



Hitchin Fun Club, After School and Holiday Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	146766
Inspection date	12 August 2005
Inspector	Carol Mansell

Setting Address	c/o Highbury Infant School, Standhill Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 9AG
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Registered person	Hitchin Fun Club, After School And Holiday Club
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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hitchin Fun Club was opened in 1990. It operates from three rooms in a purpose built building. The club is committee run and serves the local Hitchin area. A maximum of 35 children may attend the after school and holiday club at any one time. The after school club is open each weekday from 15:00-18:00 term time only. The holiday club is open each weekday from 08:00-18:00 each school holiday. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 114 children from 4 to 12 years on roll. The group currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and also supports a

number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The fun club employs 12 staff, of these 7 of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children increase their understanding of the importance of a healthy diet as they are offered choices of spreads with their morning toast. Children are learning about the importance of not sharing their foods as some children have intolerances or dietary restrictions and this is reinforced by staff who work closely with parents in order to meet the dietary needs of all the children. Parents provide packed lunches for their children and have useful information from staff regarding what items can be stored safely. Staff eat in the same space as the children and are able to observe them and provide good role models for them. Meal times are social, happy times where the staff and children discuss what they are eating and why these are their favourites which helps the children to gain a better understanding of a healthy diet.

Children confidently access drinks from a tray and know that they can ask staff for a drink when they are thirsty. Children take part in a range of physical activities which contributes to their good health. There is a large outdoor area that they use and have access to a wide range of outdoor equipment. Staff join in with the outdoor activities enhancing the experience for the children.

Staff have clear procedures to follow regarding first aid and the required documentation is in place. Staff are aware of the needs of any children who need medication regularly and support the children with this to ensure their well-being is safeguarded. However, the hygiene routine before and after meals does not fully maintain a good example for the children as staff do not wash the tables adequately at these times which could have implications for their health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and airy environment. The accessibility and variety of well maintained toys and equipment means the children can move around freely to independently choose the activities they wish to participate in.

Children understand the need to remove their outdoor footwear before entering the main hall as this safeguards the children playing on the floor from 'having their fingers squashed' and protects the hall floor surface. Staff are aware of the need to conduct a premises check before children arrive to ensure the premises are safe. They provide a tape barrier to areas the children are not permitted to access to ensure their safety at all times. Staff ensure accident and incident reports are up to date and signed by parents as appropriate. They reflect on these to ensure their safety

precautions are appropriate and that improvements are made if accident records reveal a pattern of problems in a specific area or with specific equipment.

Staffing levels are maintained at a high level, however, children accessed some areas unsupervised and others were left inside alone whilst the member of staff went to collect resources for her activity. Staff were therefore not able to ensure children's safety at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are relaxed, cheerful and busy in the setting most of the time. They have formed good relationships with staff and other children which enable them to feel safe and secure. Children know what activities are available to them and are also aware of where the additional resources are stored. They choose what they want to play with and are supported by the staff that are available to help if needed particularly when the task is more difficult, such as making intricate Lego models. The younger children have opportunities to play games to their own rules, for example when playing pool this ensures they have a sense of achievement when all the balls have been potted.

Children are developing their confidence and self-esteem which is assisted by the rules regarding the outside toys that staff have put in place. The children know that they must seek assistance from a staff member to gain access to the outdoor resources and this they do very well. The staff make the most of any good weather by spending a long time outside providing lots of fresh air for the children and giving them a variety of activities to access. However, some children would have preferred to have been able to play indoors for part of the time.

Staff set out the different areas with a wide variety of activities. They are aware of the children's likes and preferences and endeavour to meet their individual needs. Staff allocate time for a small group activity as this allows the less confident children to have additional support in order to achieve a completed item of work before the end of the session.

Children are confident when talking to adults and are able to state why they like to attend the fun club. 'I like to come here because it has lots of fun stuff. Friends come here too, but if they are not here I can make new friends'. 'I come because Mum and Dad work. My sister comes here as well. I like to do the colouring and playing on the playstation'. 'On the outings I liked the rides and because we had a cooked meal whilst we were there'. However, one child also stated 'I don't go on the outings as they are always on a Wednesday, and I don't come on a Wednesday'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are aware of the need to share and take turns. Staff encourage this,

particularly with the playstation, by providing a timer and list of children who wish to have a go. This works well and children are able to regulate it themselves. Children are friendly and in the main behave well. The rules of the setting are kept on the board and are reinforced by the staff as required. Children are learning right from wrong and staff aid this by explaining to children why things are wrong and give them time to calm down and then say sorry to the other child which helps them to understand how the other person may be feeling.

Staff provide a wide range of toys, equipment and resources for the children that meet their developmental needs and helps them to gain a better understanding of diversity and difference.

Children who attend with special needs are given additional support by both the staff and other children. The staff exchange information with parents on a daily basis and this ensures the children's individual needs are being met and that they are being cared for in line with parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff arrange the space, resources and routine to help encourage the children's competency and independence. Children are happy and confident when initiating their own play and exploring the setting; they seek adult support if required. The timetable is on the wall so children and staff know what is available and when. The operational plan is in place and this indicates how the sessions will be run and which staff have set responsibilities. Staff plan the activities in advance and these are included with the information on the wall. However, staff are not always well prepared for the planned activities and this can jeopardise the children's safety.

Parents have access to comprehensive policies and procedures and staff are provided with a staff handbook to ensure all adults are aware of the expectations of this setting. All of the documentation is available on the premises. However, there have been changes to committee and staff but these have not always been notified to Ofsted.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to improve the procedure for completing records of medicines administered to children; the policy to promote equal opportunities with regard to staff employment and training and the procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff or a volunteer.

The provider has improved all the procedures and policies as requested. The records of any medication administered to the children are kept confidential, are signed by parents and meet the requirements under the National Standards. The procedures to be followed if any allegations are made against staff are now included in the Child Protection policy. These safeguard staff as well as children and meet the requirements under the National Standards. The policy to promote equal

opportunities with regard to staff employment and training have been met in part. The provider advertises any vacancies widely and has accepted work experience students with special needs and has a member of staff who also has additional needs. As yet training has not been accessed and this is still on the agenda for future development.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made against this setting.

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 all surfaces have been cleaned between activities particularly when the same surfaces are to be used for meal times
- make sure that children are supervised at all times and that staff are aware of where they are
- ensure the regulator is informed of any significant changes, particularly any changes of staff or committee members.

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