is well maintained. Accident and medication systems are fully understood and when children are hurt during play staff respond appropriately to meet their medical needs. The setting provides a healthy and nourishing range of snacks that appeal to the children and meet their nutritional needs. Children eagerly choose chopped apples, pears, bananas and raisins, among other healthy options. At snack time children are offered drinks of juice. However, water is not routinely offered and fresh drinking water is not readily available to children. As a result, when children are occupied with the interesting range of physical activities they may forget to ask for a drink and become thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very well-organised environment, which is suitable for their play and enjoyment. They have extensive space to move around in, which enables them to play and learn safely and in comfort. Staff are attentive to the individual abilities of children and adjust the equipment to ensure it is suitable for the abilities of children using it. The staff give high priority to promoting children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe and to maintaining children's safety within the setting. Children develop awareness of safety issues as they are gently reminded of how to keep themselves safe and how to play safely. This means that children are able to move around safely, freely and independently.

Hazards to children are reduced because the staff are attentive and use detailed risk assessments to reduce possible risks. However, there are a number of electric sockets, at low levels, which are accessible to young children and which are not in use or fitted with socket covers. This presents a possible risk to young children, who may not be aware of the dangers of electricity. Fire evacuation procedures are good; they are fully understood by both staff and children. The staff have a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and are aware of the correct reporting procedures. This ensures that children are protected from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well in the provision's welcoming environment. They confidently engage in the gym sessions with the excellent range of developmentally-appropriate physical play equipment and resources available. Children are enthusiastic when they arrive and are eager to join in with the activities. They are eager to show how they can balance on the balance bars, step over the beanbags and swing on the parallel bars, with confidence and agility. Children are excited and animated as they take part in a game of 'Dragon's Gold', when they have to creep very slowly and quietly to steal treasure from the dragon, while singing to make the dragon sleep. They

squeal with delight as they run away, when they have succeeded in stealing some gold. Children attending the setting are happy and settled and all relate well to the staff and play amicably together.

Children are well-supported by staff who take time to get to know each child and encourage them to develop and learn through active and creative play. Staff encourage children to learn and practise new skills such as following the instructions of the song, when using a wand to draw shapes in the air. Children enjoy themselves, while learning about shape, as well as movement and the need for careful listening skills. The themes that are used throughout the summer camps are integrated into both the physical curriculum and the creative play sessions. This helps children to make connections and to incorporate their learning into other areas. For example, when they play a physical game involving taking a friend to 'outer space', it is followed up by constructing a glitter galaxy in the creative session.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Good relationships with the staff ensure that children's individual needs are met appropriately. Self-confidence is developed well by staff with the constant use of praise and encouragement during play and activities. Staff implement consistent boundaries which helps children to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. This develops their understanding of right and wrong and they behave well and play together amicably in group activities, sharing resources and taking turns. Children are comfortable in the setting, choosing activities and approaching staff and other children confidently.

The setting has a strong inclusion policy and parents and carers of children are welcomed to attend sessions. Staff are knowledgeable and are aware to adapt activities to the individual needs of children attending. Relationships with parents are positive and friendly, children's individual needs are documented and staff are available to discuss any questions or concerns at the end of each session. A wealth of information is available to parents on the company and on the facilities offered to children and parents, which means that children and parents are well-informed about what activities are available and what they will gain from taking part in these activities. However, information regarding the regulatory processes such as complaints and other policies and procedures is not readily available to parents. Although this information is in place it is not shown to parents and the setting does not make it accessible. As a result, parents are not fully informed about the care their children receive, in relation to the National Standards.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Procedures are in place and are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and play of children. All documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. The induction programme and good teamwork ensures staff work together to promote children's health, enjoyment and achievement. There are clear systems in place for recording attendance and there is an appropriate level of staff to care for children.

Children are comfortable and feel secure in the well-ordered surroundings. The gym is organised well to provide an extensive range of physical play opportunities for children. This enables

them to develop their bodily skills and extend their play and learning. Children are cared for by an appropriately qualified, dedicated team of staff. Recruitment and vetting procedures are in place, which ensures that children are cared for by practitioners with knowledge and understanding of child development, as well as physical development and fitness. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

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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):

- allow children to make healthy choices with respect to drinks, by ensuring water is readily available to them
- improve safety measures by fitting socket covers on all unused, accessible electric sockets
- make sure that the contact details of Ofsted are available to parents so that they can contact the regulator if they wish to comment on the childcare provided
- introduce strategies to make the club's policies and procedures freely available to parents.

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