



Schools Out Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

LEA Reference Number: 319297

Date of inspection: 20 September 2007

Inspector: Julie Lamer

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Childcare

Out of School care

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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.

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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.

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On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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Schools Out is a privately owned after school club which has been established for 10 years. In September 2002 it moved to new premises. The club now operates from a two classroom portacabin in the grounds of Archibald First School, Gosforth. The group also have use of the school yard area for outdoor play. The group is registered to take 40 children under eight. There are currently 75 children on roll, who attend a variety of sessions. The group operates during term time from Monday to Friday, from 08:00 to 09:00 and 15:00 to 18:00. The club is attended by children from the school in which it is situated and three other local schools, St Charles Primary, Gosforth Junior High and Gosforth Central Middle School. The group employs six staff, including the manager; of these, four hold relevant childcare qualifications.

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The provision is inadequate.

Children benefit from regular opportunities to enjoy fresh air and physical exercise when the weather permits. They clearly enjoy being active outside as most children play outside for the

majority of the session. They play chase with staff, practise their football skills with other children and join hoops around each other to form a train around the yard.

Children are not cared for in a sufficiently clean and hygienic environment when they move freely between both rooms in the setting. Some areas are not maintained in a suitable state of decoration or hygiene, although there are marked differences in the rooms that are used, with one being sufficient. Whilst a basic comfortable area is in place, children rarely visit it, and during part of the session the room with the quiet, comfortable area is not available to children, meaning at times they cannot relax or play quietly.

Children are beginning to learn about the benefits of healthy eating. Planned activities give children opportunities to explore foods that they think are good or bad for their bodies and they produce nice displays which look at 'is it good for you'. Children take care of some of their personal needs as they pour their own drinks from an easily accessible table with choices of apple juice, orange juice and water. However, some staff's understanding of the value of encouraging independence of the younger children is limited.

Snack time is not a social occasion and the lack of organisation of this directly impacts on the care of the children. Children approach staff to ask for a range of healthy options, such as rice cakes, breadsticks and chopped apples, the latter of which, they serve for themselves promoting independence. However, children are not encouraged to wash their hands before eating foods and on occasion staff do not provide a good role model for them to learn from.

Children's dietary needs are met adequately by staff sharing verbal information about children's individual needs. First aid training is a necessary requirement of staff caring for children; all staff have either completed or are booked on courses which contributes to children's overall welfare. Whilst verbal information is shared with parents about accidents and staff provide consistent, warm care by taking individual time to comfort children who have been injured, not all accidents are recorded. This is a breach of regulation.

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The provision is satisfactory.

Children move freely and safely around the environment. They come into the setting and quickly settle down to activities that interest them, such as playing card games with staff, playing on the computer or enjoying board games. Children enjoy choosing from the equipment that is available to them and use most of the areas in the group, with the exception of the book corner and imaginary play area. They move freely around the different activities to make models with construction materials, paint pictures or race toy cars with other children.

Outdoor play is particularly popular with a great deal of the children, because of this lots of children spend the majority of the session outside, chatting to staff, playing football or playing chasing games. Children play with a fair range of equipment which is easily available, being stored in low level boxes on the ground. This means that children can freely choose what they want to do.

Visual checks are completed on the areas that children use to ensure they are safe. Staff know about basic safety issues, for example, about ensuring that sockets not used are covered with furniture and to keep the cupboard with the cleaning materials in locked. Checks on outdoor play space are sufficient. Staff ensure that the area is secure and enclosed to prevent unwanted visitors, by closing the gate at the side of the building and displaying a poster reminding parents

group. Some children are competent at taking turns and sharing as they wait for their turn on the computer and play board games well with each other.

Partnerships with parents are satisfactory. Some adequate information for parents is displayed in the setting, such as photographs of staff, certificates that they have achieved, and a file containing policies and procedures located on the desk. However, more routine daily information, such as menus and activity planners, are lacking. Staff pass on information adequately to parents about how their child has been during the session in some cases, for example, if they have had an accident or there is information to pass on from school.

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The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a fairly organised environment. Children make decisions about where they want to play, moving freely from indoors to outdoors on their own choosing for most of the session. Staff organise the rooms to create different areas for children's play, for example, with a construction area and a homework area, which is used by some children. Staff use their time well and the resources and space adequately to ensure that children are well supported in their play.

The staff team mainly work adequately together. They show an awareness of the acceptable policies of the group, however, these are not always consistently followed, for example, in dealing with behaviour and recording accidents. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities, for example, by checking the outdoor area is secure and showing an understanding of what their role as key worker for groups of children involves. Staff deploy themselves adequately in the setting, however, ensuring they are vigilant about supervision of the cloakroom and toilet area is not always sufficient to protect the children's welfare.

Paperwork and documentation is well organised to ensure it is confidential and contains the necessary details.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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At the previous inspection the group agreed to inform Ofsted of any significant events, such as a change to the manager of the group. After the inspection Ofsted were informed of this change by the group.

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Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint relating to Standard 1: Suitable Person. This involved an allegation made about the actions of a member of staff in the out of school club. The provider responded to the allegation by seeking advice from their local authority development worker and initiating an investigation by Ofsted and social services, with which they fully cooperated. Ofsted was satisfied by taking these steps and updating the setting's policies and procedures, the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was complete.

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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