

# Jousters At Oakwood

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY367033  
**Inspection date** 15/06/2009  
**Inspector** Gillian Walley

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Hertfordshire, AL4 0XA  
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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

Jousters at Oakwood is one of seven provisions run by Jousters Child Care Ltd. It was registered in 2007, under its current owners, operating from the dining room and school hall at Oakwood Primary School St Albans, Hertfordshire. All children share access to the school's outdoor play areas. The provision is registered for 24 children from five to eight years of age, although children up to the age of 11 may attend. It is open each weekday during term time only from 15.00 to 18.00. There are currently 43 children on roll, all of whom attend Oakwood Primary School. The provision is inclusive and supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There is disabled access to the premises. Jousters at Oakwood employs six staff members. Two hold appropriate early years or play worker qualifications. The setting is on Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Provision at Jousters is good. It meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage well; supporting them in their development effectively. The good leadership ensures that all children are included in activities and the life of the setting. It has a good capacity to improve further because the staff evaluate the provision, can accurately identify areas for further improvement and make appropriate changes.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- establish an system for exchanging information about children's progress with school staff so that children's specific learning needs can be better supported
- provide children with opportunities to develop information and communication technology skills fully

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is led and managed well. The manager has established a strong and cohesive team and the provision runs smoothly and efficiently on a day-to-day basis. There are effective policies and routines, and rigorous procedures for safeguarding children. Staff are very vigilant in supervising children. New staff are vetted carefully, and all risks are assessed. There is a password system for times when parents need another adult to pick their child up in an emergency. There is a good staff:child ratio which enables children can have free access to indoor and outdoor areas. Adults update their training because they are focussed on improving the provision. For example, they have improved the planning of the activities on offer in each of the six areas of learning. They have met the

recommendations of the last inspection report. This together with the commitment to doing the best for the children and the approach to self-evaluation demonstrates that there is good capacity to improve further.

The setting is inclusive, and meets the needs of children who may need additional support in reaching the early learning goals. Each child has a target based on the child's next steps in social development, and when the target has been met a new one is set. Adults observe the children's progress and use the evaluations to inform planning activities that will help each child to progress. The setting does not have a system for exchanging information about children with their class teachers. Consequently, the setting is not able to support children as effectively as they might in some aspects of their development. The setting works well with parents, who say they like the opportunities their children have to mix and play with older children. They feel that their children are well cared for and safe. They recognise that the children are happy because the staff are caring, and because there is so much for them to do. Parents are kept informed via a notice board, for example about menus, and they can share information with the staff at any time. They are able to express their views about the setting through half-termly questionnaires, and the manager responds to their comments.

There are rigorous procedures and policies for safeguarding children. Risks are managed, new staff are vetted, and children feel safe and well cared for. Safety checks are carried out daily. The behaviour policy is linked to the school's behaviour policy so that children have a consistent approach. Key workers plan and assess children's progress, but children relate equally well to all adults. Each child has a target, and adults look for measurable progress towards it. The staff are considering how they can provide parents with even more detailed information about their children's progress. Although they keep good records of children's progress, they have recently embarked on keeping learning journals which will record the children's achievements, often through photographs.

Behaviour is good and children develop good attitudes because adults speak positively to them and provide them with a calm atmosphere in which they can relax and feel comfortable. There are clear routines, and there are incentives to encourage them. Children are polite and very keen to talk to visitors.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

The provision is good. Children enjoy coming to the after-school club. They can choose from a range of activities both indoors and outside, where they use the school's playground and field. Indoor and outdoor activities can be provided at the same time because of the high ratio of staff. The playground provides shade and shelter, is well equipped with balls and racquets and there are opportunities to climb and to invent games. Adults interact with children to encourage and challenge them constructively. They develop children's independence by encouraging them to make choices. There is a good range of activities available indoors and younger and older children play well together. Children can choose from creative tasks, puzzles and construction sets, and there is a quiet reading area. Creative tasks may relate to a special occasion or event, for example making

cards for Father's Day. Resources are easily accessible. Because of the high staff:child ratio adults can play games with the children and this build their confidence. There are opportunities to develop their imagination through role play. However, there are no opportunities for them to develop their information and communication technology skills.

Children learn about their personal safety well. For example they know how to evacuate the building in an emergency. They know that they must wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They say that they feel safe and well cared for by all the adults in the setting. Adults escort the younger children from their classrooms at the start of each session. Children learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle because they have plenty of opportunities for physical exercise, and because of the food they are given to eat. At the start of the session they enjoy some fruit. Later they sit together at tables and have their tea. This is a very sociable occasion. They are given a wide variety of healthy choices, and the menus change regularly so that there is little repetition. All staff are qualified in food hygiene. Children are encouraged to try new foods, and supported in developing their table manners. Children serve one another, and develop their sense of respect by helping with clearing up afterwards. They can have a drink of water at any time.

Staff plan to provide a range of activities for children to choose from, but they feel that the main aim is to develop and build on children's social and emotional skills, and their sense of well-being. They give the children targets, which are explained to them and these are reviewed regularly. They look for clear evidence that children make good progress, for example in their behaviour and in their ability to concentrate and to cooperate together. Children take pride in what they achieve.

## 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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	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

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## **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