

Barracudas Activity Camp

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY257626
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Inspector Sheila Harrison

Setting address Abbots Hill School, Bunkers Lane, Hemel Hempstead,
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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 Abbotts Hill School is one of 27 activity camps run by Young World Leisure Group Limited. It opened in 2003 and operates from six classrooms, gym, and school hall, set within the grounds of an independent school. There is access to the tennis courts and outdoor swimming pool. Most of the premises are accessible. It serves the local and surrounding areas of Hemel Hempstead, St. Albans and Berkhamsted. The group opens five days a week during some school holidays. Sessions are from 8:30am until 5:30pm. Arrangements for extending sessions from 8:00am until 6:00pm can be made.

This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are 130 places for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The club also offers places for children aged between eight and 16 years with a maximum of 200 children in total. Children occupying these places share the same facilities as the children in the early years age range. There are 600 children on roll with 150 children in the early years group with varying attendance patterns. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

The camp employs 22 staff. Over half of the staff working with children under eight years, including the manager, hold appropriate qualifications. Barracudas Activity Camp takes part in the '4 Children Aiming Higher' quality assurance scheme and has currently achieved accreditation.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are very happy and are making good progress in their learning and development. The setting promotes a safe and inclusive environment where staff are well aware of, and respond to, the individual needs and interests of the children. This ensures that the uniqueness of each child is fully recognised. Children benefit from the effective partnership with parents. The company have effective measures to assess and improve the quality of the provision and they are pro-active in extending the knowledge and skills of the staff.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhance the equipment in the base rooms to support and extend children's learning and development.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded. Robust recruitment and induction procedures ensure staff are suitable and effectively prepared for their roles within the holiday playscheme. Staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding issues and the records required for safe and efficient management of the early years provision are maintained and effective. Staff deployment is highly effective in ensuring children are safe, comfortable and well cared for. There are good opportunities for staff's professional development through the training the company offers and this is used to enhance the activities on offer for the children; for example, coaching certificates for several sports. There are thorough and efficient risk assessments and the setting takes positive action to manage and eliminate risks. The outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture and sports equipment are well suited to the activities and carefully looked after. The base rooms are attractively decorated with a large amount of the children's art work creating a sense of security and belonging. The toys and the equipment in the base rooms cover the six areas of learning. However, the amount of equipment in the base rooms is sparse and lacks variety potentially limiting children's achievements.

Children's needs are well protected as the setting has a beneficial relationship with parents and carers. They are well informed of their child's day at the holiday playscheme as the children take home certificates detailing the activities they have undertaken. The company provides useful information in brochures and on the company's website and staff are available to talk to parents on request.

Children are heavily involved in the self evaluation of the setting by contributing their views and ideas with confidence. These are actively considered by the setting to enhance the provision. Information from staff and feedback from parents inform the self evaluation process and senior staff ensures that this information is used to improve the provision and contribute to the smooth running of the setting.

Staff ensure an inclusive and welcoming service is provided. They identify a child's requirement for additional support with information from parents and carers and they consider these needs when planning activities. For example, visual timetables are effectively used to help children with English as an additional language.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are very happy and are greatly enjoying their time in the setting. A child commented that 'it couldn't be better'. Children make good progress and achieve well in their play. They settle well and develop strong relationships with the staff and their peers. They behave well, take turns and are beginning to take responsibility within their group. Children are encouraged to develop a good understanding of diversity through art activities. They have many valuable chances to work together and to think creatively in drama sessions as they blow feathers, observe and move like the feather, and to create shapes from the leader's toy snake. Staff extend the children's favourite games of musical statues to encourage children to move imaginatively. Children enjoy and eagerly take part in the

conversations during the 'show and tell' time. There are suitable systems in place for the staff to record their observations and assessments of the progress the EYFS children make whilst in their care and are beginning to plan for the next steps in their learning.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe as they follow the instruction of the staff whilst swimming and playing physical games. They walk safely around the large site as the staff turn walking carefully into a game.

Children's health is very well promoted. They show a good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They record the amount of fruit and vegetables they eat at lunch and snack time to ensure they have their five pieces of fruit or vegetables a day. Staff provide a well stocked fruit tuck shop and children are consulted in the types of fruit available. Children understand the need to drink after physical exercise and staff ensure water is easily available, Children engage in a wide range of physical activities both indoors and outside. They expand their skills in various sports such as swimming and tennis.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

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?	2
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?	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