



Talacre Action Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	116350
Inspection date	17 February 2006
Inspector	Marcia Robinson
Setting Address	Adventure Building, Dalby Street, London, NW5 3NH
Telephone number	020 7267 9755
E-mail	
Registered person	The Talacre Action 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?

Talacre Action Group was registered in 1992. It operates a holiday play scheme and out of school care provision for a maximum of 40 children from 5 to under 8 years. It operates from a two storey, purpose built building and uses three play rooms, an office, kitchen and toilet and hand washing facilities for children and staff. Two secure outdoor play areas are available to children. The provision is situated in the Kentish Town area of the London Borough of Camden.

The setting offers after school sessions each weekday from 15:30 to 18:15 and holiday play schemes from 09:30 to 17:30 during spring or 09:00 to 18:00 during the

summer. Currently there are 59 children on roll. The play centre also caters for children over the age of 8 years.

The setting employs eight members of staff. The manager and most of the staff employed hold appropriate play and early years qualifications. The setting also employs a number of support staff.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are looked after in a clean and well-maintained environment. Children are learning the importance of good hygiene and personal care, for example, they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children's health within the setting is generally assured by staff who have a sound knowledge of the settings' health and hygiene procedures. For example, staff wash their hands before preparing food. Most staff are qualified in first aid and the procedures for recording accidents are implemented well. Children's welfare, however, is not fully promoted because written parental consent for urgent medical treatment has not been sought and the medication record does not contain parental signatures.

Children play outdoors on a daily basis. They have good opportunities to enjoy physical exercise and learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy free play and organised activities, such as hockey and football, using the good range of apparatus and outdoor play equipment to promote their physical skills and abilities.

Parents provide packed lunches for their children, which are appropriately stored by staff. Parents receive written guidelines from the setting on safe foods and healthy eating for children. The setting provides snacks for children which comply with their dietary needs. Snacks consists of either toast or fresh fruit. Staff acknowledge that the choice of food at snack time is limited. Children can help themselves to drinking water at all times, which means that their self care and independence skills are being promoted.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well looked after in secure premises, where they are welcomed individually by staff. The premises are bright and welcoming with posters and children's art work on wall displays. Although space is utilised reasonably well, the quiet area is not presented in an inviting way.

Children who attend the holiday play scheme have access to a satisfactory range of safe and suitable toys, furniture and equipment. Children are safe and secure on the premises as suitable steps have been taken to minimise possible hazards. For example, risk assessments and regular fire drills are carried out. Relevant health and safety policies and procedures are clearly put in to practice by staff.

Children are well protected as some staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of their role and responsibility regarding child protection matters. The child protection policy includes the procedure to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Not all staff, however, are secure in their knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. The setting is aware of this and have arranged for staff to update their knowledge by attending child protection training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily into the club's generally well organised environment. A suitable range of activities and resources are presented before the children arrive. They are appropriate for their ages and geared towards their individual interests. This helps them to make choices when playing and to settle quickly.

Staff spend time listening, talking and playing with children. For example, children are supported in acquiring new knowledge and skills through playing board games, snooker and outdoor games together. However, not enough attention is given to planning of activities that promote children's imagination and mathematical learning.

Children are able to take turns when playing games such as table snooker and they are kind and considerate towards each other, which promotes children's social skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn to acknowledge and accept differences, through planned activities and discussion. Resources that reflect positive images are limited to a small supply of books and dolls, although children's art work and posters on wall display reflect positive images of diversity. For example, children's art work entitled 'flags of Africa' helps children to develop a positive sense of identity and gain a greater understanding of the wider world.

Adequate systems are in place to identify and meet children's special needs. Children are well behaved, they are polite and show consideration to each other and staff members. They know what is expected of them because they discuss and help to write the group's behaviour rules. The behaviour policy is positive and staff have a suitable understanding of different behaviour strategies to use according to children's age and level of understanding.

There is a good relationship between parents and staff. Parents' knowledge about their child's likes, dislikes and needs are carefully recorded on the detailed registration form. This establishes a sound relationship so staff know how to meet the children's individual needs. Parents and children have an informal chat with staff at arrival and departure times. Staff ensure they are briefed about any specific areas of interest, daily routine or concern about their child's day. Parents are well informed

about the service provided through leaflets and policies and procedures displayed on the notice board. However, the setting is yet to develop procedures for logging complaints made by parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The registered provider remains suitably qualified to work with young children. The person in charge and most staff employed are suitably qualified and experienced to work with children. Children's welfare is ensured by suitable contingency plans, in place to cover staff absences. However, the named deputy does not hold the required level three qualification but has arranged to achieve this by the end of the year.

Overall, the organisation of the environment and deployment of staff ensures that children are secure and happily engaged in activities, although the quiet area is not always made welcoming to the children. The staff are committed to attending further childcare training and development courses. They have identified their future training needs, which include completing child protection training.

The setting has rigorous induction procedures. The required recruitment procedures for appointing and vetting are in place, but these are kept at head office. All mandatory records are in place, most containing all the necessary detail, apart from the medication book which does not contain parental signatures and written parental consent for urgent medical treatment has not been sought. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and support staff in their care practices with children, but a complaints log book is yet to be devised.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group were asked to prevent the spread of infection and make sure good hygiene practice is promoted with children at all times; organise space effectively so that children can rest safely; and ensure that staff induction training within the first week of employment provides them with access to all the groups policies and procedures and has particular regard for issues surrounding child protection. They were also asked to notify Ofsted of all significant changes, including any changes in members of staff; make sure that the record of accidents involving children is signed by parents to acknowledge the entry and deploy staff effectively within the premises to ensure the safety and welfare of children. All previous actions have been implemented to ensure children's health, safety and welfare is improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

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

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):

- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and ensure the medication record contains all the required details, including parental signatures.
- increase the range of resources that promote children's imagination and mathematical learning, including a wider range of toys, books and puzzles that reflect positive images of diversity.
- improve record keeping, by ensuring procedures for appointing and vetting staff are made available for inspection and that the requirements for recording complaints and appointing a suitably qualified deputy are complied with.
- provide a broader range and choice of healthy and nutritious snacks for children.

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