

Alton Sports Centre Creche

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Alton Sports Centre Crèche is run by DC Leisure. It opened in 1985 and was registered in 2000. The crèche operates from one large room and a small side room on the upper floor of the sports centre. It is situated on the southern outskirts of Alton in Hampshire.

There are currently over 500 children aged six weeks to under five years on roll although a maximum of 26 children may attend the crèche at any one time. The crèche is open weekdays from 09:00-12:00 with the exception of bank holidays. Children stay for a maximum of two and a half hours. The crèche has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language.

The crèche employs five part-time members of staff who are all experienced. One of the staff members has a recent early years qualification and all of them hold current first aid qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are dealt with appropriately following accidents as all staff have first aid qualifications and a first aid kit is stored accessibly. Parents provide staff with written consent for permission to seek emergency medical treatment in the event of more serious incidents so children's needs can be met effectively. Clear records are kept of any accidents occurring on site which parents sign to acknowledge.

Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet, although they do not do wash their hands before they eat which could cause germs to spread. Children are protected from the risk of infection as parents are asked to keep children with contagious ailments at home to promote the health of others.

Children's dietary needs are met as parents either supply a drink and snack for their own children or ask the staff to provide them with one during the session. Drinking water is constantly available to ensure children remain suitably hydrated.

Children have plenty of opportunities to practise their physical skills as they regularly use climbing apparatus and equipment such as slides, tunnels and ride on toys which helps to teach them to move their bodies in a variety of ways.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a large play room where there are facilities to divide the room into separate areas for different aged children. The majority of the floor is covered with padded mats for the children's comfort and safety.

Children are well supervised at all times and have access to a selection of age appropriate resources that are clean and well maintained to meet their development needs. Staff make the crèche welcoming to children by laying out a selection of toys for them to choose from on arrival. There is additional equipment in a large store cupboard that staff rotate to provide children with a variety of activities.

Children benefit from being cared for in a secure environment which is checked for safety on a daily basis. They take part in fire drills so they are aware of what to do if the centre needs to be evacuated. Procedures are in place should children not be collected although there is no written procedure in place should a child get lost.

Children's well-being is promoted as staff have a good understanding of the child protection procedure. Staff keep up to date with training in this area to promote the welfare of the children. Parents are asked to inform staff of existing injuries to enable staff to monitor the children effectively.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy to come into the crèche and enjoy getting involved in playing with the toys that have been set out for them. They interact well with the staff who create a calm and relaxed atmosphere for them to play in. Staff recognise when to approach children for play and when to sit back and allow them to make their own choices in what they do. For example, a toddler took a book to a member of staff and sat on her lap while she read to her, the child then got up and went off to play independently.

Children's individual needs are met as the parents inform staff on a daily basis about what is required, for example, if babies need a bottle or a sleep. Children are encouraged to master new skills, such as staff positioning stimulating equipment around a baby to encourage her to stretch and reach for them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated as individuals with their needs met following discussions with parents. Resources in the crèche reflect diversity and the group is open to all families on a first come, first serve basis.

Children learn the rules in the crèche as staff act as positive role models and give clear explanations of why some behaviour is unacceptable. For example, children are told that they must not climb onto storage boxes in case they fall and hurt themselves. Children are distracted away from unwanted situations and parents are informed about any behavioural problems.

All new parents complete registration sheets for their children which provides staff with all the required information in case of an emergency. Parents are provided with a policy and procedure booklet at the time of enrolment, which provides them with information about a variety of aspects. However, there is no clear information about how to make a complaint to Ofsted and there is no system in place to keep records of complaints. Parents are provided with verbal feedback about how their children have been to provide consistency of care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care. All of the staff are very experienced in crèche work. Although only one member of staff has a recent child care qualification, others have more dated childcare qualifications; and they all update their skills by attending training in relevant areas such as child protection and first aid. Staff have annual appraisals where training needs are identified. All staff are appropriately vetted and ensure that children are never left alone with unvetted people.

Ratios are maintained at all times. Accurate records are kept of children's attendance to ensure their safety, although records of visitors to the setting are not kept. Most of the required documentation is in place. It is stored confidentially and is shared with parents as necessary to meet the needs of the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were raised. The first was to extend documentation such as: a complaints procedure; lost/uncollected child policy; visitor's register; behaviour incident records; and written consent for seeking emergency medical treatment. This recommendation has been partly met as the group has addressed half of these issues, which results in increased safety for the children. However, the group has not yet improved their complaints procedure, developed a written procedure regarding lost children or devised a procedure to keep records of visitors to the setting. Therefore this part of the recommendation continues to further improve the safety of the children.

The second recommendation was to identify measures to meet qualification requirements, such as through short courses and qualifying training. Although no staff have completed a recognised qualification since the last inspection, they are all experienced. They continue to attend workshops to increase their childcare knowledge, enabling them to meet the needs of the children. As the qualification requirement is not met, this remains a recommendation to ensure staff regularly update their skills.

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):

- ensure good hygiene procedures are followed before children have their snacks
- improve documentation by maintaining a record of visitors to the setting and by producing a written statement of the procedure to follow should a child become lost
- continue to ensure staff regularly update their skills by attending short courses and workshops
- make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint and keep a record of complaints relating to the National Standards and any action taken

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