



Time Out After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256837
Inspection date	08 November 2005
Inspector	Deborah Ellerby
Setting Address	Southfields Junior School, Southfields Avenue, Stanground, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 8PU
Telephone number	07812 656346
E-mail	
Registered person	Time Out After School Club Committee
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Time out After School Club has been registered since 1995. It operates from several rooms in Southfields Primary School, Stanground, Peterborough. Time Out After School Club serves the local community.

There are 72 children on roll. The setting does not currently have any children attending with special needs or any children who speak English as an additional language.

The club operates five days a week during term-time from 08:00 - 09:00 and from 15:00 -18:00 hours. During the school summer holidays the club operates for 4 weeks, from 08:00 - 18:00 hours.

Nine part-time/full-time staff work directly with the children. Several staff members have early years qualifications to level 2 or 3 and 1 staff member is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

The setting receives support from within the school and from the Peterborough Childcare Strategic Partnership childcare adviser.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children's medical needs are not fully met as some detail in the regulatory documentation required to support the care of children when they are ill, or have had an accident, is not in place. Staff are not aware of the need to notify Ofsted of significant events which means children are not adequately protected in such circumstances. However, staff are sensitive to children when they are ill or injured and take appropriate steps to ensure they are well cared for. For example, a child requiring a course of unpleasant tasting medication was helped by a staff member who made it fun, enabling her to take it. Children learn about good hygiene practice as they wash their hands, on arrival at the club, before they sit down to eat their snack. Staff also remind them about hand-washing before they visit the toilet.

Children's natural enjoyment for physical play is well catered for. They are able to ask if they want active play during the winter months or bad weather; staff take them into the hall for ball games and other physical activities which develop their physical skills and enable them to let off steam, helping them to stay healthy. They experience outdoor play in good weather in the extensive school grounds which enables them to enjoy the fresh air and being outside.

Children are encouraged to learn about the value of a healthy diet. They are offered a snack provision which is rotated weekly and varied each time. They are also offered fruit every day, and drinks whenever they want them, of either additive-free squashes or water. Snack time is a social occasion when children and staff discuss their day and what activities they may like to do while at the club. This helps develop children's social skills and also enables them to unwind and relax at the end of the formal school day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Ofsted has not been notified that one of the rooms at the setting is no longer available for use by the club. This contravenes the legal requirements governing the registration and does not enable children's needs to be fully considered.

Children are cared for in a reasonably safe and secure environment. They enjoy coming to the warm, welcoming environment created by the staff team and there is positive interaction between staff and children. Children feel secure and relaxed. Long term risk assessments are completed but more frequent reviews of safety are not carried out in a meaningful way. Children are not, therefore, adequately protected from the risk of injury or potential harm. They are familiar with the procedure to be followed when they visit the toilets, which are down a long corridor, as staff have a system in place using coloured bean bags to know when they go and return. Children come to the club themselves after school through the school building. However, arrangements for registration do not satisfactorily cover children who may arrive late due to attendance at clubs, or intermittent attendance, at the after school club. A visitors' book is in place. Children's safety on outings and when playing outdoors is suitably addressed; staff visit outing venues and risk assess them before the children visit and, when playing outside, staff are always with them and will approach anyone who is not supposed to be there. This means children are protected from persons who are not vetted. Staff carry out topic work with the children which addresses various safety-related concerns. For example, the current display is based on the 'Be Safe Be Seen' campaign and a wall display depicts the children's interpretation of this, helping them relate this to their everyday life.

Children have sufficient room to move around freely as the room is set out to facilitate easy movement and thought has been given to how resources are arranged to enable this to happen. Toys and equipment are safe and some checking is carried out to ensure they are fit for use. However, a thorough update of the equipment and resources is necessary. This would benefit the children by providing them with greater scope in their play. Resources are stored in a bank of built-in storage cupboards, some of which are child-accessible, enabling children to self-select and encouraging them to develop their independence. Staff help children who wish to play with other resources stored out of their reach.

Information relating to the club is stored in a cupboard in the room, but there is no lockable facility, meaning that confidentiality of information cannot be assured. A clear understanding of child protection procedures means staff are able to take appropriate action should there be the need so ensuring children are protected from risk of harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are involved in a broad range of activities which are planned by staff around what the children enjoy. This means children are interested in, and motivated by, what is on offer. These include floor-based play such as Barbies and dolls, small-world play, a Playstation 2 which children enjoy timed play on, board games and craft and creative activities. However, children do not develop positive associations over issues such as gender, disability and cultural and religious difference as resources do not address equal opportunity considerations.

