

Jousters at Wheatfields

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Hilary Preece

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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

Jousters at Wheatfields is one of seven provisions run by Jousters Childcare Limited. It originally opened in 2004, but was re-registered in 2008 because the owners became a limited company. It operates from Wheatfields Infant School which is situated in the Marshalswick area of St Albans, Hertfordshire. The group has access to a resources room with an integral kitchen, the school dining room and the use of the school hall. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The club is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 32 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 12 children in the early years age group on roll for the before and after-school clubs and three children on roll for the holiday club. The after-school club is open each weekday from 15:10 until 18:00 during school term times only. The group also offers a breakfast club from 07:45 until 09:00 during school term times and a holiday club from 08:00 until 18:00 during most school holidays. This inspection took place whilst the holiday club was in operation when three children in the early years age group were present.

Jousters at Wheatfields also provides out of school care for children aged over eight years which is based in the nearby junior school. This is also registered with Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The older children join the younger children at the end of each after-school club session for collection by parents. Children come from the local area. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

The holiday club employs a total of 14 staff who work across all three parts of the provision. Six members of staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications and two staff are working towards a qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children enjoy their time in the setting because they are actively engaged in activities and play that interest them. Children's welfare is generally managed well so that they remain safe, healthy and feel secure. The process of self-evaluation is positive and identifies strengths and realistic areas for development which all staff are supported to work towards. Some strategies introduced to meet targets, such as making observations of children who attend the after-school club and developing links with parents and other agencies to support children's learning and development, are new. This means it is too early to assess their impact on how well children are making progress. However, this does suggest there is good capacity for further and continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- make sure observations are relevant and used effectively to assess and plan for children's progress towards the early learning goals
- make sure the daily checks that form part of the risk assessment show when and by whom they are completed, and that they identify additional hazards. This refers to safety of the entrance area to the club and the accessibility of electrical equipment in areas children use
- provide parents with information about the Early Years Foundation Stage and develop ways of sharing children's achievements and progress with them.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's care, welfare and learning are promoted as a result of a suitably qualified and experienced staff team. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and most documentation is managed efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Risk assessments are generally effective in minimising risks and keeping children safe within the setting. However, some daily checks made of the premises are not consistently recorded within the holiday club and not all risks are identified. For example, untidy shoes scattered over the entrance floor and the position of an electric toaster within children's reach present hazards to children and adults. Arrangements for safeguarding children in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines are securely understood by staff and regularly reviewed through training. Children are attended to appropriately if they are hurt or sick because most staff hold a current first aid certificate.

Partnerships with parents are overall well-established. The owner reports that there is effective communication with parents of children attending the after-school club through regular e-mailing and discussion with staff. Parents have access to good quality information about the setting and its policies. Some information relating to weekly and daily activities that children take part in is displayed on the notice board but parents are less well informed specifically about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and how their children's learning and development will be supported through play. Some positive links with other settings children attend, particularly with the school and class teachers for children attending the after-school club, are being developed in order to promote continuity and progression for children.

The process of reflection and review has meant there has been good improvement following the last inspection. A clear and comprehensive self-evaluation document shows how all issues raised at inspection have been addressed. For example, a review of the staffing arrangements and times when the holiday club will run now ensures that suitably qualified staff are on duty to manage it. The owner encourages the staff team to be involved in the self-evaluation process so there is

a common sense of purpose between the adults that work together. Children also have a sense of ownership of the club by sharing their ideas about activities they would like to do which are then incorporated into the plans.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children use a comfortable class room which is divided into defined areas where they can chill out comfortably or access a range of table top activities and games. They have free access to indoor and outdoor play as they wish which enables children to make choices and take part in play that suits their needs. Staff report that children are grouped appropriately in the after-school club with a key person appointed to ensure there is a familiar adult they can turn to. Planning takes account of the EYFS and ensures a range of activities are provided that supports children's learning and development across the six areas, with a particular emphasis on supporting children's social skills as they join the club. Some simple observations of children in the early years age group attending the after-school club have recently been introduced to establish their starting points. These are not necessarily focused on areas that will benefit the children within the context of the setting and have not yet been evaluated to plan the next steps in their learning and development. There is a generally more relaxed approach to play and activities in the Holiday Club with less emphasis given to monitoring children's learning and development and less structure to the sessions.

Children attending the holiday club are observed to be happy and content. They report that they enjoy the variety of activities offered including outside physical play on apparatus, riding their own bikes and playing team games such as dodge ball. Children generally behave well and show positive attitudes to taking part and getting along with their peers. Many children enjoy the craft activities. Appropriate support is provided for young children to enable them to design and paint their own T-shirt. They express their ideas through creating individual designs and explore the range of mark-making and paints available. Staff report that children attending the after-school club have opportunities to consolidate their understanding of numeracy and problem-solving when playing bingo or taking part in cooking activities. They observe how toy cars move with speed as they are raced down ramps. Children play with magnetic letters on a white board, they read books and practice good listening skills during games.

Children are encouraged to contribute to their own well-being. They keep themselves fit and healthy through taking plenty of physical exercise and eating nutritious snacks and light meals. Menus for the breakfast and after-school clubs offer toast, healthy cereals, and a range of sandwiches, jacket potatoes, noodles and fresh fruit so children are encouraged to make healthy choices. Children stay safe because sound hygiene practices are followed. Children are reminded about the importance of washing their hands thoroughly and are keen to help with routines such as wiping tables before lunch. They are reminded about safe play rules when using equipment outside and co-operate well together when stacking their chairs and clearing away after lunch. Children gain an appropriate understanding of how to behave safely and responsibly. They contribute to setting rules that keep themselves safe and show respect for others and the environment,

which are reinforced by staff when necessary. Overall these practices promote sound outcomes for children.

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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
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?	3
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?	3
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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.