

Barracudas Activity Camp

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 203427
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Inspector Lynn Denise Smith

Setting address Chelmsford County High School, Broomfield 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 Chelmsford is privately owned and managed. It opened in 1994 and operates from various rooms within the Chelmsford County High School for Girls. A ramp to the hall entrance means that the premises are easily accessible. A secure enclosed outdoor area is used for outdoor play activities. A maximum of 146 children aged from four to eight years may attend the setting at any one time. The group is open five days a week during school holidays from 8:00am to 6:00pm.

There are currently 20 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) years. They live in the local and surrounding areas. The setting also offers care to children aged over five years to 16 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are 24 members of staff, including the manager who manages the early years provision. Six staff hold Qualified Teacher Status and three staff hold other appropriate early years qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children's individual needs are identified through the setting's clear procedures and effective working relationship with parents. All children are well-supported and treated with equal concern. Children are provided with fun based activities which mostly enable them to explore all six areas of learning. Staff plan a varied and exciting programme of activities and make very basic observations about how the children achieve these. Observations are used to identify a next step or skill for children to work towards. Children's welfare is suitably promoted through very clear and well-implemented procedures. Effective systems for reviewing and evaluating the provision enable staff to identify areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure activities on offer cover all six areas of learning and enable children to freely express themselves creatively.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by a group of caring and committed staff who work for the Barracudas organisation. The company has very clear written policies and procedures in place to ensure that all of their settings are provided with consistent guidelines to follow. Children are effectively safeguarded as the setting has clear recruitment procedures and induction practices for new staff. Staff undertake

training which includes safeguarding before each holiday camp operates. The staff team work well together and share skills to extend the children's experiences.

The company shares good practice and feedback from inspections throughout its settings and has a clear system for monitoring and evaluating its provision to identify improvements. For example, parents and children are asked to provide feedback about their views on the camp; the younger children's questionnaires are in pictorial form whereas the older children are asked to describe what they like the most about the scheme. Many of the children state that they like the staff and the activities most.

Clear written information is available for parents and staff are provided with effective and accurate written information about the children's needs. Policies are well-implemented by staff and are inclusive for all attending.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's welfare needs are very well met by a dedicated and consistent team of adults, many of whom have returned to work at the holiday scheme for a number of years. Their learning and development is promoted through fun-based activities, which generally enable them to explore all six areas of learning. Children develop a sound understanding about keeping themselves safe and healthy as they follow the staff's directions and the setting's consistent policies. For example, they know that they need to walk sensibly between activities staying with their group leader and not running off. Children gain a secure understanding about healthy eating as staff actively encourage them to eat at least five portions of fruit or vegetables each day. If they achieve this, they receive a stamp on their card; when they are able to produce five completed cards by the end of the week, they receive a suitable prize. Children enjoy sitting with their friends at meal times, sharing this special time of the day and chatting calmly with their peers and with the staff supervising them.

Children have access to large expanses of areas within the Chelmsford County High School for Girls. Each group, mostly determined by age, has a base room where children leave their belongings and return to at the end of each session. Activities are carried out in appropriate rooms and halls, for example, children express themselves through music and drama in the drama studio and use the outdoor equipment on fields and areas within the grounds of the school. Children enjoy safe play experiences as staff thoroughly risk assess the premises each day.

Children are very settled and comfortable within the holiday camp. They approach staff confidently and share jokes with them. Children's self-esteem is actively promoted by staff being attentive to their needs, praising them and encouraging them to develop new skills. The setting promotes equality throughout its practices and endeavours to operate a fully inclusive provision. For example, parents of children who require additional help are invited to risk assess the premises before each holiday camp to identify any aspects of the building or activities which may be problematic to their children. Staff develop good working relationships with the parents and provide clear information for them at the end of each day about the

activities their children have been involved in and any issues which may have arisen during the day. The setting has few links with other providers working within the EYFS as the schemes generally operate during a four week period of the school summer holidays and occasionally during the Easter holidays.

Children participate in a wide range of activities, some of which are adult-led and others which children choose. They have good opportunities to develop physical skills and to try new experiences. They swim on a regular basis and participate in group games both indoors and outdoors. Children are encouraged to express themselves through music and acting when they perform for their parents at the end of each week. Children explore nature and the world around them when they go for walks around the grounds and become involved in treasure hunts. Staff plan a varied programme of activities which cover the whole week. Children have some opportunities to express themselves creatively, however, this is sometimes limited to colouring pictures which are pre-printed for them. From this programme, children make choices over the activities they wish to participate in each day. Some individual planning takes place for children within the EYFS age group as staff identify two skills they have achieved each week and one which they need to work on to next time they attend. Adults informally observe children's progress and use their observations to inform further planning.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
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?	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