



Lydgate After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	300767
Inspection date	20 February 2006
Inspector	Karen Cockings
Setting Address	Lydgate Lane, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S10 5FQ
Telephone number	07931715889 after 1430
E-mail	
Registered person	Lydgate Out Of School Club
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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Lydgate After School Club was registered in 1992. It operates from Lydgate Infant School, which is located in the Crosspool area of Sheffield. The setting provides a service for children attending the school.

The club meets in the school dining hall, which is housed in a detached building to one side of the playground. Facilities include the main hall, with adjoining toilet provision and a reception area incorporating space for quieter activities. Staff are able to use the school kitchen for the preparation of light snacks. The playground is available for outdoor play.

The club is registered to provide care for a maximum of 40 children under 8 years and there are currently 80 children on roll. They attend for a variety of sessions. The club welcomes children from a range of cultural backgrounds. It is open every weekday during term time between 15.15 and 18.00.

The setting is managed by a committee, which includes parent representatives. A team of ten staff work with the children, five of whom have relevant Level 3 qualifications, while others are working towards them. The club receives support from the school and the Out of School Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and well organised environment where staff maintain good standards of hygiene. They ensure that tables are cleaned well before food is served and they encourage children with hand washing routines. There is easy, independent access to toilet facilities, which adjoin the hall. Children's health needs are addressed well and staff work closely with parents in order to provide appropriate care. For example, they seek training and advice regarding the management of allergic reactions. Medication is stored securely and information about children's needs is regularly updated.

Children enjoy some healthy options for snacks, which include fresh fruit and vegetables, a biscuit and drink. Staff ensure that they are well informed about any special dietary needs. There are limited opportunities for children to be involved in any food preparation but sometimes specific activities are planned, such as icing and decorating biscuits.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise, which contributes to their good health. Staff encourage them to play outside for some time at each session. A number of children choose to spend longer periods outdoors and staff are effectively deployed to facilitate this freedom of choice. Children enjoy using a variety of equipment, including scooters, hoops and balls. Indoors, staff make good use of the spacious hall to provide opportunities for more active play. Children have fun and learn new skills as they practise using stilts, hula hoops and badminton equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given high priority and staff work effectively together to maintain a secure environment for them. There are clearly agreed procedures for collection from school. Children gather together near their classrooms and staff carefully check against their registers to ensure that no children are missing. Any absences are followed up with the class teacher and with the parent if necessary. On arrival at the club, a second check is made and the main register completed. Staff acknowledge the difficulty of escorting children safely across the yard when there are other school

children playing or waiting for their parents. However, children understand that they must stay together and staff closely monitor their movements.

Children learn to keep themselves safe within the building. Staff remind them to walk carefully down the stairs into the hall and they understand that they should not play on the staircase. They learn to use equipment safely to prevent injury to themselves or others. Their awareness of safety issues is raised through discussion and through specific activities, such as those planned around bonfire night when they are reminded about the dangers of fireworks and matches. Children have access to a good range of suitable resources of which a variety is set out for them at each session. Equipment is regularly checked and cleaned to ensure that it is suitable for children to use.

Fire safety is addressed well. The setting complies with recommendations made by fire officers and regular fire drills are held and recorded. Consideration is given to ensuring that all children and staff receive the same, clear evacuation instructions as a number of staff speak English as an additional language. Several torches are available in designated areas to use at assembly points when it is dark.

There is a satisfactory awareness of child protection issues and procedures, which helps to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. Staff know that they must report any concerns to the person in charge and there is guidance material available for them. However, this is an area for further development to ensure that procedures incorporate all required detail and staff are fully conversant with them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good balance of activities, both indoors and outside. They have opportunities to participate in active play, or to occupy themselves quietly. For example, children feel sufficiently comfortable to become totally absorbed in a book or a drawing activity, while others have fun riding the scooters or playing with hoops outside. Staff plan a themed programme, often linked to the seasons or specific festivals. Children enjoy varied craft activities, such as using their observational skills to create a collage picture of spring flowers. They are encouraged to develop their own ideas and designs and their achievements are recognised. There are opportunities for children to use their imaginations as they play with dressing up clothes and small world toys. Outside they enjoy resources in the play house, using the cots and kitchen to develop their own stories and role play.

Children are happy and settled at the club where they build good relationships with adults and with each other. They confidently approach staff to tell them about events at home or in school. Staff respond with interest and children know that if they have any difficulties they can go to an adult for support. For example, they ask for help to negotiate turns on favourite equipment. Staff successfully adapt routines to ensure that children are not overwhelmed when they first arrive and have time to settle in.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff work hard to create a welcoming environment for children, despite the constraints of shared premises. For example, they create a comfortable space in the reception area where children can relax and use colourful cloths on the tables to give the room a more homely feel. Children know that they are valued because staff listen to their views and are very positive about children's achievements. As a result, children are proud to show their pictures and models. They make choices about where they play and engage well with activities.

Children's understanding about the wider community is enhanced through a variety of resources, including jigsaws, books and play figures. Staff plan activities in celebration of different festivals, such as the Chinese New Year, when the children try Chinese foods and perform a dragon dance. They are cared for by adults from a diversity of cultural backgrounds, reflecting the make up of the school community and providing good role-models for children. Staff work with parents to meet children's individual needs, liaising as necessary with teachers in school.

Children behave well and are aware of expectations and boundaries. They play cooperatively together, seeking help if needed to settle differences and negotiate turn taking. Staff use effective strategies to help children to settle and to encourage a sense of responsibility and concern for others. For example, they may ask a child to be a "buddy" to a child who is new to the setting. They also make good use of spontaneous opportunities to remind children about expectations and to consider with them the feelings of others.

The partnership with parents works well. A regular newsletter is distributed to them, providing helpful information about forthcoming events, significant dates and changes within the setting. This ensures that parents are kept up to date and supplements ongoing conversations with parents at collection times. Parents are able to be involved as volunteers on the management committee, if they wish.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children enjoy attending the club and some are reluctant to leave at the end of the session. Staff organise space and resources appropriately to ensure that children are able to experience a variety of activities in safe surroundings. They are deployed well, taking into account the need for supervision and support of children using the different areas, both indoors and outside. For example, staff are allocated to different zones and collection points on a rota basis. This helps them to get to know all children and to become familiar with all aspects of the provision.

Recruitment systems are in place and there is a clear understanding of the requirement to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Record keeping systems are maintained well generally, to safeguard children's welfare. However, there is no clear system as yet for recording details of any complaints made by

parents and the action taken. Written policies and procedures underpin most aspects of practice, but in some instances these lack detail or are not specific to the setting.

Children are cared for by a friendly and committed staff team, some of whom have been with the setting over a number of years. They work effectively together to support children's play and to keep them safe.

Overall, the needs of the range of children attending are being met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection and a subsequent visit to check the new premises, a number of recommendations were made. The provider was asked to develop an action plan to show how staff training and qualification requirements would be met and to produce a written risk assessment of the premises, identifying actions to be taken to minimise risks. The setting now has a staff team which meets qualification requirements and several staff are now trained to Level 3, while others have a relevant Level 2 qualification or are working towards it. A useful chart has been devised as a method of logging staff details, such as training information and checks undertaken. This helps to ensure that children are being cared for by staff who are suitably qualified and experienced.

Risk assessments were also made on the new premises and decisions were taken as a result. For example, it was decided that the club would not generally use the wildlife garden because of the difficulties of supervising children near potential hazards, such as the pond. Staff address other risk factors, including the steps to the hall, by means of careful supervision and by reinforcing agreed safety rules. These measures help to keep children safe while they are at the club.

The provider was also asked to review and update child protection policies and devise procedures for lost or uncollected children. Steps have been taken to update information available about child protection procedures, although this needs further improvement to ensure that it incorporates all necessary detail. There are now clear statements about the steps to be taken if children are lost or are not collected. This means that staff are better prepared to manage such situations, in order to safeguard children's welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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):

- review the child protection policy to ensure it includes all required detail and further develop staff's knowledge and awareness of child protection issues
- review and develop policies that are specific to the setting, with particular regard to behaviour management and special needs
- devise a system for recording complaints made by parents.

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