

Redbourn After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123651
Inspection date	06 December 2007
Inspector	Hilary Preece
Setting Address	Redbourn Junior School, Longcutt, REDBOURN, Hertfordshire, AL3 7EX
Telephone number	01582 626489
E-mail	admin.redbournjm@thegrid.org.uk
Registered person	Redbourn After School Club
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Redbourn After School Club registered in 1996 and is run by a committee of parents and volunteers. It operates from the dining room, main hall and library area of Redbourn Junior school and is for children attending the school and the adjoining Infant School. A maximum of 26 children may attend the club at any one time. The club is open from Tuesday to Friday between 15:15 and 17:45 during term time only. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area. There are currently 22 children aged from four to under eight on roll. Children up to the age of 11 may also attend.

The club employs six members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three members of staff work for the full session and a fourth works for the first hour to prepare the children's tea.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted through some effective measures. Clear procedures are followed to manage individual health and dietary needs. For example, all staff have been trained to administer adrenaline in order to meet the needs of children with severe food allergies and effective checking systems are used to monitor children when eating to make sure they do not eat foods that are potentially dangerous to their health. Children receive appropriate medical attention in the event of illness or injury because all staff are trained in first aid and follow the club's clear procedures.

Children eat a generally nutritious snack tea on arrival at the club after school. This consists of toast, spreads of their choice, fruit or raw vegetables and biscuits, which gives them sufficient energy to enjoy the extended school day. Occasionally children have the opportunity to make their own sandwiches, which gets them more involved in making decisions about what they eat and promotes their independence. Drinks are readily available for children to help themselves whenever they are thirsty. Children are aware of basic hygiene practices. They independently wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, and signs on the food counter are used to remind them why they need to wash their hands. Children stay healthy because appropriate food hygiene procedures are followed by staff when storing and preparing food to avoid the risk of cross-contamination.

Children take part in physical activity outside on the play ground and school playing field in fine weather. They enjoy team games such as football and use a range of small equipment to develop physical skills. Children have fewer opportunities to be active when bad weather or the dark evenings prevent them from playing outside as space is not set up inside for large physical play. As a result, children are confined to passive activities when sometimes they need to burn off energy. Children can play quietly or look at a book in the library area if they are tired and need to rest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The accommodation is safe and secure once other school children and parents on site have left the premises. Until then staff supervise exits and thoroughfares to ensure children at the club remain safe. Younger children are collected from their infant classrooms and accompanied safely to the club. They wear coloured bands while walking so they can be easily identified as children attending the club. There is a secure entry system to protect children from any unauthorised persons entering the building. Children's welfare is further protected as the club has a clear policy on vetting and child protection that is understood by staff and reflects the local safeguarding children's board guidelines. Effective risk assessments are carried out to make sure the premises remains safe on a daily basis and well-documented fire evacuation procedures are practised regularly with the children so they are able to take some responsibility for their own safety in an emergency.

Children move around the space easily and have ready access to boys and girls toilets. Outside areas are used in fine weather but limited access to the main hall restricts some indoor play opportunities. There is no provision to display children's art work and posters that would make the environment more welcoming. Children use an appropriate range of equipment and resources,

these are well maintained and appropriate for the ages of the children attending. They develop a basic understanding of how to use the resources and environment safely, such as not running inside.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive enthusiastically at the club and report that they enjoy attending. Most quickly settle and become absorbed in an activity. Staff take time to chat to the children in a relaxed, informal manner to find out about their day in school. They show interest in what the children are doing and offer lots of praise and encouragement. Consequently, children become confident and build strong relationships with the staff. Friendships and group activities are encouraged. For example, children come together around the table to play a memory game which staff make fun and exciting to hold children's interest. Children learn to share and take turns using popular resources such as the computer or 'Play Station'. Clever strategies are used to measure the time spent using the equipment so children all get equal chances and learn about fairness. Younger children enjoy 'Small World' play resources such as the dolls' house and train set.

Children particularly enjoy the array of art and craft activities on offer. They develop their own ideas to decorate Christmas cards, paint with candle wax or make intricate figures from modelling clay for a nativity scene. Activities are planned around a theme but children are given plenty of freedom to choose or develop an activity according to their own interests. For example, a child's desire to find out more about the nativity scene leads to a group session to share a book about the Christmas story and traditions. This shows children that their ideas and contributions are important and develops their self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated with respect and helped to feel good about themselves. They have opportunities to share their own heritage and culture with the group, for example talking to others about how they celebrate Jewish New Year. They become aware of diversity through planned activities to find out about a range of cultures and get involved in local community projects such as designing posters for the parish council events. This participation contributes to their sense of identity and community.

Children generally behave well and understand expectations. They play well in small groups or alongside each other in their chosen activities. Children have previously contributed to setting the club's 'golden rules' for behaviour that promote respect for others. However, these have not been reviewed to meet the needs of the children who currently attend and are not reinforced by staff to help children resolve any conflicts. This means some children do not always show respect for behaviour boundaries and are not learning to manage their behaviour as effectively as they could.

Children's care needs are met because the club works closely with their parents and carers. Parents receive a warm greeting and appreciate the club's flexible approach to meeting their needs. For example, collection times are staggered to allow children to attend for short or longer periods as required. Effective arrangements are in place to make sure staff find out about children's needs and a reliable password system ensures children are only collected by authorised persons. Good communication at the end of the session keeps parents and carers

well informed about what goes on and further information and planning is displayed on the notice board. However, this is not in a prominent position where it can be seen easily so parents may not actually be informed by it.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's health, safety and enjoyment are promoted by some effective policies and procedures. The leader manages the paperwork and provision efficiently and strives hard to develop the opportunities and promote the outcomes for children. She is well supported by the small management committee. They have developed a rigorous recruitment, vetting and induction programme to ensure staff are suitable to work with children but due to staff changes the minimum requirement for 50% of staff on duty being qualified is not always met. The committee has an action plan to show how this situation is being addressed. From January 2008 the requirements will be met due to staff returning from maternity leave. They encourage the on-going training and professional development of staff who are mostly prepared to attend short courses in order to develop their skills and knowledge.

Staff are generally well deployed and spend time moving around the setting to support children in their play. They organise the space and resources sufficiently to provide plenty of table-top activities for the children in the dining hall and a cosier area in the library. Less consideration is given to providing large, free space for children to use for physical activity or as they wish, so some children get bored at times.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure the leader obtains a Level 3 qualification as stated in the agreed action plan; minimise hazards to children and ensure risk assessments are carried out of the premises; ensure all staff receive formal induction training; ensure staff attendance is recorded; ensure fire procedures are displayed; and ensure a designated person takes responsibility for child protection and staff update their knowledge of child protection procedures.

Good progress has been made to address these actions and recommendations. The leader of the club has changed and she holds the appropriate Level 3 qualification required to manage the setting. A more rigorous induction programme has been developed that helps staff quickly become familiar with the policies and procedures in place. Registers are now accurate as they contain records for staff as well as children's attendance. A comprehensive risk assessment has been developed that identifies any risks to children's safety so that they can be addressed promptly and fire procedures are displayed and practiced at regular intervals, contributing to children's overall safety. The leader is the designated person responsible for child protection matters and staff have attended training in safeguarding children so they are up-to-date with current procedures.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- provide regular activities and play opportunities for children to be physically active, particularly when they are prevented from playing outside
- provide displays of children's work, posters, and notices for parents so they are welcoming and visible on entry to the club
- review the process for setting 'rules' with children to promote positive behaviour and help them understand the effects of their behaviour on others.

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