

The Den out of School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY375743
Inspection date	13/10/2008
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
Setting address	The Den Before & After School Club, Business & Technology Centre, Radway Green, CREWE, CW2 5PR
Telephone number	01270 884 443
Email	
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).

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

The Den Out of School Club was registered under the present provider in 2008. The setting is privately owned and operates from three converted houses situated on the Imex Spaces Business Park in Radway Green, near Alsager. Children are cared for within six playrooms located on two floors. There is a large secure area available for outdoor play. A maximum of 60 children aged four to 11 years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 07.00 to 09.00 and 15.00 to 18.00 during term time and each weekday from 07.00 to 18.00 during school holidays. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas and are taken to and collected from several schools in the locality.

There are currently 82 children on roll aged from four to 11 years. Of these, three are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There were 35 children present on the day of inspection. The care provided to children aged over five years is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five members of staff including the manager. The manager is qualified to level 3 in early years and three staff are qualified to level 2. Two staff are working towards a level 3 early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The provision for children in the EYFS does not adequately take into account or complement the learning and development opportunities that children receive elsewhere. Four and five year olds attending are welcomed and included in games and play experiences alongside their older siblings and friends in the after school setting and have their own designated playroom. However, adults do not observe, assess, plan or provide for each one to make progress from their starting points or elicit information about their development needs from parents and the various schools from which they are collected. The setting is not planning effectively for improvement and has not made preparation for delivering the EYFS requirements.

Nevertheless, staff endeavour to support every child and recognise each one's uniqueness. They are successfully supporting both children who speak English as an additional language and the cultural and religious diversity represented in the membership. Key strengths are the understanding and flexibility of senior staff to families' needs and involving and consulting children about the activities of the club.

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:

- ensure that parents are always informed of any accidents sustained whilst in the care of the providers and of any first aid treatment given 13/11/2008
- organise staffing arrangements to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children when they first return to the club from school 13/11/2008
- keep records to show that suitability checks, including CRB checks, have been done for all staff and drivers and devise ways to check staff members' ongoing suitability 13/11/2008
- undertake sensitive observational assessment of individual children in the EYFS in order to plan and provide experiences and activities for them which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs. 13/11/2008

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure that up-to-date records are maintained of all drivers, escorts and their vehicles, including insurance details
- extend the provision of fruits and vegetables within the snack menus to make them more balanced and nutritious
- ensure that all staff are informed and up-to-date about safe practice decisions concerning the use of the trampoline
- assess and evaluate the setting's strengths and weaknesses and make plans for continuous improvement
- strengthen the exchange of information between all parties involved with children in the EYFS so that their play experiences complement and consolidate what they are learning in school and at home.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager of the setting is qualified and has prioritised professional training for senior play worker staff. However, she is required to maintain adult-to-child ratios and standards on school runs and within the setting. As a result, time has not been given to familiarisation with the EYFS or with necessary forward planning, organisation and record keeping. Staff retention difficulties also hold back confidence and the manager's capacity to monitor the setting's strengths and weaknesses and implement improvements. Some records are not properly maintained, including suitability checks for one driver escort and records of the cars and drivers being used to take and collect children from school. Fire drill records are not completed promptly to learn from them and risk assessments and accident records are not always being used effectively by all staff. As a result, both adults and children are unsure, for example, of the arrangements for the use of the large trampoline which has a damaged safety net.

The manager demonstrates a commitment to long term improvement through the improved supervision and support of staff through annual appraisals and training. She has also comprehensively re-written the setting's policies and procedures so that they are suitable. In particular, the policies on promotion of equality and inclusion are working effectively and all children are well integrated. In addition, children have improved 'home rooms' around the setting, and school holiday activity plans are now tailored to better meet the needs of three age ranges.

The setting works adequately with parents and there are warm, supportive and flexible relationships particularly between the manager and parents. The views of parents and children are sought after the summer holidays so that successful ideas and trips can be repeated. However, no systems have been devised to link with parents and schools about the learning and developmental stages of individual children in the EYFS.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The learning environment, resources and activity plans are appropriate for out of school provision for children in the EYFS, but staff are mostly ineffective in providing for individual young children's learning and development. This is because staff do not undertake frequent observational assessments of individual children in the EYFS or find out about their starting points and capabilities from parents or schools where they are attending. Too little time is spent with young children when they first arrive from school because key staff are still out collecting children and some of the drivers and escorts do not actively engage with children. As a result, adults do not have a clear enough understanding of children's individual needs to give them challenge and support to make identifiable progress. Instead, the setting offers planned arts and crafts, outdoor play and themed activities to the whole group. The activities do contrast well with the formal teaching received in school and offer suitable opportunities for physical and creative development. For example, children play team games such as football outside and devise turn taking role play games using the static rowing boat on the grass. Trips in the school holidays to cinemas, sports facilities and places of interest are also appropriate pastimes which foster children's knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development.

Children's welfare is adequately provided for because activities, resources and caring adults contribute to a welcoming, fun atmosphere. Children enjoy active outdoor play and are encouraged to adopt good personal hygiene to avoid cross-infection. A water cooler is a popular new addition regularly used by most children and snacks are warm and fairly substantial. However, fruits, salad and vegetables on the menus have recently been reduced in favour of more popular convenience foods and the tuck shop sweets remain popular with all.

Children are taught to keep safe through use of clear registration and collection arrangements and guidance and supervision in the safe use of the equipment. Informal, friendly relationships forged between staff and children are successful in promoting good behaviour. Children are encouraged to mix and take care of one

another. Adults and children respect particular additional needs, including religious, language and dietary requirements, and enjoy being with children who do not attend the same school as they do. Creative activities, such as making and displaying family trees, help children to make links between home and the club, building a strong sense of belonging. Good art and craft materials are well used and children are pleased to take various decorated Halloween crafts and paintings home. Quieter, smaller rooms are used for older children to pursue computer games or for younger children to play with dolls and small world resources. Children choose what they do and where, so that their individual feelings and moods are satisfactorily catered for.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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

Leadership and management

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

Quality and standards

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

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.