



## Wild Camp/Creche

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Inspector** Heidi Falconer

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**Registered person** Stevenage Leisure Ltd.  
**Type of inspection** Childcare  
**Type of care** Out of School care, Crèche

## 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](http://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?

Wild Camp playscheme and the crèche are run by Stevenage Leisure Ltd. It opened in 2001 and operates from 4 rooms within North Herts Leisure Centre. It is situated in the town of Letchworth. The settings previously operated under the name Camp Adventure. A maximum of 24 children may attend the crèche and a maximum of 32 children may attend the playscheme at any one time. The crèche is open for 4 sessions each week and the playscheme is open for 2 days over Christmas and during the Easter and summer holidays from 09:00 till 17:00. Children attending the playscheme have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 300 children on roll for the playscheme and 60 on roll for the crèche. Children attending the crèche are aged from 3 months to 5 years. Only children whose parents are using the leisure centre facilities may use the crèche.

The playscheme employs eight staff and the crèche employs four staff. Of the staff, the manager of the crèche holds an appropriate early year's qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's good health is generally well promoted. Staff generally follow appropriate hygiene procedures. For example, in the crèche they act as good role models, wiping down surfaces before serving food. This practice is helping children to stay healthy. However, their routines for nappy changing are not effective in ensuring that the risk of cross infection between children is minimised. Children in the playscheme are learning about good personal hygiene routines and wash their hands before snacks and meals. Children's medical needs are met because parental consents for emergency first aid or treatment are obtained and a suitable number of staff in the playscheme hold current first aid certificates. However, in the crèche no member of staff holds a valid certificate. The risk to children is reduced because there are many staff working in the centre who have valid certificates and could quickly attend in the event of an emergency. All accidents are recorded and are countersigned by parents. This promotes children's health and overall well-being.

Children are suitably nourished. Parents provide the majority of food and drink for their children. Staff in the playscheme provide parents with information on their facilities for storing food in the form of 'Handy packed lunch tips'. This gives parents practical ideas on how they can keep their child's food cool to reduce the risk of bacterial spread. This practice supports children's good health. However, food and drink brought into the crèche is not labelled and potentially could be given to the wrong child, posing a risk to their safety. Fresh drinking water is available for children to access independently throughout the day. Children's individual dietary needs are met as clear information is gathered from parents about allergies or special dietary requirements. Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure staff are aware of these requirements. Children develop an understanding about healthy eating through staff's use of everyday routines to spontaneously talk to children about foods which are good for them. In addition children are reminded to close up their lunch boxes when they have finished eating so that their food stays fresh. Children also learn that food gives them energy in between vigorous activities such as swimming and dodge ball.

Children in the crèche enjoy a range of physical activities indoors such as climbing on large apparatus, riding on ride on toys and playing ball games. These activities help to develop their physical skills. Children attending the playscheme spend the majority of their time engaged in physical activities such as swimming, running games and using the trampoline. In addition they also have space to 'chill out' after vigorous activity, allowing them to relax with their friends playing games and drawing. This ensures that all children benefit from physical activity and quiet time so they are

happy and content.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children in the crèche and the playscheme are cared for in a clean and well-maintained environment. They have access to a wide range of suitable equipment and resources, which promotes their overall development well. Staff plan a variety of activities using the facilities available at the leisure centre, for example, the playscheme have use of a trampolines, a bouncy castle and the sports hall. Staff in the crèche ensure that all of the activities and resources they provide are safe and suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children attending. This promotes children's safety.

Staff take positive steps to promote children's safety within the playscheme and the crèche. Daily risk assessments are carried out to identify hazards. These are generally effective at ensuring that proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents. However, in the crèche, staff's limited understanding of potential hazards means that they are not all identified. For example, some areas of the carpet are worn and therefore present a trip hazard to young children. Children's safety is protected because all staff are vigilant in ensuring that children are unable to leave their room bases unsupervised. Children using the playscheme know they need to ask a member of staff to escort them to the toilets. Staff supervise the children well when using public areas of the building to ensure that children are never left alone with other people using the leisure centre facilities.

Children's safety during the swimming sessions at the playscheme is paramount. Staff are vigilant in their care and have clear procedures in place for water safety and swimming pool use. Staff wear additional clothing, for example, T-shirts so the children can easily identify them in the water. The area of the pool used by the children is sectioned off and an additional lifeguard is on duty to supervise this area. In addition there is good supervision in the changing area and this contributes to children's safety and protects them from harm.

Children begin to learn about keeping themselves safe. With adult support they are safely able to take risks and acquire new skills in a controlled environment. For example, children using the playscheme learn how to use equipment such as trampolines safely. In the crèche young children are encouraged to climb on the climbing frame and shown how to use the slide safely.

Staff working in the playscheme actively support children's welfare. This is because they have a good understanding of the procedures to follow should they have a concern regarding any child in their care or if any allegations were made against a member of staff. However, staff working in the crèche do not have a full understanding of these procedures. This limits their ability to fully safeguard children's well-being.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children throughout the setting benefit from a suitable range of activities that are appropriate to their age and meet their individual needs. Children all through the setting play well together and are developing a good understanding of the need to take turns in games and share popular resources. Children in the playscheme display high levels of engagement and enthusiasm. This indicates that they are motivated and enjoy their time at the setting. Children in the crèche are interested and occupied with the activities provided but receive less support from staff to enhance their play experiences.

Younger children in the crèche enjoy a satisfactory range of activities, which are planned using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They are generally settled and happy. Activities include dressing up, hiding in play tents and engaging in role-play such as pushing babies in prams. Creative activities are provided to allow children to develop their creative skills and use their senses. However, these are not always provided on a regular basis. Babies generally enjoy good relationships with staff. Their emotional needs are supported because staff give them cuddles and reassurance as they go off to sleep. This helps them to feel valued and secure. However, staff lack a secure understanding of how the 'Birth to three matters' framework can be implemented to further support and enhance their work with children of this age. As a result, children do not always receive good levels of support in activities.

Children in the playscheme help to devise games to play in the sports hall and in their room base. Staff are skilled at listening and responding to children's ideas and suggestions, giving them opportunities to make choices about how they spend their time at the group. For example, during a quiet drawing session some children developed their ideas by making aeroplanes and then attempting to fly them. Staff joined in this activity appropriately and offered children support and encouragement to help them extend their play.

All staff in the playscheme are sensitive to the needs of the younger children and adapt games and activities so that they can participate at an appropriate level. In addition if children choose not to take part in a particular activity they are provided with alternative activities. This ensures that their needs are met. Children are grouped appropriately according to their age to ensure that their needs can be met effectively. As a result the care of the older children does not have an adverse effect on the younger children.

The playscheme has a well organised routine to the day which helps children to feel secure. Children are provided with a good balance of quiet and physical activities. Some activities are based around themes such as Easter, this extends the variety of play opportunities for the children. Sports activities include parachute games, use of the trampoline, relay races and football. Children confidently access quiet activities, for example, fuzzy felts and drawing, when they had finished eating their lunches. Staff and children play enthusiastically together allowing other's to finish their lunches and additional children to arrive for the afternoon session.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are valued as individuals and have equal opportunities to participate in all of the activities on offer. Staff respect children's individuality and offer extra support to enable each of them to participate in activities at an appropriate level. Those with special needs are able to be fully integrated because staff in the playscheme understand how they can adapt activities to ensure that all children can be included. Children begin to gain awareness of the society they live in through the use of appropriate resources. For example, they use resources such as books and dolls showing positive images of different cultures and genders.

Children behave well and are learning to work. Staff use positive methods to help them understand the rules. They talk to the children regularly to ensure they understand the behaviour boundaries and encourage them to think, not only about their behaviour but also how it may hurt other children. Staff offer all children praise and encouragement to reward their efforts in trying new activities and participating in group games. This boosts their self-esteem and ensures that all children feel valued and included. Staff are sensitive to the needs of the less confident children and provide additional support if children are feeling unhappy or insecure.

Staff generally make parents feel welcome in the group. Parents come into the setting readily, making contact with staff to exchange information about matters relating to children's individual needs. In the crèche parents pass on essential information as they book their children in. For example, staff request information on when young children will require a sleep or feeding. Parents and staff communicate on a daily basis and both parties are well informed of any changes in the children's care. In addition parents receive newsletters and have access to the policies and procedures of the setting. These positive relationships strengthen links with the children's homes, giving them a sense of stability and belonging.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Throughout the setting there are appropriate procedures in place to ensure that staff are fully aware of children's dietary requirements or health issues. This enables them to provide appropriate care for children in accordance to their individual needs. Staffing ratios are maintained at a high level to provide additional care and support for the children. In the playscheme a effective induction programme and good teamwork make sure all staff work together well to promote children's health, enjoyment and achievement. Children who attend the playscheme benefit from being cared for by a consistent staff team who are enthusiastic about their job and evidently enjoy their time with the children. As a result, children are happy and settled in their care. In the crèche, children benefit from the organisation of resources. They are set out attractively and offer children opportunities to make free choices about how they spend their time.

Staff maintain the documentation for both groups generally well. However, crèche

staff do not always maintain accurate records of attendance times. This would compromise children's safety in the event of an emergency. Records in both areas are safely stored with regard to confidentiality and are shared appropriately with parents. Policies and procedures are implemented well by staff in the playscheme, however, in the crèche some of the policies do not reflect the practice. This impacts the quality of care that the children receive.

Robust systems are in place to ensure that all staff working with the children complete the relevant vetting procedures before they start work with the children. This practice enhances children's safety and welfare at the group. Overall, children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

A concern was raised in relation to standards 1 Suitable person, 2 Organisation, 6 Safety, 7 Health, 8 Food and Drink and standard 12 Working in partnership with parents. Ofsted carried out a visit on 16th March 2006. The provision was given five actions under standards 2, 6, 8 and 13. The response from the provision was satisfactory and the group remains qualified for registration.

## **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 good hygiene practices are in place in the crèche for changing children's nappies to ensure that the risk of cross infection is minimised
- improve outcomes for children under three by further developing staff's knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a level two qualification in childcare.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)