

Impact @ Walnut Tree

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY273455 |
| Inspection date | 18 March 2008 |
| Inspector | Ann Hilary Guy |
| Setting Address | Heronsbrook Meeting Place, Lichfield Down, Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK7 7PG |
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| Registered person | Impact Childcare Services LTD |
| Type of inspection | Childcare |
| Type of 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?

Impact @ Walnut Tree is one of two provisions run by Impact Childcare Services Ltd. The group registered in 2003 and operate from the Community Centre in Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire.

A maximum of 40 children from three to under eight years may attend at any one time. The group is open five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 7.30 to 8.40 and 15.10 to 17.45 term time and 08.00 to 17.45 during the school holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed play area.

There are currently 44 children on roll from three to 11 years. The children attend for various sessions. They are all full time pupils at the local schools. The group support children with a learning difficulty or disability and those who speak English as an additional language.

Six staff are employed to work with the children, three of whom were working at the time of inspection in the after school club. Of those present two hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards furthering their qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a suitable range of equipment that promotes their physical well being both inside and outside the premises. They have access to a safe, enclosed outdoor area beside the community centre, where they can play ball games. They are also taken to a near by park to experience larger play equipment. Within the building they have facilities for dancing to music and good use is made of this. Children are picked up and taken to their schools during term time, enabling them to have a short walk in the fresh air each day.

Good hygiene practices are encouraged and monitored by the staff. All children are sent to wash their hands before snack time and are reminded to do so after using the toilets. Clear records for accidents, medication and incidents are maintained and signed appropriately by the parents. Staff have found the children have been requesting healthy snacks, and so fruit is always available for those not wanting the snack of the day. Staff try and balance healthy nutritional snacks with something that is reasonably filling to satisfy the children during the session. This can be pizza, hot dogs and sandwiches as well as fruit and vegetable pieces. Drinks of squash or water are available throughout the session.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a suitable standard of care in this very safe environment. The building and outdoor areas are risk assessed daily and maintained in a very safe manner, suitable for use by the children. Risk assessments are in place for the walking of children to and from the school buildings and when visiting the local park. The group aim to maintain a one to eight ratio as much as possible, although this is sometimes exceeded by one in the after school club. However, the majority of the children attending this group are over eight years. This does not adversely affect the standard of care given to those under eight years. Fire drills are held only very occasionally, meaning not all children know and have practised the procedure for evacuation of the building.

Children move freely between the two indoor areas and the outdoor areas of the building. Clear rules for behaviour at all times ensure their safety and well being. The club have a suitable range of equipment for use outdoors, with more on order to extend what is currently offered. They also offer a wide range of activities inside the building that meet the needs of all the children. Toys and equipment are set out for the children, although they can request other items if they so wish. Their welfare is safeguarded at all times, with clear documentation and monitoring of the main entrance by staff. All staff have a sound understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection and are very aware of their duty to safeguard the children at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children greatly enjoy the freedom and range of activities offered within the club. They always have an art and craft activity each evening, within the after school club. This is set out in such a way that children of all ages and abilities can access it and adapt the ideas to their own skills and abilities. The children made Easter cards, with suitable materials for them to design their

own or templates to copy. This was a popular activity and enjoyed by all who took part. Some developed it further and started making posters to sell their cards at school. Other activities included small world play, construction, books, games and puzzles, together with a quiet room in which they could colour, watch DVD's or just relax and talk to friends. Some children used this space to hold a dance competition.

Staff rotate the areas of responsibility ensuring all take turns in the kitchen and supervising the outdoor areas, however, when they go to the park the whole group go together. Physical play meets the needs of the children currently in attendance. A group played football, whilst another were demonstrating their gymnastic skills to the others. All areas are well supervised and staff integrate well with the children. Ensuring they remain safe, developing their skills and sometimes playing an active role in their games.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are fully included in this group and there is a family atmosphere, with children of all ages playing together. Staff skilfully ensure all activities can be accessed by all children and offer them a range of things, especially within art and craft, that develop their knowledge of other cultures festivals. The aim is to build upon work the children have been doing in this field whilst at school and to give them opportunities to explore creative ideas they may have. The club aim to encourage children to be considerate and to care for those younger than themselves.

Children with any form of learning difficulty or disability, providing they attend one of the feeder schools, are welcomed into the group. The relaxed atmosphere, with mostly free play and activities that can be completed at many levels, mean they are easily integrated and included in all that is on offer. Although at times noise levels get quite high, staff have a way of attracting children's attention without raising their voices. They have very clear behaviour management strategies which mean there is rarely a major problem. Staff work closely with the parents and would notify them if they were having any specific difficulties with their child. Clear documentation is in place relating to the children and parents details. No complaint policy is in place and parents are not given the Ofsted complaints telephone number. An old poster was displayed on the inside of a cupboard, but showed the wrong telephone number.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The inspection took place within the after school provision only. The breakfast and holiday care were not seen during this inspection. Time, space and resources are well managed to provide a varied range of activities for the children. Most policies and procedures are in place, and these underpin the care offered. Some staff have been working towards achieving qualifications, in order to meet the minimum requirements. The play leader of the after school club has almost completed her level three qualification; however, although not fully qualified, demonstrated a very good understanding of the needs of the children and how to manage the group.

Clear attendance records are maintained of all children, staff and visitors, with parents signing their child out at the end of the after school session. Discussions with staff showed that most of the staff employed at the breakfast and after school clubs work on a rota basis during the holidays to run the holiday club.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the club had three recommendations made. They have a very clear operational plan in place and have a sound system for recording the times children attend the club. Staff clearances were not available at inspection as there is no secure storage facilities on site. However, staff records show these are in place. Staff are beginning to introduce some healthy snacks into the weekly menu. By the implementation of these changes the group have made some improvement in all areas.

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 all children experience at least one fire practice during their time at the club by varying the days and times
- ensure a complaints policy is in place and the Ofsted complaints number shared with the 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