



Barracudas

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148701
Inspection date	11 April 2006
Inspector	Deborah Jaqueline Newbury
Setting Address	Holt Lane, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 1EE
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Registered person	Young World Leisure Group Limited
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Barracudas at the Holt School, Wokingham, Berkshire opened in 2001. It is one of 28 activity day camps operated by Young World Leisure Group Limited, at different venues throughout the country. The activity camp at the Holt School is held during the school Easter holidays only, with opening hours from 08.30 - 17.30.

Children participate in a varied range of activities. They have access to various classrooms, the school gymnasium, hall, sports hall, craft room and playing fields.

The camp is registered to care for a maximum of 150 children from 5 years (to

include those aged 4 years in full-time education) to under 8 years at any one time. It accepts children up to the age of 14 years; children are grouped according to age. The number of children on roll varies.

There are 12 members of staff working with the children; of these 5 hold a teaching qualification or are studying on teacher training courses. Staff attend relevant training courses as necessary.

Barracudas activity camps are part of the Aiming High quality assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children participate in a varied range of activities that contribute to their good health. They enjoy playing badminton, football and practise and develop co-ordination and balance as they jump on the trampoline and play on the bouncy castle. Children regularly spend time outside in the fresh air, weather permitting. Staff act in the best interest of children by encouraging them to wear jackets when they are outside to keep warm. They also respond well to changing weather conditions by bringing children back indoors when it becomes too cold to stay outside.

Children bring packed lunches and snacks from home. Parents are informed of the lack of refrigeration facilities on site through literature issued by the company. Suggestions are offered as to how food can be kept cool and therefore not pose a health risk to children. Children have regular drink breaks throughout the day. Staff operate a daily tuck shop where children can purchase drinks, crisps and confectionery. There are limited healthy options available. However, staff set a limit on the amount of money children can spend and are careful about the quantity of sweets they allow children to buy.

Children are independent in their self-care skills. Staff generally promote good hygiene practices by encouraging children to wash their hands before eating lunch, although they do not do this before snack-time. Staff handle accidents involving children well. Children have somewhere comfy to rest and staff allow them to remain there until they feel ready to return to their group. They are treated by staff who have attended first aid training and who are kind and reassuring.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

All staff help to complete a risk assessment of the site before the camp starts. A member of the management team undertakes twice daily site checks, to ensure the ongoing safety of children. There are good systems in place for the safe handover of children to parents and carers and children are well supervised by staff as they move round the school. A register is taken at the start of each activity and staff regularly do head counts. However, procedures to ensure unvetted staff do not have

unsupervised access to children do not always work in practice, which means that children may be at potential risk.

Children participate in a fire drill on the first day of each week that the camp is in operation; so they know what they must do in the event of it being necessary to evacuate the premises. However, staff do not talk about this on subsequent days to ensure that those children, who join the camp later in the week, are also aware of this very important information. Furthermore, at the time of inspection, the setting's written fire evacuation procedure was not displayed in accordance with Children's Act regulations. However, managers did take positive steps to address this issue when it was brought to their attention.

Staff are aware of child protection issues and the procedure to follow if they have any concerns. This means that they are able to act in the best interests of children.

Children learn the rules for their own safety as staff explain and guide them. Children receive clear instructions about using such equipment as the trampoline and bouncy castle in safe ways. This information is also displayed for ease of reference. Children use a suitable range of equipment that is checked to ensure it is safe and ready to use.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

There is a lively atmosphere at the camp and children have fun. They participate in six activities each day and are offered a choice of different things. Activities are balanced, well-planned and appealing; some enable children to develop new skills, as they encounter something they may not have tried before, whilst others are more familiar. For instance, children can choose from varied sports and games, arts and crafts, initiative games, circus skills and using the trampoline, to name a few. Staff set the scene for the different activities on offer well; they talk about what each one entails and check that children have a good understanding. Children are then able to make informed choices about what they wish to do and staff respect their decisions. Children concentrate and remain engrossed. They wait patiently to take turns on the trampoline or bouncy castle. Art and craft materials are plentiful and children are not restricted in their use of these.

Relationships between children and staff are warm and friendly. They interact positively with one another, chatting and laughing. Staff are kind and caring and clearly want the children to have a good time. Children speak highly of the scheme; they enjoy the camp, talk happily about their favourite activities and like the fact that they have a choice about what they do.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals and with equal concern. Activities are open to all,

provided they are age appropriate. Staff include and consult with children; for example, when there are too many children for one particular activity they negotiate with them, to see if anyone is willing to swap and promise that they will have their first choice of activity next time. Children feel that staff keep their promises with regard to this and quite happily change groups, with some volunteering before they are asked. Children have the confidence to approach staff to ask questions and express their needs; they are secure in the knowledge that these will be addressed. The display of art work, in children's base-rooms, helps them develop a sense of belonging and awareness that their efforts are valued. The company issues questionnaires to both children and parents whilst the camp is in operation to seek their views.

Children are polite and behave well. They are involved in setting the rules for their group, which means that they are more meaningful as they have been able to input their views. Children are encouraged to take on active roles; for example, by informing other children what the rules for the group are. Staff build further on this by asking questions and checking that children have a clear understanding of the reasons behind them. Children's self-esteem and confidence is well nurtured by the staff's good use of praise and encouragement. Children are encouraged to share in the achievements of others.

Parents have access to comprehensive information about the activity camp, including its policies and procedures. This is available to them in a variety of formats; for instance on the company's website, brochures and notices displayed at the setting. Staff and parents enjoy friendly relationships and there is a good exchange of information about children, both informally and through the completion of written documentation. The camp has an effective system in place for notifying parents that staff need to speak with them when they collect their children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. Overall effective organisation of the activity camp ensures that children feel settled, at ease and receive appropriate levels of adult support. They enjoy a balanced range of activities and are grouped well according to age for activities.

There are effective procedures in place to promote the welfare and safety of children and the efficient management of the provision. However, unforeseen difficulties, as a result of staff illness, has meant that different managers have been leading the Easter camp on different days. Consequently, this lack of continuity has meant that set procedures are not always fully implemented in practice. For instance, arrangements for ensuring that group co-ordinators are fully aware of everything they need to know about children; and that all parents sign forms to give their consent for different aspects of children's care. Most other documentation is in place. There are suitable recruitment, vetting and induction procedures. The company provides clear instructions as to which staff may not have unsupervised access to children, because their checks have not yet come through. At the time of inspection this was not adhered to on one occasion but managers responded positively to rectify this when it

was brought to their attention.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was requested to: improve communication between staff members, so that there is quick access to each other at all times; to ensure the group co-ordinator for the 5-8 year olds has a relevant early years qualification and experience of working with children aged under 8 years.

Staff make use of mobile phones and a member of the management team wanders round the camp regularly throughout the day, checking on individual groups. One of the members of staff, working with the youngest group of children attending the camp, is a teaching assistant and has experience of working with children in Year R. Other staff working with children under 8 include teachers and have experience of working with children. However, staff do not hold relevant early years qualifications.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- ensure the setting's fire evacuation procedure is displayed at all times and improve existing arrangements for sharing information with children about the procedure to follow in the event of it being necessary to evacuate the premises
- improve existing monitoring procedures to ensure unvetted staff do not have unsupervised access to children and ensure Ofsted is informed of significant events, for instance, changes to managers

- ensure staff working directly with children are fully aware of everything they need to know about children and ensure written consent is obtained from all parents to further consolidate the health and safety records of children within the setting
- improve existing arrangements for ensuring good hygiene at all times by ensuring greater consistency with regard to hand washing and consider the inclusion of healthier options for the tuck shop.

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