

Cockermouth After School Scheme

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY320746
Inspection date 14/05/2009
Inspector Carys Millican

Setting address The Scout Hut, St. Helens Street, Cockermouth, Cumbria,
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Telephone number

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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 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

Cockermouth After School Scheme is run by a voluntary management committee and was re-registered in 2006 to provide a breakfast club, after school club and holiday play scheme in The Scout Centre, Cockermouth. The provision serves the immediate and extended rural community. The club has access to a main hall, craft room, quiet rooms, kitchen and associated facilities. Children have access to an enclosed play area attached to the scout centre. Children use the adventure playground opposite when under supervision. There are shops, sport and leisure facilities nearby.

The club is registered to care for a maximum of 50 children at any one time. There are 176 children on roll, of whom seven are in the early years age range. The club provides care for children aged up to 11 years. The breakfast club is open weekdays from 08.00 to 09.15 and the after school club operates from 15.10 to 17.45 during term time. The holiday play scheme is held each week day from 08.00 to 17.45. The club currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The committee employs eight staff, of which five, including the manager, hold an early years qualification. The club is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of provision is good. The manager and staff work well together as a team to provide effectively for the individual needs of the early years children attending the club. They provide a warm and welcoming environment and service where children's unique qualities are recognised and activities follow their interests. Key strengths lie in the ongoing training and development programme for staff and the well organised documentation, policies and procedures that ensure children's safety and enable the effective running of the provision to promote the outcomes for children. Observation and record keeping are well presented and for the most part met. The manager and staff are highly motivated and a combined effort is made in the self-evaluation process where continuous improvement is seen as a high priority.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop systems to enable the sharing and exchange of information with other settings in order to complement children's learning and encourage parents to be involved in supporting their children's learning and development at home
- further develop the observational assessment of children's development in order to identify the next steps for future learning and planned activities

- appoint a designated person responsible for behaviour management.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well cared for by experienced practitioners who are highly motivated to update their own understanding and professional development by attending training and obtaining early years qualifications. Documentation is well organised and policies and procedures are effectively implemented to ensure the smooth running of the establishment. Staff, parents and children have contributed to the reflective self-evaluation process and continuous improvement of the club is a high priority. Areas for improvement have been identified such as building more formal links with the schools children attend to complement learning already achieved and encouraging parents to help with their child's learning at home. Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance and most requirements are in place. The key worker system is implemented and ensures that children's needs are well met and relationships are well established.

Staff are appropriately deployed to monitor the safety and well-being of the children both indoors and outside in the enclosed play area. Registers are completed and children are supervised at all times. Children are kept safe through the procedures implemented. A robust recruitment process is in place and suitability checks are maintained for staff and the evidence of the suitability of drivers is obtained from taxi and bus companies. Risk assessments are completed to ensure that all children are kept safe and secure on the premises and on outings. Registration and collection arrangements are robust including detailed risk assessments for the 'walking bus' for escorting children from school and the collection of children by coach or taxi. The manager and staff have a good understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures and are clear on their role and responsibility to protect children's welfare.

The manager and staff work well as a team and act as positive role models for children. They meet with development workers to discuss the running of the group to improve their everyday working practices. The staff have a good rapport with the school staff when collecting children. However, these links do not extend to sharing or exchanging information about children's development, progress or planning to enable the group to complement the learning already taking place. Children with learning difficulties have one to one support whilst attending through funding obtained for extra staff. Parents are encouraged to talk to staff about their children and there is a regular but largely informal exchange of information, which does not include how parents can help with their child's learning at home. Children's records are in order and consents obtained. A wealth of information is displayed on the notice board in reception including the complaints procedure.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy themselves and have fun. They arrive happily at the club and quickly settle into the daily routine. Staff set out the tables and adjoining rooms before children arrive. They rotate the resources to provide a balance of activities

throughout the week. These are based on the interests of the children and take account of their age and individual needs. Children enjoy the activities indoors and outside as they move freely from one activity to another independently accessing resources and initiating their own games and adventures. For example, several children build dens using the natural resources in the play area. They play ball games and peddle scooters and tricycles on the tarmac area. Children regularly enjoy visits from people in the community. They recently enjoyed visits from a local farmer complete with his tractor and a sheep, the fire fighters and fire engine, and the local police. Children are well behaved. They follow the good role model set by staff and learn about respect and how to treat others courteously. The behaviour policy is implemented and effective positive methods are used by staff. However, a designated person for behaviour has not been appointed.

Children easily access the resources set out on the tables or on the floor. They enjoy painting the large cardboard box creating their own picnic basket. Staff support their activity and extend this by asking what they want to do next which results in a discussion about having a teddy bears picnic. The staff are effective in consulting the children for their ideas of what activities they would like the club to provide and they continuously look at ways to improve the environment. For example, they have created a quiet area for the younger children and a quiet area for the older children. Children enjoy the craft table and engage in conversations with the adults as they complete large table top jigsaws. Staff complete simple note style observations which are transferred into children's own personal files and their ongoing development is recognised using the Early Years Foundation Stage development charts. Assessments are not yet completed to identify the next steps in children's learning which would inform future planning.

Children are offered healthy snacks and drinks that take account of their individual dietary needs. They sit together creating a social time where they have a choice of fresh fruit, hot buttered toast or crackers. Menus show a good selection of healthy options are provided. Fresh drinking water is easily accessed by children. Staff explain packed lunches are stored in a cool storeroom till lunchtime and the contents are discussed with parents on registering. Children understand the importance to their health of adopting basic hygiene habits as they explain why they must wash their hands before eating, after playing outside and after toileting.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
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?	2
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?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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