

St Mary & St Michael Before/After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY362407
Inspection date	24 June 2008
Inspector	Lisa Patterson
Setting Address	St. Marys RC School, Castle Lane, Garstang, PRESTON, PR3 1RB
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Registered person	Discovery Vine Ltd
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?

St Mary and St Michael After School Club and is one of eight out of school provisions run by Discovery Vine Ltd. It opened under this registration in 2007 and operates from the main and smaller room on the ground floor of the parish centre in Garstang. Children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and toilet facilities are available on the ground floor. The setting is open each weekday from 15.25 to 17.45 during term time only, and a maximum of 20 children from St Mary and St Michael RC Primary School may attend.

There are currently 24 children aged from four to under eight years on roll. The setting also provides care for children over eight.

The setting employs six regular members of staff, half of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from infection and appropriately taken care of should they have an accident because staff follow comprehensive policies and procedures. Tables are wiped with antibacterial spray prior to snack, staff wear protective clothing when preparing and serving food and at least one member of staff holds current first aid training at all times. Children are becoming increasingly responsible for their own hygiene and staff talk to them about hand washing during group times. While children clean their hands using antibacterial gel prior to snack at the beginning of the session, this only sanitises the dirt that is on their hands and does not teach children the correct methods and importance of washing their hands at other times.

Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and out. They thoroughly enjoy using the fixed play and sports equipment and make up their own games in the outside area. Children also take part in inter-club sporting activities and learn about the value of exercise for a healthy body. The physical environment is arranged to offer space for quiet activities, resting and reading, and this is well used, particularly by the older children.

Children are very well nourished because they have regular access to a wide range of nutritionally balanced snacks. They are given plenty of choice during snack time and children can be seen tucking into tomatoes, apple kiwi and toasted tea-cakes, or fruit kebabs and pizzas they have made during the topic. Posters remind them to eat healthily and drink plenty of water. A good range of drinks are available and water is available at all times. Staff have a clear understanding of the needs of individual children and work closely with parents in ensuring they are met. This provides children with the basis of a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment. The physical environment is extremely well organised to include areas for table top activities, dressing up, role play and quiet activities and reading. Examples of their art work and creative activities are displayed on the walls, which provides children with a sense of belonging. Regular formal risk assessments are carried out and informal monitoring systems are in place to promote safety on an ongoing basis. Staff receive a formal induction and an induction for the setting, though this is not consistently carried out and leaves new staff not always fully aware of the setting's specific procedures.

Children are learning to take responsibility for their own safety through discussions with staff, for example, the queuing up system for snack is well managed and staff explain that if they all go at once there would be a stampede and children would get hurt. This increases their responsibility for the safety of themselves and others. Collection from school procedures work well in practice. Attendance is recorded both at the school and when they all arrive safely at the setting, with regular head counts along the way. Fire procedures are practised regularly and staff make sure that this is completed on different nights, particularly when children are new. This maintains the children's safety.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to child protection issues. Comprehensive policy documents are in place and staff know who to contact should they have a concern. All staff are required to undertake in-house training in safeguarding, which ensures their knowledge base is current.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely settled in the club. They participate fully throughout the session, encouraged by staff who are on hand to offer additional resources should it be required. Staff are full of praise and encouragement for the children, giving them lots of responsibilities for the activities in which they are involved and the club as a whole. During game time prior to snacks, for example, children give suggestions of how a familiar game could be changed to relate to the current theme, such as 'sleeping bugs'.

Extensive planning ensures children are involved in an exceptional range of stimulating, exciting, educational and fascinating activities relating to a theme, currently 'Nature Detectives'. They draw, create large models, construct using a range of commercial kits, make various types of foods, dance, perform, take nature walks and most importantly thoroughly enjoy themselves. External specialists, such as a forest warden, are invited into the setting to offer alternative and expert insights into the topic. Children have the freedom to develop the theme, for example, when children bring in things from home they are used to develop the role play area, or produce a show with the dressing up clothes, including posters and tickets.

Children have their individual needs met because staff are perceptive to their personalities and individual requirements. Staff are genuinely interested in what the children do and say. Some activities are planned to develop skills, such as confidence to talk in a group and children are given the opportunity, during circle time to discuss their day at school or any other topic, prior to staff giving them a clear indication of what is on offer during the session. This increases their self-esteem and gives them some ownership over their club.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are valued and included in the setting. Staff work extremely closely with parents in finding out about their child prior to them starting, and a flexible settling in procedure is in place. Parents are kept very well informed about their child and any wider issues. They receive a wealth of information about the setting prior to starting, receive daily verbal feedback from staff on collection, regular newsletters and have access to a file containing photographs of activities in which the children have been involved. Parents are fully included in all decisions and are invited to complete a questionnaire during each summer term, the results of which are used to move the setting forward.

Children are very well behaved and respond extremely well to the clear and consistently applied routine and boundaries. Posters outlining the club rules are displayed and staff expertly manage behaviour using positive reinforcement, for example, when children kindly offer to swap their place, staff are quick to praise and say that was kind. Children share and take turns throughout the session and staff have devised a feelings wall on which the children are able to express how they feel without having to talk, though staff are perceptive to the needs of children who appear unhappy. This increases their self esteem and shows how they are valued.

Children learn about the diverse nature of society through a range of planned and spontaneous activity, and a wealth of resources portraying positive imagery. A recent topic took the children on a journey around the world, during which they experienced foods, cultural traditions, costumes, music, languages and homes from a wide range of different countries. This promotes an understanding of equality. Children's input into the club is very much valued. The daily news booklet, completed by the children, contains a wealth of stories about school, home and life at the club and gives children a sense of belonging.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who have a high regard for their well-being and, as such, they are fully committed to further professional development, through in-house training and local authority run events. Recruitment and selection procedures ensure staff are appropriate and provides the basis for future training needs, though insufficient information about staff suitability is stored on site. Induction and appraisal systems are used to promote continuous development, which benefits the children. Staff deployment effectively supports the children and maintains their safety.

All required documentation and policies are in place and in order, with the exception of the attendance register, in which the times of departure are not always recorded. This compromises children's welfare and is a requirement of registration.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 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):

- promote good hygiene by ensuring that children thoroughly wash their hands at appropriate times of the session
- record hours of attendance appropriately
- have available on site sufficient information to confirm staff suitability.

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