



Springers Holiday and After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY306012
Inspection date	24 January 2006
Inspector	Lynne Kathleen Talbot
Setting Address	Leys Primary School, Ripon Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 4QZ
Telephone number	01438 314148
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Registered person	Springers Holiday and After School 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Springers Holiday and After School club registered in March 2005 and is located in Leys Primary School, Stevenage. The group is situated in two main rooms which is divided into separate areas according to activity, and have use of the gymnasium for sports activities. Children have access to secure outside play areas.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the club at any one time. It is open during school term-time and sessions are daily from 15:15 to 18:00. The group also provides care during the school holidays. These sessions run daily during each school holiday and are from 08:30 to 17:30.

There are currently 35 children on roll, the group is registered to care for children from 4 years to under 8 years, they also accept children aged from 8 to 12 years at all sessions. The club serves children from Leys Primary School and from the wider community. They are currently supporting children who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The club employs four staff. Three staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications with the fourth staff member booked to attend training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a comfortable, clean environment where there is plenty of space and separate areas to offer a wide range of activities and play opportunities. They develop an excellent knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyles, passed on to them by staff in an enthusiastic and practical manner so that they understand the relevance of this area. Children have a very good understanding of the importance of personal hygiene, for example, washing their hands before snack time and after outdoor activities. They enjoy healthy and nutritious foods, including fresh fruit and vegetables, yoghurts, and hot snacks such as toast and baked beans. They participate in a range of creative activities such as food tasting sessions, where they have further opportunities to learn about different foods, finding out which ones are healthy and how they affect their development. Children evaluate menus and give feedback about what they like and would like to try again. This enables them to make fully developed and considered choices for supporting their own health as growing individuals.

Children enjoy an extensive range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. They develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills and co-ordination as they participate in structured activities such as dance sessions, dodge-ball and a variety of sports. Afterwards they recognise their thirst and seek drinks independently to replenish their fluid levels. All children are able to participate as staff have an excellent understanding of individual children, adapting activities to suit needs and working with children on particular skills so that they are able to practise and master these. Their independence is consistently promoted and they have an exceptional understanding of their own needs, for example, serving snacks and helping themselves to drinks when needed.

Children's general health and safety is supported by excellent relevant paperwork and records. Children's medical needs, both ongoing or of an emergency nature, are thoroughly dealt with through clearly outlined procedures carried out by qualified staff. Clear methods of recording and procedures underpin all aspects of physical care. These stringent, well-executed measures ensure that children's health can be promoted at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given a very high priority and risks of accidental injury are minimised because staff are vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Policies, procedures and paperwork in this area are very well planned and reviewed. Children are protected as staff carry out daily safety checks, repeating these throughout the sessions to ensure continuing safety, for example, checking that emergency exits are clear at all times and consistently checking materials and furnishings are suitable. There is, however, a need to review the potential risk to children of unauthorised persons being given access to the premises, and of the potential for children to enter areas surrounding the club rooms used, but not included in the registration for their use.

Children have a firm understanding about taking responsibility and keeping themselves, and others, safe as they fully participate in tidying away and take part in regular emergency drills. This is clear from the way they control and demonstrate the drill to each other and new children, explaining all aspects of the procedure and how to keep themselves and each other safe.

Children are cared for in a welcoming setting where their work is creatively displayed and resources are extremely well organised and easily accessible. Continuous monitoring of the environment and staff's constant attention to all details ensures that children's free access to play materials reaches a high standard of safety.

Children are very well protected because staff fully understand child protection issues and the appropriate steps to follow. Staff have completed and reviewed advanced staff training. They work closely with both the schools from which children attend and relevant professionals. This enables them to continually remain abreast of ongoing training and updated regulations to effectively protect children in their care. There are robust procedures for induction of suitable staff and their ongoing suitability whilst employed by the group. However a review of recruitment procedures is required in line with updated regulations and guidelines to ensure the safety of children at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the setting, both when attending the before and after school sessions, and the holiday care scheme. Children's independence is promoted as they freely make choices about resources and activities. An example of this is during the holiday playscheme when the staff extended the hire period of resources for a further 2 days at the request of the children, demonstrating to them that their choices are important. Children play an active role in this setting. There are regular questionnaires enabling children to give feedback on what they do or do not like about the club and its activities, these then form the basis of all future planning.

Children enjoy stimulating activities that cover all areas of development, encouraging

them to explore and learn about their environment. An emphasis is placed on encouraging children to achieve in whatever field interests them, this may include crafts, sports or skill with technology. Planning enables children to choose which area they are interested in and be supported in that. Children are proud of their achievements and are encouraged to develop high self-esteem, all children are consistently praised. To further this sense of pride, each week there is a targeted area of development for which a certificate is presented to one child. They are aided in their learning by the skilled staff who encourage children's understanding and build on their knowledge through appropriate planning, discussion and instruction. Children are able to relax and enjoy their time at the setting as there is a clear recognition that this is out of school hours care, with an emphasis on having fun. However, this is well balanced with opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities to extend children's learning.

