

Barracudas Activity Camp

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY330758
Inspection date 13/08/2009
Inspector Patricia Mary Champion

Setting address Brentwood County High School, Seven Arches Road,
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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

Barracudas Activity Camp at Brentwood is one of 26 holiday schemes run by Young World Leisure Group. It opened in 2006 and operates from the sports hall, gymnasium, drama hall, arts and craft rooms, swimming pool, hall and dining room in Brentwood County High School. The holiday scheme also has use of four classrooms as base rooms. All children share access to playing fields and playgrounds for outdoor play. A maximum of 200 children aged under eight years may attend the camp at any one time. The camp opens five days a week during school summer holidays. Operating times are from 8am until 6pm.

There are currently 66 children aged from four to 15 years on roll. Of these, 16 children are in the early years age group. Children attend for full day care. The camp serves the local and wider communities. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The camp employs 11 staff, of whom three of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years or teaching qualifications. There are two staff that hold Qualified Teacher Status. There are two staff members working towards a teaching qualification. Specialist staff such as lifeguards and sports instructors also work with the children. The setting receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children generally enjoy the wide range of fun activities. They are grouped appropriately and feel confident with the adults looking after them. Barracudas has devised effective policies and procedures to promote children's welfare and safety and partnerships with parents are very positive. The safety and security of the children has been given a high regard; staff are vigilant and risk assessment is frequently undertaken. Self-evaluation carried out by the organisation ensures that any improvements are generally well-chosen and carefully planned.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the timetable to ensure that resources and staff are effectively deployed to consistently provide children with enjoyable learning experiences.
- develop a systematic and routine approach to using observations to plan learning experiences tailored for individual needs
- ensure that an acting manager has a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities and is provided with all the relevant information needed to

efficiently run the setting.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded because adults have checks in place to ensure they are suitable to work with the children. Staff are vigilant about the children's safety at all times. The children's security on the premises is a paramount consideration, particularly while there is building work undertaken on the school site. Staff have a very good awareness of the whereabouts of other people in the building or outside. An efficient system has been implemented for the collection of children. Fire drills are regularly undertaken to ensure that children and staff can swiftly evacuate the premises in an emergency. Children are protected as staff have a suitable understanding of their responsibilities with regard to child protection procedures. They understand who to share their concerns with, both within the setting and externally.

The staff working with the children in the Early years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are suitably qualified and experienced to ensure that children's activities are appropriately planned and supported. The induction and training programme ensures that staff work together to implement the organisation's policies and procedures in a suitable manner. However, the acting manager has not been given sufficient information prior to taking on the role regarding Barracudas' operational procedures and good practice guidelines, so that all routines run smoothly. The minimum required staffing ratios are usually met, but at times staff are fully stretched especially when dealing with minor accidents or individual children's care needs. Staff from another nearby Barracudas' activity camp provide cover in the event of staff absence or sickness. While documentation is mostly in good order, it is not always systematically filed so that it can easily be found for inspection. Self evaluation is completed by the organisation and staff on site evaluate the activities they provide to ensure that they are effective in focussing on priorities for improvement.

Parents and carers are supplied with good quality information which includes the camp's organisation, the activities offered and booking conditions. They are kept informed of what their children do and their achievements through daily discussions, weekly certificates and appropriate notices. Parents speak very positively about the camp and appreciate the wide range of activities offered to the children and how they are made to feel welcome and valued. Parents become meaningfully involved in their children's experiences by contributing to questionnaires or attending the weekly talent show.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children follow a planned programme of fun experiences linked to themes and special events such as dressing up days are held each week. The grounds of the school allow staff to plan plenty of outdoor physical activities. A range of sporting equipment is used and larger items such as a bouncy castle, aqua slide and go-karts are appropriately supervised. There are also opportunities for children to

attend intensive courses such as swimming or 'lab rats' science sessions. Children demonstrate their creative skills as they design and make collages, flags, models and greetings cards, sometimes utilising items they find in the environment, such as feathers. Alternative choices are always offered to the main activities. However, the structure of some sessions means that there are still occasions when children spend time sitting and waiting rather than taking part in productive experiences. Due to the large school site the youngest children often have to walk distances to have a snack or to reach their next activity. This sometimes has an impact on children's behaviour and level of tiredness.

The staff interact well with the children and actively encourage children to join in, try new games and extend their skills. Warm and trusting relationships are built with the children returning year after year. The range of activities provide children with opportunities to learn how to work as part of team and listen and respect others ideas. Effective strategies are used to ensure that children feel valued and acknowledged. Staff greet children warmly by name and rewards such as sunhats and certificates are given to acknowledge effort and achievements. There is a clear policy covering equality of opportunity and staff are sensitive to the children's individual needs and backgrounds. However, the staff have not yet developed a systematic and routine approach to using their observations of the children's achievements to plan learning experiences tailored for children's individual needs.

Children generally behave responsibly and know what is expected of them. They are told about safety in the various areas of the school and this message is reinforced throughout each day. The many opportunities for exercise and fresh air and appropriate hygiene routines ensure that children remain healthy. Their dietary needs are met by parents providing a packed lunch and fruit can be purchased from the fruit shop. Staff are mindful of very hot weather; they encourage children to play in the shade while outdoors and check that they are drinking plenty of fluids and wear sun lotion and sunhats. Children's medical needs are met as staff deal promptly with minor accidents and have had additional training to deal with asthma and anaphylaxis reaction to allergies.

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?	3
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?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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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