

# Schools Out Club - Balham

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	508661
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Lesley Boyle
<b>Setting Address</b>	Balham Community Centre, 91 Bedford Hill, London, SW12 9HE
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<b>Registered person</b>	Balham Community Centre
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Schools Out Club Balham has been registered since 1977. It operates from a community centre in the London suburb of Balham. During school term times a breakfast club operates from 07:30 to 09:00 and an after school club from 15:00 to 18:30. A holiday club operates from 08:00 to 18:30 during school holiday periods. The club serves the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 53 children aged from four to under eight years on roll. The club also provides care for children who are over the age of eight years. The club is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The club employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The Schools Out Club is part of the Balham Community Centre Project, which is managed by board of trustees and is a registered charity.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because they are provided with an excellent range of nutritious, freshly cooked foods that contributes significantly to their understanding of a healthy diet. They are offered a wide variety of food and the children are able to choose from two hot options. For example a typical breakfast choice is a selection of cereals and fruit juice, vegetarian bacon rolls or waffle with fruit, while the afternoon menu would offer sweet and sour noodles or spaghetti bolognese followed by yoghurts, or crackers and cheese. Fresh fruit is available to the children throughout the sessions. As a result, children are well nourished and they learn to eat foods that promote their growth and development. They are further becoming aware of their own health needs because the staff encourage the children to take drinks of fresh water, especially when they become hot and thirsty after playing outside. Consequently, they quickly understand the effect that being active has upon their bodies. Parents are encouraged to take home the weekly menu and their suggestions of any changes are encouraged. Through this effective partnership with parents, staff have a clear understanding of individual children's dietary needs and plan and provide a suitable menu accordingly.

Children's good health is promoted very well because the setting takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and takes appropriate measures when children are ill. The children's good health is also promoted effectively through daily routines, policies and procedures and the keeping of the required documentation. For example, any medical conditions or food allergies are recorded so that all staff are aware of these and are able to meet the children's needs. All the staff are first aid qualified at the club and therefore able to deal with any emergencies.

Physical play is an integral part of children's time at the club and helps them to develop extremely positive attitudes to the importance of fresh air and exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. Children enjoy an outstanding level of activity and stimulation all through the year. The manager is committed to the importance of educating children about keeping themselves healthy and provides the children with a versatile range of innovative activities aiding their co-ordination and keeping them fit.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very warmly welcomed by the staff who are genuinely pleased to see them. The club has exclusive use of the centre and children have designed and produced colourful wall displays that transform it into an attractive, child-centred play environment where they are able to gain a sense of belonging. The furniture and superb range of safely maintained toys and equipment further help children to relax and ensure that those who are new to the club feel secure and settle effectively. Children move freely and safely around the building which is divided to create different areas, so that both boisterous and quiet activities can take place at the same time without affecting the enjoyment of either group.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment, where risks have been identified and minimised. Detailed, written risk assessments are in place and are regularly reviewed and updated. The emergency evacuation procedures are clearly displayed and the manager organises fire drills each month to ensure that all children and staff have a good awareness of what to

do to keep themselves safe in an emergency. Children's safety is further promoted by an intercom system in the club which allows staff to communicate with each other in case of an emergency.

Children's welfare is safeguarded through comprehensive child protection policies and procedures, which are shared with parents. All staff have a clear understanding of the known indicators of child abuse and regularly update their knowledge and skills through accessing relevant training. They have a solid understanding of the action that they should take in the event of a concern about a child in their care and recognise the importance of keeping well-documented records.

Children develop a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe through topics, activities and talking about key risks and how to deal with them. They are escorted to the club from school and a procedure such as older children partnering younger children promotes the safety of all children. They contribute to the club's safety and behaviour rules such as no fighting or running in the rooms and staff are proactive in talking to children about safety issues like concentrating when they cross the road. Clear boundaries are set when children play in the outdoor area, for example, ensuring that the ball is not kicked over the fence and into the busy street, so that they learn to be responsible for their own safety, but also develop an awareness of how they may impact on the safety of others.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle extremely well and have access to an excellent range of toys, activities and equipment suitable to their ages and stages of development. Staff are passionate about helping children become confident and have high self-esteem. Children spend their time purposefully and are keen to participate in all activities. They enjoy physical, outdoor exercise and enthusiastically play games of their choice. They share toys and equipment well and play board games cooperatively, with older children supporting younger children with turn-taking. The younger and quieter children benefit from individual support from staff who spend time playing and talking with them, helping them to learn and gain confidence.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the setting and benefit from the club's friendly and stimulating environment. They develop close relationships with each other and are quick to involve staff in what they are doing, share their news and chat freely. Children use their imagination widely, are creative and choose what they want to do because of the good quality resources and activities based on their interests. Although staff develop a basic structure to sessions, children's participation is highly valued and they are encouraged to plan, lead and develop activities and follow their own interests. Regular meetings are held where older children take minutes, to allow them to express their opinions and make suggestions. For example, at one meeting, children asked for opportunities to cook multicultural food like Chinese fried rice and spaghetti bolognese, and for activities such as candle-making and modelling. This was fully acted upon, with more opportunities provided for cooking and craft activities.

Children benefit enormously from taking part in outings during school holiday periods that provide superb opportunities for them to visit attractions that they may not otherwise experience such as Battersea Art performances, trips to Brighton Sea World and Tiger's Eye. The staff regularly evaluate the play programme and they continually obtain feedback on what the children like or dislike. Consequently, they provide flexible play opportunities that are extremely

well matched to current trends and interests and help children to have as much fun as they can.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children from all backgrounds feel included because the staff treat them with respect and value their individuality. Staff encourage children to show a caring attitude towards each other by planning topics such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and Eid to ensure they respect diversity. Children also develop a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood when they invite members from the community like the local librarians to come and share books and literacy interests with the children.

Children have a strong sense of belonging and are enthusiastic about the time that they spend at the club. They are actively involved in planning activities and events. They are active participants in regular meetings between both children and staff which enables them to express their opinions and wishes for the club, including which toys they would like to buy. All children are treated as individuals, with care tailored to meet their individual needs. This is achieved through the completion of questionnaires, during which parents, children and staff work together to identify particular likes and dislikes of individual children.

Although there are currently no children on roll with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, effective procedures are in place. Staff have a clear understanding of children's individual needs and plan and provide care and play opportunities accordingly. They recognise the importance of working in partnership with parents, carers and school teachers and are aware that further support, advice and guidance can be accessed from external organisations.

The children's behaviour is excellent. They are courteous, caring and play well together. Staff act as good role models, treating children with respect and clearly enjoying their company. This helps children feel appreciated and have a sense of belonging. Staff establish clear boundaries according to the child's level of understanding and children respond quickly to their timely and sensitive reminders.

Children's well-being is significantly enhanced by the effective partnership between parents and staff. Parents' views about their children's needs are actively sought before children attend and they are also asked to provide, through questionnaires and a suggestion box, their views on the ongoing operation of the club. They are provided with daily verbal exchanges on their children and what they have been doing, and there is an opportunity for parents to meet with staff twice a year for a more formal update. Parents receive excellent information about the club when they enrol their children and there is a notice board which is full of information to ensure all parents and carers are fully informed about working practices.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's well-being is superbly supported because the staff are confident in carrying out their roles and responsibilities and they have an excellent understanding of the National Standards. The manager capably supports his staff and they all work together very effectively. Therefore, they are able to provide a safe, caring and supportive environment in which children thoroughly enjoy themselves. The robust recruitment procedures ensure that all staff are vetted and suitable to work with children. The adults are committed to continuous improvement and have access

to a rolling training programme in food hygiene, safeguarding children and first aid which protects the health and welfare of children.

The staff make very good use of the available space and children have plenty of room to move about freely. For instance, there are several rooms available to the children which all have different activities supported by a member of staff. Consequently, children thrive because the effective organisation of space, toys and equipment contributes to their well-being. The manager has a clear vision for the future of the club and is constantly working towards better outcomes for the children, for example, by planning more visits during holidays and through developing further the outdoor area.

All legally required documentation is meticulously maintained and the registers of attendance are marked as soon as adults and children arrive at or leave the building to ensure that they are kept safe in an emergency. Children are further safeguarded by a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that are shared with parents, understood by the staff and consistently applied. As a result, the club operates efficiently and the staff are fully able to support children's welfare, care and learning. Overall, children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At their previous inspection the club was asked to make the guttering safe. This was attended to immediately thus ensuring children's continued safety.

### **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 the 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 outstanding. 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**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)