Staff know the children well and are sensitive to their needs. They interact

enthusiastically with them, joining in with their play and asking them about their day. They also give thought to promoting children's independence and learning by joining their play appropriately, as well as asking them questions which increase their learning. Children interact well with both staff and their peers meaning they feel happy and secure while at the club. Several children commented on how much they enjoy attending "to play with my friends", "because the food is good here" and "because I like the staff". Children are encouraged to take responsibility as they help to tidy away, after they have finished using a particular toy or activity, and endeavour to keep the play dough within the plastic sheeting area so that the school carpet tiles do not get marked.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are familiar with the club routine and staff know them well. They are treated as individuals, and are respected and valued, which promotes their confidence and self-esteem. Policies for equal opportunities and special needs are implemented, although there is no resourcing to support practice in these areas. Children who need input do not therefore have the opportunity to see positive representations of themselves which does not help them to feel fully integrated. Staff however handle any child with sensitivity and care. Staff are friendly, positive and seek to help children play happily together. This helps to minimise conflict and differences of opinion so that children can learn from their experiences.

Staff know about strategies for dealing with different types of behaviour, and are consistent in their approach, promoting children's welfare and development. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with sensitively and appropriately without physical threats or punishment. Children's level of maturity and understanding is respected and taken into account. Good behaviour is valued and encouraged according to children's differing stages of development.

Relationships with parents are informal and relaxed. Staff know the families they deal with well, and are friendly to older siblings, who often collect their younger brothers and sisters. However, the welcome children receive on arrival at, and departure from, the setting is unsatisfactory. They sometimes arrive without receiving a greeting and leave without any verbal exchange from staff. This does not help to promote their sense of self-worth. The exchange of information which takes place at collection time with responsible adults provides good continuity of care for children attending. The club are also making positive efforts to improve methods of communication with parents and carers and have recently set up a club web site. A parent on the committee has also devised the termly newsletter. In addition, other letters are sent throughout the term as and when the need arises. Children respond well to the heightened club identity, are proud of the provision and enjoy attending.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children enjoy attending the club and are often reluctant to leave when it is time to go home. They are offered interesting and fun activities and there is a tangible sense of belonging and ownership. Staff ensure that children are protected from persons who have not been vetted and ratios are met although staff deployment is not always appropriate. The lack of an appropriate procedure for knowing which children are due at the club on which day and their time of arrival and departure means that the club leader sometimes has to go searching for children. This leaves insufficient staff with those at the club. Although only for short duration this leaves the remaining staff and children in a potentially vulnerable position. Children's care is otherwise enhanced by dedicated and committed staff who have relevant qualifications which enable them to cater for the children's needs.

Staff work well together but there is a need for both staff and committee to develop a better understanding of the National Standards and the supporting guidance. The committee are fairly new and must improve the documentation which supports the operation of the club and their understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The available space is used well, and staff work hard to make it feel homely and relaxed, enabling children to unwind and enjoy their time at the club. However, the club's resources reveal the paucity of provision regarding equal opportunity and show that many toys have reached the end of their useful life. This means children do not have a stimulating environment to benefit from.

Parents are kept well informed about their child's time at the club which provides continuity of care between home and the out of school club. However, records, policies and procedures need amending and updating to reflect current practise in the club and current requirements relating to the registration. The provision does not effectively use the policies to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. Overall, the range of children's needs are not met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The group were required to record the staff attendance pattern, including their days of working and times of arrival and departure. They now do so at the foot of the daily register which helps to ensure children's safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

The provider is required to keep a records of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that all records and policies relating to the out of school club are correctly completed with particular reference to written consent for emergency medical advice or treatment and the amendment or updating of any policies as required
- ensure that information pertaining to the children, staff or club is stored confidentially and is available for inspection
- assess the risks to children in relation to the safety of equipment in the club and take action to minimise these
- ensure that resources reflect positive images of diversity related issues
- amend and update the behaviour management policy so that it reflects practice in the club
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters with particular regard to significant events such as; changes to the premises or its use, changes to the registered body, or the person in charge, or the management structure of the club
- keep a written record, containing all necessary detail and signed by parents, of accidents and medication given to children

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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