

Acomb Out of School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY286437
Inspection date	17 April 2008
Inspector	Jacqueline Patricia Walter
Setting Address	Acomb Primary School, West Bank, York, North Yorkshire, YO24 4ES
Telephone number	07708050366
E-mail	
Registered person	Acomb Out of School Club 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Acomb Out of School Club is a committee run provision that offers, holiday and before and after school care. It was registered in 2004 and operates from a school hall and three classrooms, which are situated in Acomb Primary School, which is on the outskirts of York, in North Yorkshire. The children have access to two enclosed outdoor areas.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the provision at any one time. Opening times are 07.45 to 08.45 and 15.00 to 18.00 Monday to Friday during term time, with a holiday club operating Monday to Friday during all school holiday periods from 07.45 to 18.00.

There are currently 105 children aged from four to 16 years on roll. Children attend from the surrounding areas. The provision currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. They also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The provision employs four regular staff who work with the children, of these, 50% of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because practitioners are active in following good current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, there is a regular cleaning programme, which is vigilantly implemented to ensure toys and resources are clean and safe. Very good procedures are implemented if children become ill in the setting, which helps to prevent the spread of infection and ensures the children receive appropriate care as soon as possible. For example, children that complain of feeling ill are comforted by staff and made comfortable in a quiet area, parents are contacted and asked to collect them as soon as possible. The situation is then discussed with the parents when they arrive. Overall, children are able to receive medication safely. Records of what has been administered is clearly recorded, shared with parents and kept for the required period of time. Although the consent from parents for medication to be administered is also obtained as part of the children's health development plans, staff are currently working on this to improve the clarity of these records.

Children are developing a very good understanding of simple good health and hygiene practice. They know to wash their hands after using the toilet and to wipe them with anti-bacterial gel before they eat their meals. They are also confident in using tissues, which are readily available at their level. Their further understanding of good hygiene is also promoted through the staff taking wet wipes on outings. This also ensures children are able to continue with good hygiene procedures.

Children have very good opportunities to enjoy and develop their physical skills both inside and outside the setting. A good selection of resources and activities are available in the outdoor area. For example, children can access footballs, enjoy parachute games and organised team games. They also have opportunities to take part in more challenging activities during the school holiday care. For example, they enjoy climbing, using a climbing wall. Children are well nourished through staff and parents providing healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Dietary needs are very successfully met and children are gaining a very good understanding of healthy eating. For example, staff talk to them and discuss the importance of a balanced diet and why particular food is good for them. This enables children to make informed choices. Children are then encouraged to use this knowledge to help to draw up a monthly snack menu, which includes items, such as different fruits, raw vegetables and dips.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for well in a secure and safe environment. Staff take positive steps both inside and outside the setting. For example, they carry out regular risk assessments on the premises, both indoors and outdoors and take appropriate measures, such as checking the outdoor area before children go out and ensuring outings are thoroughly risk assessed and recorded in detail. Staff also make sure electrical points are not accessible to children by fitting covers and they ensure the children's security by checking any visitors identification and asking them to complete a record of their visiting times. In addition to this, when children are entering the setting, staff closely monitor the entrance by sitting at a desk, which is very near the door. This means they can clearly see and check those who wish to access the premises. As a result, children can safely access all areas of play.

Children are able to develop an appropriate sense of belonging in this setting, although there are limited opportunities to display their work as there is only one notice board available. Space is organised appropriately and used well. For example, tables top activities are set out in one area of the hall, leaving space for the children to engage freely in floor activities at the other end. A book corner with large cushions is also available, which provides a quiet area for the children to relax. A suitable selection of safe equipment, resources and activities are available at most times and staff encourage children's understanding and learning in keeping themselves safe and well. As a result, children know they must tidy the toys away after use to prevent accidents and falls and know they must inform staff before accessing the toilet, so they know their whereabouts. Children are also familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures, as they practise these on a regular basis.

Overall, children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded. Staff have a sound knowledge of child protection signs and symptoms and there is a written policy for staff to follow in the event of any concerns regarding child protection. This includes procedures to manage behaviour and to deal with allegations made against staff members. As a result, consistency in practice is promoted appropriately. Most staff have a good knowledge of procedures to follow if concerns are raised. However, there are a minor number of staff who are unsure if, and where contact numbers and guidance is held within the setting, should a line manager not be available to refer their concerns to.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are developing good confidence and self-esteem. For example, they are praised for both effort and achievement and encouraged and supported well by staff when engaging in activities. They are able to freely access all areas of play and select resources that are set out by staff and changed to stimulate their interest. However, their opportunities to develop choice and decision making skills is limited to some extent, due to the lack of storage facilities that make activities easily accessible to them.

