



Talacre Action Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 116350 |
| Inspection date | 22 August 2005 |
| Inspector | Kanwal Sonia Lobo |
| Setting Address | Adventure Building, Dalby Street, London, NW5 3NH |
| Telephone number | 020 7267 9755 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | The Talacre Action Group Limited |
| 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Talacre Action Group was registered in 1992. The group operate from the play centre in Kentish Town, in the London Borough of Camden. It is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children aged from 5 years to under 8 years.

The play centre caters for the needs of children who live in the local area and places are open to older children. There are currently 15 children on roll.

It provides an all year round service and during term time operates from 15.30 -

18.15.

In school holidays opening hours are either 09.30 - 17.30 or 09:00 - 18:00.

The setting forms part of a redeveloped site that also includes a sports centre and green open space. Facilities for children comprise a two storey building, garden and courtyard area.

A committee of locally elected volunteers manage the service and employ a core team of four staff all of whom are qualified and experienced play workers. Additional sessional workers are employed during school holidays to reflect the overall increase in attendance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children participate in a variety of physical exercise and engage in team games such as football and basketball. They are offered appropriate challenges to enhance their physical development. Children enjoy regular snacks and drinks throughout the day, which refreshes their energy. They are able to eat at their own pace and meal times are considered to be a sociable time.

Children are not always encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times such as after playing outside, using outdoor equipment or before eating snacks. The toilets do not have soap available for children's use at all times. As a result, they are not protected from infections or harmful bacteria and consequently there is a greater risk of children becoming ill or developing infections.

Children needing medication are assured of receiving the correct medicine as suitable records are kept. Children get swift and appropriate help if they have an accident due to staff's knowledge of first aid.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Some systems are in place to ensure children are protected from strangers, such as, the closed-circuit television and the entry phone system. However, managing access to the setting has not been fully considered, as the record of visitors is not used and there is no system for registering staff attendance on a daily basis.

Children and parents are greeted warmly on arrival by staff who are friendly and approachable. This contributes to a welcoming environment for children. Some of their creative work is displayed which helps them to feel a sense of belonging. However, children are not able to withdraw from activities to a quiet space should they wish to rest or relax. This means the safety of children who are relaxing and those still engaged in activities has not been carefully examined. This issue is

particularly apparent in wet weather conditions when children are indoors.

Children are able to access toys and equipment that are safe and regularly checked. However, they are not always fully safeguarded from hazards such as the highly stacked chairs. This is because at times the setting does not take the necessary steps to ensure that potential risks are minimised.

Children's welfare, with regard child protection, is not completely safeguarded. This is because the induction programme for staff does not ensure that all new members are secure in their knowledge of the possible signs and indicators of children at risk, or what to do in the event an allegation of abuse against them. Due to some staff's lack of understanding of these issues, there is a risk that concerns are not identified quickly and a situation is mismanaged.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from building positive relationships and are developing their self-esteem. This is encouraged by staff who help them to be confident and independent. Most children are able to relate well to their peers and adults in the group. They form good friendships and in the main, children are able to express their needs to staff in the secure knowledge that they will be acknowledged.

Children are engaged in activities most of the time that are age appropriate and provide some enjoyment. However, at times younger children become restless as they have to wait their turn for certain activities such as table football or table tennis. Whilst waiting their turn they are not always directed to do something else. This leads to children not being well occupied or engaged in purposeful play.

Although children enjoy playing outdoors and going on outings, the contingency plans for wet weather lack imagination. Some of the indoor activities on offer are planned to take account of children's interests, but, these are not always sufficiently varied to allow children to be involved in a wide range of stimulating tasks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children share their experiences and staff listen and value their contributions, which in turn helps children to feel secure and included. Although resources that reflect diversity and positive images are limited, children are involved in some activities that promote anti-discriminatory practice. This helps children learn about the wider community and makes them aware that there is equal access for all, irrespective of gender.

Children with special needs are welcome and consideration is given to ensuring children are integrated and feel part of the group. This enables children to participate in most activities as they are adapted to meet their needs. Children are supported as staff endeavour to work closely with parents. However, information is not readily

gathered to raise staff awareness in this area.

Most children are well behaved and respond well to staff. They receive warm care and attention. The use of positive language and sensitive interaction, helps them learn to manage their own behaviour. Children benefit from the consistent and positive approach to the management of their behaviour. They are helped to understand their actions through explanations which in turn contributes to them forming positive attitudes.

In the main, children are supported from the partnership between staff and their parents. There is a regular exchange of information about issues relating to children's behaviour, health and well-being. Although, parents are informed verbally of any accidents involving their children, the systems in place to ensure they sign the record of accidents to acknowledge the entry is not effective.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The person in charge has a suitable childcare qualification. However, there are some weaknesses in the management of the provision. For example they have overlooked the requirement to notify Ofsted of significant changes such as staff changes, which may affect the safety and welfare of the children.

Children share positive relationships with staff that have been vetted for their suitability to work with young children. However deployment of staff is not always effective as at times children are left unsupervised. The arrangement in place, to ensure children are never left in the sole charge of staff who are not yet vetted, is lax.

The group have appropriate records in place to support their understanding of each child. Records are kept confidentially, maintaining the children's privacy. However, some systems are not secure. These are yet to be developed in order to ensure the efficient and safe management of the setting such as the record of accidents involving children and the group implementing the visitors book as a system for managing access to the setting. Although staff undergo an induction programme, too little is done to ensure they are fully aware of the procedures such as child protection.

Overall, the setting does not meet the needs of the range of children attending.

Improvements since the last inspection

The setting has met the recommendation that was raised at the last inspection. They have obtained a fire blanket and located it in the kitchen. This has improved fire safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- prevent the spread of infection and make sure good hygiene practice is promoted with children at all times.
- organise space effectively so that children can rest safely.
- ensure that staff induction training within the first week of employment provides them with access to all the groups policies and procedures and has particular regard for issues surrounding child protection.
- notify Ofsted of all significant changes that include any changes in members of staff.
- make sure that the record of accidents involving children is signed by parents to acknowledge the entry.
- deploy staff effectively within the premises to ensure the safety and welfare of children.

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk