

Smart Zone Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	199472
Inspection date	19 March 2008
Inspector	Rachel Edwards
Setting Address	The Mobile - St Sampson's Junior School, Bath Road,Cricklade,, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 6AX
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Registered person	The Smart Zone 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Smart Zone Holiday and Out of School Club opened in 2001. It is privately owned and run. It operates from a mobile building, in the grounds of St. Sampson's Junior School, Cricklade. It serves the local area. The club have sole use during operation of a play room, cloakroom, toilets, kitchen and office. They have use of the school playground for outdoor play.

The club is registered to care for no more than 26 children from four to under eight years at any one time. There are currently 100 children on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The club has an inclusive policy which supports children with additional needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens 08.00 to 09.00 and 15.00 to 18.00 during term time and 08.00 to 18.00, as well as flexible hours by arrangement, during the holiday period.

There are 12 part-time staff working with the children. Of these, eight have appropriate qualifications to level 2 or 3. Other staff are working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from Bright Horizons Family Solutions.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is generally very well promoted by this popular breakfast and after school club, in particular the children eat healthily and they are encouraged to be physically active and enjoy playing outside. The premises and equipment are cleaned daily and staff regularly check toilet areas throughout the sessions. Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene and are encouraged to wash their hands after a day at school and also before eating and after visiting the toilet. There are hygienic facilities for washing in the toilet areas but before eating some children wash hands in the playroom sink, where they are using a very dirty shared towel, which increases the risk of infection. Throughout the year, staff plan health related topics, for example on dental hygiene, when a dentist visited the group, leaving children with brushes and paste and leaflets to take home. There are carefully detailed records of any medical needs and where needed, all staff have received specialist training to administer medication. There is always a member of staff present who holds a current first aid certificate. All medication is securely stored yet readily available to staff.

Staff understand how hungry children are after a day at school and they provide a drink and healthy snack of fresh fruit as soon as children come in. They use this time to sit with children and hear about the highs and lows of their day. A little later a light nutritious tea is provided, such as pasta and tomato sauce. The children all sit together to eat and there is much lively conversation around the table. A jug of water is always available to those needing a drink at any time. The group only provide a small meal as most parents prefer their children to eat later with the family at home. However, they are very happy to heat up main meals provided by the parents. Children with special dietary needs are fully accommodated and staff are careful to make sure they are not left out when food is provided for special occasions, such as birthday cakes or ice-cream on outings.

Children are able to move freely between the inside and outside play areas throughout the year and many choose to play outside for much of the session. They are well supervised and there is a very good range of exciting equipment, for example, they enjoy using ropes to pull each other round on low to the ground wheeled vehicles. There are games of football going on and challenging climbing and balancing equipment. The group have prepared a large vegetable patch and the local gardening club are going to help children with planting and growing. During the holidays they have other activities, such as bring your bikes and scooters, swimming or dog walking, especially requested by children who do not have dogs at home. These enjoyable activities encourage children to be physically active and stay fit and healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The group are the major users of a well maintained mobile building, which has its own toilets, cloakroom, kitchen and office. The room is well suited for its purpose and staff have made it into a warm, bright and very welcoming environment for the children and their families. The walls are decorated with children's art work and photographs; activities are set out ready for play and other toys are stored where children can reach them themselves. There are large comfortable sofas and cushions, creating a quiet area for those needing a rest. Children are cared for in a safe environment, where the outdoor play area is fenced but gates are not locked.

However, there is always at least one member of staff outside to monitor those arriving and to prevent children from leaving unsupervised.

Children play with an extensive range of high quality toys and equipment. These are very effectively organised to allow them to choose for themselves. Children share responsibility for keeping the environment safe, for example by tidying up toys. Staff have a good understanding of achieving a balance between allowing children freedom and setting limits for safe play, for example, children are able to pedal fast but they must wear helmets, in this way children are able to take small risks and learn to keep themselves safe. The children have learnt much from visitors to the group, such as the police and fire service who have raised their awareness of safety issues, such as fire in the home and talking to strangers and allowed them to meet the people who are able to help them.

Staff carry out rigorous risk assessments, including for all outings. This ensures that activities are well planned and safety issues are taken fully into account. There are safe arrangements in place for the arrival and departure of children from the group, including collecting and delivering them from the infant and pre-school. Children's welfare is very well safeguarded by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection and the procedures to follow should they have concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish the time they spend in the club. They enjoy spending time with their friends and eagerly join in with all the club has to offer. The staff excel in creating a well organised, welcoming, friendly environment, where children feel happy and secure and are well occupied in a multitude of stimulating and enjoyable activities. Children and their parents speak highly of the club.

Staff are experienced and well qualified and they use this to plan and provide a wonderful range of activities that cater for all ages, abilities and interests. Many special activities are provided during the holidays, such as a camping and barbeque day, circus skills, specialist sports skills, pamper days, swimming, dance, drama and many craft and cookery days.

Children enthusiastically make choices for themselves, for example in what to do and resources they need. They are actively encouraged to express their wishes for new toys or activities and any special events they would like to take part in. Wherever possible, staff accommodate these so that children know their contributions are valued. The staff have excellent relationships with the children and their families, whom they know well. These genuinely caring relationships between staff and the children help children to develop their independence, confidence and self esteem.

The children develop very good social skills. They play cooperatively and show a high level of maturity in recognising the needs of children younger or less able than themselves. Staff are excellent role models as they treat all children with kindness and respect. Staff are interested in what children say and do and they praise and encourage their efforts so that children feel good about themselves and are proud of their achievements. For example, children eagerly show off the beautiful group mosaic that they designed and made with the help of a visiting artist.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into this friendly group and valued as individuals. The warmth and interest that staff show in the children is outstanding. They work closely with parents and carers and know the children extremely well, so that they are aware of any issues causing concern in the children's lives and they take these into account in the care they provide. Staff are very pro-active in ensuring that children of all ages and abilities are fully included, for example, they quickly notice when the very youngest children are getting tired and offer a cuddle and quiet activity together. Children with additional needs are very well supported. Children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging and they are involved in the running of the group in many ways. For example, their suggestions for new resources and activities are accommodated whenever possible; they helped to plant trees in the grounds to improve their environment and they are rightly proud of the wonderful group mosaic they made.

The children behave well. The staff consistently manage unwanted behaviour well, they offer clear explanations and praise good behaviour, so that children understand the boundaries for acceptable behaviour. They have high expectations and expect children to be kind and considerate towards others, which they generally are. The children have many opportunities to learn about the local area, such as during walks, going swimming or visiting the fire station. They regularly welcome visitors, such as the local gardening group, police, sports coaches and artists, who broaden children's knowledge of the wider community.

The group work closely with parents to make sure that children's individual needs are known and taken into account. Parents are welcomed into the group and staff are available to talk to them each day. Parents speak very highly of the group, they are confident that their children are happy and well cared for. Parents receive good quality information about the running of the provision and the activities their children will be involved in. They see copies of all policies and procedures, although the complaints policy does not make it clear that parents may ask to see the complaints log.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare is enhanced by the very good organisation and leadership of the group. The experienced and well qualified staff demonstrate a strong commitment to providing a safe and stimulating place for children to stay. There are robust procedures in place to ensure that adults working with the children are suitable to do so. Staff work extremely well as a team and there are clear lines of responsibility. High staff ratios mean that children are well supervised and children's needs are consistently well met. Strong emphasis is placed on meeting staff training needs so that knowledge is updated as necessary and they are able to further improve what they offer.

All the legally required documentation is in place. A full range of policies, including risk assessments, are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary, except for the complaints procedure, which does not fully comply with regulations. The group meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection and a visit to approve the new building, the group was asked to address three recommendations for improvement. These related to providing parents with the regulator's (Ofsted's) contact details, which they now do. They were also asked to obtain parents' written consent to administer emergency medical treatment or advice, which is now in place so that staff could act appropriately if needed. Finally, they were asked to make sure that there was a procedure to follow in the event of a child protection allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. This is now clearly outlined so that all staff would know how to proceed if the situation arose.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no reports 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 good. 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 there are hygienic arrangements for children to dry their hands
- ensure the complaints procedure fully complies with Children Act regulations, especially in regard to making the log available to parents on request

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