Children are able to confidently acquire or revisit knowledge and skills. Staff provide a good and stimulating range of toys and equipment at most times, that meet the needs of the children attending and reflect all areas of play. For example, they enjoy a wide range of outings during the holiday sessions, such as visiting a forest and Lotherton Hall. They are also able to take part in interesting art and craft activities using techniques, such as marbling, making book marks and pencil toppers and experimenting with materials, such as nail varnish. Staff endeavour to make the club as different from school as possible. For example, they encourage children to take ownership by helping them to draw up snack menus and discussing activities, such as what they want to do and where they want to go, particularly venues they would like to visit during the holiday play scheme.

Children have very positive, friendly relationships with all the staff and their peers. They demonstrate that they are very comfortable in their care. For example, they happily sit and chat to staff and invite them to play games and take part in their activities. Staff listen to and value what the children are saying and as result, children are happy, well settled and enjoy attending the setting. They also confidently approach staff when asking for help and in showing them their work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There are professional, friendly relationships in place with parents and they work together effectively to ensure children are cared for very well. For example, in addition to the required consent staff also obtain written consent from parents for face painting activities and photographs to be taken. Staff also work very closely with parents by obtaining information through discussion, detailed registration forms and additional forms that find out as much as possible about the children. For example, their interests, likes and dislikes. Information on the setting is shared well. Parents receive an informative prospectus, which includes statements relating to most policies and procedures and parents sign a record to say they agree with the clubs terms and conditions. Parents are also able to have copies of photographs depicting the activities that their children are involved in and are able to see a slide show of activities and events at the Annual General Meeting. Staff make themselves available for discussions at the end of each session, which means information on the children's development is shared appropriately, which in turn, promotes consistency and clarity in the children's overall care.

Staff use effective strategies to promote positive behaviour and raise children's awareness and understanding of inappropriate behaviour well. For example, they are good role models, are polite to all children and encourage the children to help to draw up the codes for working together. They also ensure children receive plenty of praise and encouragement and encourage them to take on responsibilities, such as helping to tidy away utensils after their snack time. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with in a consistent manner through staff being fully aware of a detailed written policy and implementing strategies, which include dealing with bullying and other procedures for continued bad behaviour. As a result, children know what is acceptable in the setting and they play harmoniously together. For example, they implement waiting lists and timed sessions for the use of popular equipment.

Children are all involved, fully included and have access to appropriate toys and equipment. They are able to all independently access the range of toys, learning resources and equipment, regardless of gender, culture, ability or belief. For example, boys as well as girls enjoy experimenting with nail varnish. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities are very welcome to attend and are very well supported. For example, the setting has a designated member of staff that has responsibility for children with learning disabilities and difficulties and all staff fully understand about adapting activities and working closely with parents. This ensures the children's particular needs are met. Children gain a good understanding on the diversity of the world through stimulating experiences, such as African drumming and by taking part in a Kurdish Workshop. They enjoy a wide range outings, both local and further afield, which enables them to develop a good sense of belonging and understanding in the community and the wider world.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for. There are clear procedures in place for the recruitment of staff. For example, applicants have to show evidence of training and qualification and experience. In addition to this, all required checks are completed and they also need to demonstrate motivation and commitment when working with children as well as providing references. Staff also operate a policy that staff or students are never left alone with children until all required checks are completed.

Staffs knowledge and understanding of child development is appropriate and this supports the children's care and development. Requirements regarding staff qualifications are upheld with the exception of the deputy manager, who is currently working towards the required level 3 qualification in play work. Practitioners have a good regard for the well-being of all children. For example, they evaluate their practice through staff and committee meetings. They are also working towards level 1 of a recognised Quality Assurance Scheme.

Space is used well and resources are suitable and safely organised. Time is effectively used, with staff being deployed well, which in turn gives children good support. Almost all policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. However, there is a weaknesses in the contingency arrangements should staff be absent, which in turn, results in occasional short periods of care becoming detrimental to children. For example, activities are unable to be set out before children arrive, which means children aimlessly wander and begin to engage in boisterous play.

Documentation is maintained appropriately and easily accessible at most times, which underpins the overall care and development of the children. It is stored securely in a lockable portable filing cabinet, which ensures confidentiality is fully upheld. However, although almost all of the required records are retained for the required periods of time, the written parental consent for administering medication is not currently retained after the children have left the setting. This means the regulation regarding the retention of medical records is not fully upheld.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the staff ensure the premises remain secure at all times and that any unused electrical sockets are made inaccessible to children. It was also recommended that they improve the procedure for gaining written parental consent to administer medication. As a result of this, they have improved children's safety by implementing procedures, such as ensuring the door is locked and closed at all times and windows are opened to provide adequate ventilation. They have also started to improve the procedures in place for gaining written consent to administer medication.

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 effective contingency plans are in place, regarding the covering of staff absence or illness
- ensure all aspects of medication records are held for the required period of time.

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