



The Play Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY308532
Inspection date	04 January 2006
Inspector	Elizabeth Patricia Edmond
Setting Address	Gladstone & Falsgrave Recreation Centre, Wykeham Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO12 7SB
Telephone number	01723 503005
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Registered person	Gladstone & Falsgrave Community Playcentre Ltd
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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Play Centre at Gladstone and Falsgrave Recreation Centre is a privately owned out of school care facility. The recreation centre is situated on Falsgrave behind Sainsbury's supermarket in Scarborough town centre. The group use the main sports hall, a smaller room and the centre's kitchen and toilet facilities. There is an enclosed area for outdoor play and the group also use the adjacent public playground.

This out of school facility was registered in July 2005 although the group was operating before that under a different owner. The club operates during term time from 7.45 to 9.00 and from 15.00 to 18.00, Monday to Friday. During the school

holidays opening times are from 7.45 to 18.00. The centre accommodates up to 32 children aged between 5 and 13 years.

The joint owners both have relevant childcare qualifications. Additional staff also work with the children to ensure that staffing ratios are met.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a clean environment where they follow satisfactory hygiene practices. For example they remember to wash their hands after using the toilet. However, they do not always remember to wash their hands before tea and younger children are not always reminded to get a tissue for their noses when necessary and soap is not always readily available in the toilets.

The children enjoy the meals and snacks provided because they have helped to devise the menus. They benefit from the staff's approach to healthy eating; the adults talk to the children about what is healthy and about having less healthy options as treats. The children's favourite teatime meal is pasta or hot dogs, and they confidently ask for extra carrot sticks and cucumber when the dishes are empty. The children also benefit from the free access to cold drinks throughout the session.

The children develop a positive approach to being active which helps them to keep fit and healthy. In winter they enjoy playing with balls and hoops in the cooler sports hall. They talk fondly about walks out to the beach or to local parks in the holidays and they chat about who won when they last went bowling.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are able to play freely in the environment because the staff identify and minimise immediate risks. This approach means also that the children are able to enjoy outings to local parks or the beach safely. The children learn about keeping themselves safe because staff talk to them about staying together as they wait for the older children to come out of school. The children wear red caps when out and about so that they are easily identified for security purposes. The staff have identified a problem with this in winter when the children already wear hats and scarves and are looking at ways of addressing this. The children are very aware of the emergency evacuation procedures, they practice this regularly and describe exactly how to leave the building quickly and where to wait while the staff check the register. They choose from a range of play equipment and resources which are generally in good condition and meet the needs of the children attending.

All documentation and systems are in place to ensure that the children are safeguarded and protected. For example, local and national child protection guidance is kept on file for advice and important information displayed for all staff. Additionally,

both key staff have attended child protection and first aid training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are relaxed and settled at the play centre and they make themselves at home. The staff create a very happy atmosphere where the children enjoy each other's company. The staff appreciate the children's sense of humour; they all laugh as they try to remember the jokes that they put in their Christmas crackers. The children develop their self help skills to a good level; they take it in turns to take their friends' orders for food and they clear their own dishes away afterwards.

The children greatly enjoy their time at the play centre and benefit from the range of activities which are appropriate for their various ages. The shared nature of the premises creates some challenges for the staff, but they spend time rotating the resources and the children confidently ask for activities that they do not see. This means that they have a good level of choice in their activities.

The youngest children attending happily absorb themselves in the art and craft in the smaller room and they talk proudly about the Christmas decorations they have taken home. Older children concentrate for some time at the more complicated board games and enjoy the friendly competition at the video game. Some children prefer to engage in physical play in the large hall. Frequent outings to the beach or local parks in the longer holidays further increase the range of experiences for the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children develop positive relationships with the adults and each other. They are relaxed, confident and behave very well. They also demonstrate pleasant table manners; they enjoy a chat with staff and each other as they have their tea. They play very well together and take turns with the minimum of support. This is because the staff are good role models and they handle the occasional unwanted behaviour very professionally.

The children are valued and truly respected as individuals. The staff have a sound knowledge of the children's individual needs and dispositions and immediately identify changes in the children's behaviour patterns or notice when they are feeling under the weather. The children learn about traditional culture and demonstrate an acceptance and interest in other cultures. They enjoy using the Chinese calendar to check the birth year of themselves and others.

The staff work well with parents and develop pleasant relationships. They talk to the parents every day as they collect their children and they chat to them as they meet them in the school playground. The staff are vigilant in communicating messages to parents from school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The staffing arrangements currently promote the children's care and safety and the above average adult-child ratio provides a high level of support for the children. However, the provider has not been pro-active in keeping abreast of changes to the national standards. This means that assessing the suitability of any new staff and the handling of complaints could be ineffective in the future. The information and records relating to the children are clear, up to date and confidentially stored. This promotes the children's care and well-being. Although there is no formal system for evaluating the standard of care or staff's ongoing suitability, both key staff are suitably qualified and experienced, and they have a positive approach to guidance when it is offered.

The premises are used by other groups for various activities, but the staff arrive early to organise the space and arrange the resources. This helps the children to feel welcome and increases their choice of activity. The daily routine for walking the children to and from school works well in practice. This promotes the children's safety. Overall the needs of all the children attending are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 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):

- obtain information about the recent changes to the national standards and revise the staffing and complaints policies accordingly

- devise systems with the children so that they remember to wash their hands before tea and to wipe their noses when necessary.

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