Children's overall development is consistently promoted because staff have an excellent understanding of child development and are able to ensure that all activities and play opportunities are appropriate and clearly reflect children's requests, interests and needs. All children are offered appropriate challenge within the activities, and staff make excellent use of open questions to encourage them to think further. Staff are particularly attentive and know the children well. This ensures that activities are always adapted so that children are purposefully occupied and are able to participate meaningfully.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are equally welcomed and play a full and active part in the setting because staff value and respect their individuality. Staff have an excellent understanding of the importance of promoting equality of opportunity, ensuring that this theme runs through all areas of care. An example of this is shown in the discussion sessions to look at differences in the way people use the same language, use tone of voice in different ways or react to others who are as yet unable to use language to put across their meaning. This offers children the chance to extend their appreciation of others as individuals through exploring each other's culture. Children are offered an extensive range of opportunities which promote their understanding of society and increase their awareness of other cultures and ways of life. These include activities related to cultural celebrations and also a great involvement in the local and wider community.

Children are kind and considerate to each other and to staff. Their behaviour is supported throughout the sessions as they choose their activities and competently organise turn-taking and sharing. They respond very well to the staff who are highly skilled and experienced in managing behaviour. Staff set consistent boundaries for the children and act as excellent role models, reinforcing positive behaviour and working closely with the school to ensure that children receive consistent care. Children have taken part in working out their own ground rules, which are produced as posters displayed around the setting and referring to them as reminders throughout the sessions. During all sessions children take a full part in explaining the

rules and guidelines to each other. They are beginning to self-monitor behaviour, developing greater awareness of the reasons for the 'rules'.

Children enjoy the care of this 'nurturing' group who work to support children's development of self-awareness. An excellent example of this is the 'emotional barometer' used as a pictorial measure with children for times when they are distressed, angry or potentially unable to conform to the group behaviour boundaries. Children are able to gain deep understanding of themselves as individuals, gauge their own strength of feeling and find active channels of a more constructive nature.

Children who have special needs have their requirements clearly identified and each child has an individual development plan which is agreed with parents and other professionals. Plans are reviewed regularly to set achievable targets and to ensure that children are fully included in the activities and routines. Inclusion of all children is given priority, for example, all children work on being aware of each other's feelings as well as abilities. In this way they are aware of times when they each may need sensitive support or increased independence to fully participate.

Staff have an excellent working relationship with parents. There is a strong commitment to involving them fully in the setting and in their children's development. Parents are kept very well informed of their children's progress and activities through regular newsletters and meetings with staff, they also complete constructive questionnaires to ensure regular feedback about all aspects of care. Children are cared for with specific care aims agreed with parents through early discussions and ongoing daily written feedback if they choose. There are informative notice boards containing a wealth of information about a number of issues including current themes and activities, snack menus, benefits advice and health and safety. This positive approach ensures that parents' views are valued, standards are maintained and high quality care can be provided for each child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children who attend. Children's care is greatly enhanced by the quality of organisation and the attention to detail in all areas. There is regular staff supervision, a thorough continuing training scheme with attention to ensuring a diverse range of skills to support children and frequent monitoring of the setting's comprehensive policies and procedures.

Children's activities and play opportunities are enhanced by the clear organisation of space, allowing them the freedom to move safely from one activity to another and to determine their own play. Children's welfare, care and safety are consistently promoted through the staff's practical implementation of the setting's policies and procedures. There are robust procedures in place for checking that all staff are suitable and this is supported by an induction process for new staff, ensuring that all are able to work appropriately with the children. The group do, however, need to ensure that they review and update organisational procedures in line with regulations and the National Standards to continue effective care and protection for children.

Children's overall welfare is promoted by the clear understanding that the managers and staff have of their roles and responsibilities. Staff are enthusiastic and highly motivated, attending additional training to increase their knowledge and further improve the care offered. All sessions are well-planned, with a balanced range of opportunities that focus on both leisure opportunities and ongoing nurturing planning aimed to develop children's social skills. This equips them for a full and active part in the community. Staff meet weekly to plan future work and have a clear development plan for the setting, ensuring that the needs of individual children are met and the development of all children is promoted.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration. 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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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):

- improve procedures to ensure that the premises are secure so that unauthorised persons may not enter the building and so that children may not leave the premises unsupervised
- review and update organisational procedures in line with regulations and the National Standards to continue effective care and protection for children.

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:

