



Skools Out Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	312362
Inspection date	30 August 2005
Inspector	Carol Ann Dixon

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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?

Skools Out Ltd is an out of school club based in a Community Centre in Mossley, providing care for a maximum of 60 children. The provision opened in September 1999 and operates each weekday from 07.30 to 08.55 for the breakfast club, 15.15 to 18.15 for the after school club and 07.30 to 18.15 for the holiday club.

Rooms used by the out of school include the hallway, quiet room, snack room and occasional use of the main hall. The group has access to large storage areas and a fully equipped kitchen. Outside areas can be used to the front of the centre.

There are five staff employed at the provision. Two of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate child care qualifications. Three staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health within the setting is supported appropriately by staff who have a secure knowledge of the club's health and hygiene procedures. Children are independent in self-care skills and were observed to be aware of simple health and hygiene practices.

They enjoy physical exercise and learn about the importance of activity in a healthy lifestyle as they join in free-play and organised activities in the fully enclosed playground and spacious hall. Children demonstrated good control over their bodies as they enjoyed a vigorous game of football during the inspection.

Children understand the importance of taking regular drinks as a way to maintain their health as drinks are available at all times. They gain an understanding of the value of good nutrition as healthy eating and dental care are discussed through topic work. However, staff did not utilise opportunities to develop snack time as a relaxed and social occasion and children were not involved in the preparation or serving of snacks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are vigilant and use risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Staff have a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits, which allows children to learn some sense of danger and knowledge about how to protect themselves from harm. Staff skilfully explain to children safety practices, for example, fire safety procedures have been regularly practiced to promote children's understanding of safe evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Children use good quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. Opportunities which allow children the freedom to make choices and access resources independently are limited to what staff have selected for each session.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give priority to children's welfare. Good safety practices are in place for escorting children to and from school, high ratios are maintained and staff wear fluorescent jackets so they are clearly visible.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and settled in the club's welcoming environment. They enjoy this time at the end of the school day and during school holidays when they can relax or be active in accordance with their needs and interests. There is a good range of well-maintained resources which are used effectively to interest children and develop their learning. Many children take an active part in games while others select quieter activities, such as reading or art and craft.

Children are well supported by the staff who are skilled at encouraging children to extend their experiences and at listening and talking to them. Children were encouraged to develop the use of mathematical concepts during the inspection by participation in a group card game which promoted turn taking and number skills. Other children enjoyed playing independently with construction blocks using their imagination to create buildings and vehicles. Staff regularly evaluate the activities they provide to ensure the children take part in activities that offer suitable challenge and promote their well-being and development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children have opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities and access to resources which promote their understanding of wider society.

Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting. Parents receive clear information through, for example, newsletters and access to the provision's policies and procedures. This positive partnership enables children to settle quickly at the setting and reassures parents about the care their child receives.

Children are well behaved, they know what is expected of them because the staff talk to the children regularly to ensure they understand the behaviour boundaries. Children are developing an understanding of right and wrong as they receive consistent messages about sharing and co-operating which enables them to work alongside each other without conflict.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The registered person uses effective recruitment procedures and appropriately vets and checks staff have suitable qualifications. The induction programme and good teamwork make sure all staff work together well to promote children's health, enjoyment and achievement. The priority given to staff development and training is good.

The premises are well organised. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed.

All staff are committed to continuous improvement and development with three staff currently working towards obtaining a childcare qualification. The high quality of the provision means that the provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provision was recommended to update the contents of the first aid box, provide soap for hand washing, make drinks available for children and provide comfortable seating. Children's health and comfort has now been improved as they can relax on armchairs whilst reading books and freely help themselves to drinks of water throughout the session. The provision of first aid items and soap ensure that children's health and hygiene needs are supported.

Actions relating to staff qualifications have been fully complied with. Potential hazards in the rear outdoor area have not been addressed and therefore this is not being used until staff are able to ensure children's safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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.
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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):

- ensure that snack time is a relaxed and social occasion which encourages children's participation in preparation and serving of snacks
- ensure that children can initiate their own play from a range of accessible resources.

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: www.ofsted.gov.uk