



Barracudas

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY222697
Inspection date	24 August 2005
Inspector	Greg Wolff
Setting Address	Hutton Manor School, Rayleigh Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 1SD
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Registered person	Young World Leisure Group Trading as Barracudas
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?

Barracudas (Brentwood) opened in 2002. It operates from Woodlands School at Hutton Manor near Brentwood. It serves the wider area.

There are currently 584 children from 4 to 14 years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a small number of children with special needs.

The group opens five days a week during summer school holidays. Sessions are from 9.30 until 16.30. There is an additional option for children to attend from 8.00

until 18.00.

Twenty two full-time staff work with the children. Seven staff work full-time with the children under eight, three of whom have a teaching qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where good hygiene practices are maintained. They learn about good hygiene routines through washing their hands at appropriate times, such as after using the toilet and before eating. Staff consistently apply agreed health procedures which ensures that any risk of infection is minimised and children's health is maintained.

Children keenly enjoy participating in a very wide range of inside and outside activities which contribute to their good health and physical fitness. For example, children develop their large motor skills as they play football and tennis and learn to use their skills with precision in activities such as archery and circus skills. Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise as they delight in the challenges of the range of activities which they tackle.

Children are able to rest and relax in comfortable surroundings according to their individual needs and daily routines. Fresh drinking water is freely available throughout the session and children are able to help themselves independently. Children also benefit from having access to regular drinks when engaging in outdoor physical play.

Staff are appropriately first aid trained and well informed about children's relevant medical conditions.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The provision has good measures in place to ensure that risks to children's safety, both indoors and outdoors, are minimised. Thorough and regular risk assessments are carried out to reduce potential hazards. Emergency drills are practised weekly and children are reminded of the procedure to follow daily. This helps them become familiar with the routine in the event of an emergency.

Children use high quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. Where activities may be dangerous, suitably qualified staff ensure that children are made aware of the precautions to follow which will ensure that they are not put at risk. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of children in their care, though visitors to the site are not immediately directed to the administration office. Staff ratios are mostly good but must be maintained at a higher level during some activities where there are more obvious dangers.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear and secure understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give top priority to children's welfare. The positive relationships which are built between them help staff to become familiar with children who are then more comfortable and open in their communication.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and are very happy and settled due to staff relating to them sensitively and providing a very wide range of activities which are interesting and stimulating. Children become engrossed in an extensive range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities, which provide high levels of challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children play an active part in all sessions as they offer their own ideas and respond to challenges with great enthusiasm. For example, children delight in their successes whilst learning circus skills and challenge staff to compete with them.

Children learn and practise new skills through their keen participation in the activities on offer. With the encouragement of the well motivated staff, they strive to achieve their own potential in a number of specialist activities such as archery, quad biking, circus skills and swimming. They delight not only in their own positive outcomes, but those of their peers also.

Children's creative development is enhanced by the fully stocked art room where they can take part in a wide variety of different activities such as painting, collage and sculpture.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are warmly welcomed into the setting which helps them to feel happy and secure. Staff appreciate and respect their individuality which ensures that their personal needs are met.

Children's behaviour is excellent and they benefit from having clear and consistent boundaries set by staff. Children are very well supported and are regularly praised and encouraged which promotes their self-esteem. They learn to share play equipment and take turns and increasingly take responsibility for their own actions. For example, children sit behind a safe line and wait their turn during an archery session, watching and applauding the successes made by their peers. Their understanding of right and wrong is promoted sensitively by staff through gentle reminders to care for their environment, the equipment and each other.

All children are encouraged to participate in a range of developmentally appropriate activities which ensures that they have equal opportunity to maximise their enjoyment and potential. Children attending for the first time are quickly integrated and are introduced to the groups of children they join.

Children's well being is significantly enhanced by the effective partnership between staff and parents. Parent's views about their children's needs are actively sought before children attend and they are also asked to provide feedback after the scheme. They are provided with daily verbal feedback on their children and what they have been doing. They receive good quality information about the scheme by means of an excellent colour brochure.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by good organisation and the commitment and dedication of the staff. They have a high regard for the well being of all children. Effective staff deployment by the management ensures that children are fully supported and cared for in most of the activities on offer.

The play scheme carries out regular evaluations and is committed to improvement and development. The management carries out a number of staff evaluations, risk assessments are monitored frequently by head office and questionnaires are sent out to parents and children. All staff attend a two day in-house training programme before the summer scheme commences to ensure that they are fully aware of agreed policies and procedures.

Staff are fully supported by well written policies and children's well being and safety are given high priority. Staff give good support to children and support them as they strive to achieve their potential in all the activities on offer.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, all new staff that are appointed are qualified and vetted and undergo a two day in-house training programme prior to the commencement of the scheme. This ensures that children's needs are met and that their safety and well being are protected.

A direct method of contacting the emergency services from the swimming pool has been provided, ensuring that children are kept safe at all times.

Children have opportunities to relax and unwind in their base rooms, where the provision of comfortable chairs, televisions and videos ensure that children's needs are met.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- ensure that all visitors to the site are directed to the administration office and have their time on site recorded
- ensure that suitable staff ratios are maintained during all activity sessions. This refers to staff in the pool during under eight's swimming sessions.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk