



Office for Standards
in Education

DAY CARE INSPECTION REPORT

URN 130544

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 19/10/2004
Inspector Name Hilary Preece

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Out of School Day Care
Setting Name The Big Top After School Club
Setting Address Meryfield School
Theobald Street
Borehamwood
Herts
WD6 4TJ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of The Big Top

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Big Top
Address Meryfield School
Theobald Street
Borehamwood
Herts
WD6 4TJ

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care. When making judgements, inspectors have regard to how well the provider meets the National Standards for under Eights Day Care and Childminding. A list of these is attached. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement.

This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

Information about the setting

The Big Top After School Club opened in 1999. It operates from the main hall of Meryfield School in Borehamwood. The after school club serves Meryfield School and offers pick-ups from other local schools including Parkside, Cowley Hill, Woodlands and Summerswood.

There are currently 60 children from 5 to 11 years on roll. Children attend a variety of sessions. The club opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 15:15 until 17:30.

Five part time and one fully time staff work with the children. Half these staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3, or hold specialist sports coaching certificates. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

The Big Top after school club provides satisfactory care for children. The provision is effectively managed and has a dedicated team of staff who have clearly defined roles. Most have a particular skill or interest that is used to benefit the children, such as sports, cookery or arts and crafts. They are supported by the club's committee. The staff regularly attend training courses and three members of staff have just completed NVQ 2 in Play work. Most policies and procedures that contribute to the smooth running of the club are in place, though some require attention.

Children's safety is generally well-maintained. Staff are aware that there is open access to the school and grounds and have managed this by vigilant supervision and safety procedures. However, security of the building will soon be improved by the introduction of a key pad entry system. There are sound procedures in place to promote good health and hygiene and particular emphasis is given to healthy eating. The staff ensure that children's individual needs are met and that all children are treated with equal regard.

Space is organised well to provide children with a varied range of quiet play activities or large physical play. Children have developed good relationships with staff and each other. They all played purposefully and appeared happy during inspection. There is an effective behaviour policy in place and boundaries are understood by the children.

Most parents are very pleased with the provision and staff have developed positive links with the local community. They are always willing to share information with parents upon collection. Parents are kept informed about the club through the parent registration pack, notice board and regular newsletters.

What has improved since the last inspection?

N/A. There were no actions at the last inspection.

What is being done well?

- The staff provide an extensive range of exciting play activities for the children. These include indoor and outdoor sports, arts and crafts, role play, cookery, sewing and games. Children can freely choose to participate in activities that interest them, or they can do their homework with support provided by staff.
- Children are offered a varied range of healthy tea time foods and drinks on arrival at the club. This always includes fresh fruits or vegetable sticks as well as toast or sandwiches. They are encouraged to spread their own toast and to clear away their plates and cups which helps develop their independence.
- The staff actively promote equality of opportunity and equal access to resources. During inspection, boys and girls both enjoyed threading edible necklaces out of cereals and painting clay candle holders to celebrate the Hindu festival of Divali.
- There are clear boundaries for behaviour and children are involved in drawing up rules. Staff ensure that these are reinforced regularly and there are effective procedures in place to deal with sensitive issues. Most children were polite and showed respect for the staff and each other.

What needs to be improved?

- policies and procedures for special needs, child protection, complaints and lost or uncollected children

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person must take the following actions by the date shown

| Std | Action | Date |
|-----|--|------------|
| 14 | Review policies and procedures to ensure they are appropriate and correct, and makes these available to parents. This refers to the uncollected or lost child procedure, the complaints procedure and the child protection policy. | 30/11/2004 |

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

| Std | Recommendation |
|-----|--|
| 10 | Produce a written statement about special needs that is consistent with current legislation (Code of Practice 2002). |

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.