

Link Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	511175
Inspection date	19/02/2009
Inspector	Charlotte Jenkin
Setting address	Whitehill Way, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN5 7DL
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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

The Link Centre Crèche and Hi5 Holiday Camp has been registered for over ten years. It operates from premises within the Link Centre, in west Swindon, and serves customers using the leisure centre facilities and those in the local community.

The crèche is registered to care for up to 12 children from birth to five years old. It is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 09.15 to 12.00 and on Tuesday from 10.45 to 12.15 during term time only. Children may attend for up to two hours. Four staff care for the children, including a manager who has a childcare qualification and three part-time assistants who are qualified to level 2.

Hi5 Holiday Camp is open during the school holidays from 08:30 until 18:00. It is registered to care for 48 children from four years to under eight years at any one time and there are currently 60 children on roll. The holiday camp is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently two children in the early years age range on roll. Seven staff work with the children in the holiday camp. Of these, one holds a level 3 qualification and one is working towards a level 3 qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate. Children's welfare is not promoted effectively as the regulator has not been informed of the person in day-to-day charge of the provision. Staff are not suitably qualified, although they organise a range of activities for the children to support their progress towards the early learning goals in a relaxed out of school environment. The provision has made some improvements since the last inspection and this demonstrates an ability to make improvements from recommendations. However, self-evaluation is weak and adults do not identify areas for future improvement, nor how these will impact on outcomes for children.

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 Ofsted is notified of the person who is managing the early years provision (Suitability of adults) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register) 09/03/2009
- develop an action plan that sets out how staff training and qualification requirements will be met 23/03/2009

(Qualifications, training, knowledge and skills) (also applies to the compulsory part of the Childcare Register)

- investigate written complaints relating to the requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint (Safeguarding and welfare) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register)

23/03/2009

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop systems for sharing information with parents and other adults working with the children regarding their starting points and progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure children have their progress supported towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning, especially communication, language and literacy and problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- undertake observations of children in order to assess their progress and plan for their future learning and development
- develop children's awareness of healthy eating by ensuring hot lunches available are nutritious

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is not fully promoted in the provision as the group has not informed the regulator of the person in day-to-day charge of the provision. This means necessary checks have not been carried out to assess their suitability to work with children. Recruitment procedures ensure adults working with the children are suitable, although they do not hold the minimum required qualifications. However, adults do organise a suitable range of activities that cover most areas of learning in the holiday camp. Most required documentation is kept on the premises and this enables adults to meet the children's needs. Staff deployment ensures children are included and supported in the provision. Risk assessments are effective in ensuring the environment is safe for the children. These include ensuring children are protected from members of the public when using the toilets. The provision has made most improvements since the last inspection, including providing information for parents regarding complaints, activities available to the children and with regard to updating required policies and procedures. However, the evacuation plan is still not displayed to promote the safety of adults and children in the provision. The complaints policy meets current requirements, although systems for responding to complaints do not fully ensure outcomes and future improvements to practices are identified and shared with the complainant. Self-evaluation is weak and does not encourage adults to reflect on their day-to-day practice and identify future areas for improvements, nor how these will impact on outcomes for children. Adults have implemented systems to evaluate the success of the art and craft activities they provide for the children, and this has made improvements to the programme for creative development.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children appear happy and settled in the provision. They confidently join in with the activities, including running games. Children form appropriate relationships with adults and peers, sitting chatting during lunchtime. Older children and adults include younger children in conversations, helping them develop a sense of belonging in the provision. Children develop suitable levels of independence in the provision, washing their hands prior to eating and going to the toilet independently after they have been checked by adults for safety purposes. Adults support children well, helping them learn the rules of the games and making sure they are settled. Children have access to a wide range of physical activities, including running games, swimming lessons, trampoline lessons and football. These help children develop physical skills and encourage a healthy lifestyle. Adults organise a range of activities for the children to support their progress towards the early learning goals in a relaxed out of school environment. The curriculum is not structured and activities cover most areas of learning. However, the programme for problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is not fully developed and children have limited access to books. Children have trips to local places of interest, including the fire and police stations. This helps them develop an awareness of their local community. Observations are not undertaken of children during their play to assess their progress and plan for their future learning and development. Partnerships with parents and others working with the children are not yet developed to gain information regarding children's starting points and areas for future support.

Children play in a welcoming environment where they have plenty of space for physical play. Other areas are used for craft activities and eating to ensure appropriate facilities are available for the children. All equipment is checked to ensure it is safe and suitable for the children's use. The environment is checked daily and this means children play in safe premises. Effective procedures are in place for ensuring children are safe when using other areas of the building, including wearing coloured bands and using professional instructors for specific activities, including swimming and trampolining. Children learn about the importance of hygiene routines, and snacks of fruit are available to purchase during the day. However, hot lunches offered to the children are not nutritious and do not encourage children to develop an awareness of the importance of healthy eating. Children develop a positive attitude towards exercise, with all children being keen to join in the wide range of physical activities available. Children's behaviour is good and adults demonstrate a suitable knowledge of the methods to use for managing children's behaviour. Older children are respectful to younger ones and include them in the activities.

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?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	4

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?	4
How well are children helped to stay safe?	4
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:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability to care for children, or have regular contact with them) 09/03/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Qualifications and training) 23/03/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Procedures for dealing with complaints) 23/03/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability to care for children, or have regular contact with them) 09/03/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Procedures for dealing with complaints) 23/03/2009

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

A concern was received regarding Childcare Register Requirements 6: Arrangements for safeguarding the children being cared for and 8: Suitability of persons to care for children. The concern related to how adults in the provision dealt with children's behaviour and responded to a complaint resulting from this. This Childcare Register requirements concern was inspected and not met therefore an action set to ensure the provision investigates written complaints and informs the complainant of the outcome of any investigation made. This was carried out during an Early Years 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.