

Little Hippos

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY377172
Inspection date 26/11/2008
Inspector Lara Hickson

Setting address Knockhall Cp School, Eynsford Road, GREENHITHE, Kent,
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Little Hippos out of school club was initially registered in 2007 and re-registered in 2008 following a change to the registered person. It operates from Knockhall Primary School in Greenhithe, Kent. The out of school club has the use of a large hall, separate male and female toilets, a fully fitted kitchen and a separate crafts room with toilet and kitchen facilities. The out of school facility also has the use of an outside area. The premises are suitable for wheelchair users.

Little Hippos is registered to care for up to 18 children aged from four years to under eight years. The out of school club operates every day term time only from 15:05 to 18:00. Children may attend for a variety of sessions each week. There are three full time staff who work with the children, two of whom hold an appropriate childcare qualification. There are currently 18 children on roll, five of whom are in the early years group.

All children attending are from Knockhall School. The provision is on the Early Years Register and both compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register as children up to the age of 11 years also attend. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but does include the provider's confirmation of compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The out of school club staff have insufficient knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and do not effectively promote the learning and developmental needs of younger children. Children generally enjoy their time at the out of school club and older children help younger children to participate in the range of activities available. Children play with resources set out for them by staff at the start of each session but the lack of understanding by staff of the six areas of learning means that children are not being offered a balanced range of activities. Although staff have developed relationships with parents, currently the setting does not actively involve them in their child's learning.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- develop systems to ensure that all staff are aware of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to observe and assess children to help them make progress towards the Early Learning Goals (Educational programmes)

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- develop systems to provide children with more opportunities to select play resources (Educational programmes)

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To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure all documentation remains confidential with particular reference to incident records
- develop the written record of risk assessment stating when it was carried out, by whom, the date of review and any action taken following a review or incident
- ensure children have daily access to outdoor activities

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff currently do not demonstrate how the needs of children in the early years age range are included in the overall planning of the after school club. There are no systems in place for planning, observation and assessment to ensure that the younger children's individual needs are met and their next steps of learning identified. Although staff have developed positive relationships with parents they do not involve them in their children's learning.

A self-evaluation form has not been completed online as the Manager did not know there was a new self-evaluation form to complete. However, the Manager completed the old style self-evaluation form in Sept 2008. This only recorded how well an outcome was met and did not include any assessment or evaluation. Staff have not participated in any training on the Early Years Foundation Stage although the Manager has attended a short briefing. This is clearly highlighted by staff's lack of knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Systems are not in operation to monitor the curriculum to ensure that all aspects of are sufficiently met. This impacts on the children's learning as there are gaps in areas offered.

Rigorous recruitment procedures are in place. For example, the Manager ensures the suitability of all staff working in the setting and all have completed the appropriate checks. Although the setting has the 'Are you ready for your inspection?' document and the Manager feels that she meets the requirements she has a very limited understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children are safeguarded well within the setting because staff supervise children closely and equipment is in place to ensure their safety such as socket covers on all unused sockets. All staff have been thoroughly vetted and checks are clear before staff supervise children. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in operation within the setting which guide staff and inform parents. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and a safeguarding policy is in operation which outlines procedures they would follow in the event of a concern. Any existing injuries a child arrives with are appropriately recorded. Effective fire evacuation procedures are in

operation and fire drills are completed regularly to ensure that all children are aware of the procedure to follow in the event of an accident or emergency. Fire drills are recorded with details of the numbers of children present as well as any concerns encountered. Risk assessments are in place, although the form in use is only partly completed.

Partnership with parents and other settings is basic. The staff team provide brief verbal feedback to parents at the end of each day about how their child has been at the setting. However, the setting does not exchange any information about children's learning and development and currently staff do not complete observations or planning appropriate to the younger children. The staff team does not plan activities based on observations or assessments made and no developmental records are kept. The setting has established very limited working relationships with other providers who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage and thus is unable to ensure activities are complementary or promote continuity and progression for children. As a result children's learning and development needs are not fully promoted.

Generally documentation is maintained well, although incident records are not always maintained confidentially.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The staff team demonstrate an insufficient knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and therefore cannot meet children's learning and development needs effectively. The setting's limited knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage means that children are not being offered activities and experiences to enable them to progress towards the early learning goals. Some areas of learning are not being fully promoted, for example, physical development communication, language and literacy and problem solving and numeracy. Activities provided are from a general plan and are not adapted to meet the needs of children in the Early Years. Children at the after school club arrive happily and settle in well. The majority of children attending the setting are from the older age group and are on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare register. Younger children are developing through watching and playing with the older children rather than through appropriately planned activities that enable them to develop in each area of learning. Staff demonstrate an insufficient understanding of the early learning goals and the areas of learning and therefore are unable to provide a balanced curriculum. A limited range of resources are available to children at the setting and are selected by staff with no observed input from the children. Generally activities are adult led rather than child initiated which has an impact on children's choice and reduces their independence.

Children are encouraged by staff to share and take turns and this promotes children's awareness of the needs of others. Three girls play Hannah Montana top trumps together and the older children teach a younger child how to play and what to do with the different sections on the cards. Behaviour management is appropriate within the setting and children participate in forming house rules for the setting.

Children's health is promoted as staff encourage them to develop independent hygiene practices, for example, good hand washing routines. The setting has written sickness procedures in place to limit the spread of infection and parents are aware of the exclusion periods for particular infectious illnesses. Children benefit from nutritious snacks such as baked beans on toast, toast and jam and fresh fruit. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the session and children are able to access this independently. The setting records full details of each child's individual dietary requirements on child record forms following initial discussions with their parents when they first start at the setting. A list of any allergies or special dietary requirements is displayed in the kitchen area. Although there is an extensive outdoor area available to the after school club this is not effectively used all year round and children are missing opportunities to develop and extend their physical skills.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	4
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	4
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	4
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted.

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.