

AJ's Out of School Child Care

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	147492
Inspection date	16/04/2009
Inspector	Liz Pike
Setting address	St Joseph's School, Watford Way, London, NW4 4TY
Telephone number	020 8202 2855
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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

AJ's Out of School Child Care is one of two privately owned provisions. It has been registered since 1997. The group operates from St Joseph's Junior School, which is situated in St Joseph's Grove, behind the town hall and is close to local amenities. The group uses the whole of the ground floor of the school including the enclosed outdoor playground. The indoor facilities are extensive and include a dining hall, gym, girls' and boys' toilets, playroom, art room, first aid room as well as a staff room and toilets. The group caters for children from the local community and those who attend the school. At the time of the inspection there were 47 children in the setting, of whom 23 were under eight years old. A maximum of 40 under eight-year-olds may attend at any one time. The group is not registered for overnight care. The group also caters for children aged eight to 11 years. Children's attendance varies on a daily basis and is pre-booked with the owners. Some children attending have special needs and some speak English as an additional language. The group is open from Monday to Friday during school holidays from 09:00 until 17:30. At present there are 11 staff, including the owners, caring for children across both the older and younger age ranges. Of these three have qualified teacher status and one has an appropriate Early Years qualification. The owners manage the number of staff to ensure that the correct ratio of children to adults is maintained despite the varying number of children attending each day.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children are happy and feel safe at AJ's. Staff know the children well and promote their welfare very well. Children enjoy the activities provided but there are missed opportunities to develop their learning fully. For example, there are limited resources for number work, problem solving and investigation.

The owners have begun a process of self-evaluation, but recognise that it lacks detail and depth so is not a useful tool for AJ's development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase the range of resources, including information and communications technology, and staff awareness of the steps in children's learning so as to meet children's learning and development needs more fully
- consider reorganising the pack of information to parents to make it easier for parents to access information

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The owners' leadership and management of AJ's are satisfactory. They both work in the setting every day and ensure children's enjoyment and safety, including completing all the required checks on staff and ensuring that health and safety requirements are fully met. One of their strategies to achieve this is to use walkie-talkies to keep in constant contact with each other. They manage staff effectively so that the required adult-to-child ratios are maintained. They also have high expectations of children's behaviour and implement their behaviour policy consistently. The adults are sufficiently qualified, including one who has very recently achieved qualified teacher status and another who is completing an early years vocational qualification. Daily routines are clear and well known to staff and children. In the morning, younger children can choose between the play room where they have access to technology and small toys, a dressing up and role play area, and a creative area where they can paint, cut and stick. At lunchtimes, they eat their packed lunches with the older children in the dining area and when the weather is suitable, they are encouraged to play in the school's playground. In the afternoons, they use larger play equipment both in the gym and again outside. Drinks are available for children to access when they want.

Relationships with parents are good and one spoke very positively about her children's experiences at AJ's. Useful information, for example, about children's healthy eating, is on display in the reception area. Parents also receive a comprehensive pack of written information, although this is quite dense in text and may not be fully accessible to all.

Currently the self-evaluation processes are insufficiently developed to help staff identify strengths and areas where improvement is needed. Although the owners are fully aware of children's welfare needs and create a very positive and inclusive environment, they are less aware of what should be done to promote learning and development. Apart from the close links with the school, there are no partnerships with other organisations. This is another limiting factor in promoting children's learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff know and care for the children very well. This helps foster children's enjoyment, good behaviour and self-esteem as well as very good and harmonious relationships amongst all. Testimony to this is that many children have attended every holiday for several years. Staff promote children's welfare well and take their responsibilities for protection very seriously, including working closely with the school to ensure cleanliness and safety. They use the extensive premises to provide a variety of activities, both inside and out, to engage younger and older children. In the past they have taken children on trips, for example, to the London Aquarium, when they consolidated the water theme, which was the over-arching topic for that holiday session.

Even allowing for the transitory nature of the provision because it runs during

school holidays only, there are missed opportunities to promote children's learning. For example, there are insufficient resources, including information and communication technology, to engage children in play across all the areas for learning, especially number, problem solving and scientific-type enquiry. Also, staff are not fully aware of the steps children take in learning, do not always plan with these in mind to ensure comprehensive provision and do not always assess fully to identify gaps in learning so that children are able to achieve to the best of their ability. As a result, children's learning and development is satisfactory and promoted less well than their welfare and enjoyment.

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?	2
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?	3
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?	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?	3
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?	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.