

## Little Rascals Out of School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Inspection date** 17/01/2008  
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**Type of inspection** Care

**Type of care** Out of School care

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## **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 provider must give a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must give a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Day Care and Childminding (inspection) (England) Regulations 2005 No 2300 Regulations 5 and 6).

### **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?**

Little Rascals Out of School Club was registered in 2003. It operates from the North Watford Methodist Church hall in The Harebreaks, North Watford. The club has use of the main hall, a kitchen, toilets and an enclosed outdoor play area. It serves the local area and children are taken to and collected from local schools.

The club is registered to care for 30 children at any one time. It operates during term time only and is open every day for breakfast club and after school care. The club is open from 08:00 to 09:00 and from 15:00 to 18:00.

There are currently 32 children from 4 to 14 years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The club supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. They also support children who speak English as an additional language.

The club employs six members of staff. All staff hold appropriate Play work qualifications. One member is working towards a Level 3 in Play work qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a clear understanding of good health and hygiene as they participate in daily routines to maintain this. Children, for example, are reminded to wash their hands prior to having their snack. Consequently, children develop sound personal hygiene habits. Toilets are clean, soap and paper towels are available. They are protected from infection because there is a clear policy in place regarding exclusion of children who have a contagious illness. In addition, children are reminded not to sit on the tables and these are wiped using an anti-bacterial spray.

Light snacks such as toast is provided. Children sit around tables in a large group. They enjoy choosing their favourite spread for the toast and help themselves to cheese spread, lemon curd, honey or marmite. Coloured plates and cups are used along with individual knives. Some fruit is offered such as sliced apple and they pour their own drinks from the jugs of water. This means that children's independence is fostered. They are adequately nourished and generally learn about healthy eating. Children's individual health needs, including possible allergies and dietary restrictions, are discussed before care is provided. Consequently, children benefit from the continuity of care between their parents and the staff at the club.

Procedures are in place to help staff act in the children's best interests, should they require medical attention. All necessary documentation, including written parental

consents and contact details, are in place to permit staff to act quickly if children become ill or if there is a medical emergency. All members of staff hold a current first aid qualification. The first aid kit is well stocked and easily accessible. This means that children's health, if they have an accident, is appropriately protected.

Children's physical skills are well supported. They regularly join in with useful art and craft activities and create displays linked to their interests. During this time they use a variety of utensils and tools. Children enjoy using the newly created outdoor play area. Here, they enjoy playing ball games. Indoors, they enjoy playing group skipping games. This provides them with exercise and opportunities to develop their co-ordination. When playing quietly the children use adult size chairs to sit on. This means that children are unable to relax or play quietly in comfort.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure environment. They move around freely to play and are able to access a good range of resources safely. These are varied, good quality and appropriate for the ages of the children who attend. All equipment is cleaned and checked frequently to make sure they are safe for children to use. However, the children do not have appropriate furniture to allow them to rest or play quietly. Effective procedures ensure that accidental injury is minimised. Regular risk assessments, for example, are carried out and toys are generally stored safely. An emergency evacuation procedure is in place which is practised with the children.

Correct ratios of staff collect children from various nearby schools. The children are encouraged to be aware of crossing roads safely. This means that they learn how to keep themselves safe. Staff are deployed to supervise children at all times. Parents or carers collecting their children sign the register when they leave. This means that children's safety is effectively promoted. The manager and her team have a satisfactory knowledge of child protection reporting procedures. They are aware of procedures to follow if they have any concerns. However, they have not got a copy of the Government booklet 'Safeguarding Children'. This means that, information to support children's welfare is under developed.

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

The provision is good.

Children settle and become happy in the After School Club because they have positive relationships with all staff members. Time is taken to listen and respond to the children with interest. Children share their news and children chat with ease about their day at school. Consequently, children are confident to make decisions, explore and investigate. Children initiate their own play such as a bingo game or a table game of football. Activities such as clay modelling, jewellery making and appropriate board games are regularly offered. This means that they enjoy a mix of free play, planned activities and spontaneous events such as playing outdoors. In

addition, they become involved in various art and craft activities including the creation of special interest displays. Recently they enjoyed creating an Eskimo display which appeals to the wide age range of children attending. Consequently, children develop good levels of self-esteem and their interests are effectively developed. Children are encouraged to complete homework and appropriate support such as reference books are provided.

The after school club is child-led. Children spoken to during the inspection speak highly of the club. Some comments include 'I have lots of friends here' and 'It is the best club that I have been to'. The staff are very mindful of children's favourite activities such as clay modelling, making models using Hama Beads and card collections. They ensure these are freely available for the children. All activities are well supervised with adults intervening when necessary. This means that children are able to use their imagination and develop their thoughts and ideas. Children delight in taking their completed models home. These include stars and flags made from a variety of beads. As a result, children develop confidence and share their creations with their families. During fine weather the children enjoy playing outside. They particularly enjoy playing football and games involving bats and balls. In addition, they bounce on space hoppers and play skipping games. Overall, the children take part in a good range of activities to promote their learning and development.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued and included. They receive a warm welcome and are helped to feel part of After School Club community. The manager and her staff know the children and their families well. Arrangements to settle children are negotiated taking into account the needs of children and the requirements of parents for flexible childcare. Information about the setting is shared with parents and a leaflet is provided outlining some procedures and activities. Many of the parents and children have sent complimentary thank-you cards to the group. One comment states 'very happy with the service you and your team provide'. Parents spoken to during the inspection speak highly of the provision and service it provides. This means that children benefit from the good partnership between their parents and the staff. There is a procedure in place to record any complaints which complies with the requirements of the national standards. This means that parents are aware of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns regarding the welfare of their children.

Children learn about the wider world through the creation of displays and through visitors to the club. Discussions take place surrounding the theme of the displays. Flags from different countries, for example, are discussed and created. Visitors include the Mayor, the Vicar and the local Lollipop Lady. Birthdays and special occasions such as Fathers day are celebrated. The manager ensures a gift is provided for children on their birthdays and at Christmas. This means that children are warmly cared for by sensitive adults who are interested in the children's welfare. The provision currently has no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

However, the provider is happy to provide care for all children and activities are adapted according to suit individual needs. Consequently, a commitment to an inclusive practice and ensuring all children develop self-esteem is demonstrated.

Children behave well. They interact well with their peers and generally play together harmoniously. A buddy system is in place to ensure new and younger children are settled and secure. Older children enjoy been a buddy and confidently support their younger peers. Any disagreements or unwanted behaviour is managed appropriately. Children, for example, are reminded not to climb on the chairs or to run in the hall. This means that children learn to respond to appropriate expectations for their behaviour. In addition, a points system to reward children for been helpful or for completing homework is effectively used. This means that children learn to understand their own needs and the needs of others around them.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are collected from a range of local schools within walking distance of the club. They are cared for by adults who have a clear sense of purpose. Each staff member, for example, is clear about their role and responsibilities. The adult:child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. The manager ensures ratios are always maintained and an effective rota is in place. Children benefit from the experienced staff who have worked together for a long period of time. Some staff members also work at the local schools. This means that children are very familiar with some of the staff. Recruitment and vetting procedures contribute to children being protected and cared for.

Policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. The manager and her staff regularly review the service they provide. This means that children's enjoyment at the club is effectively monitored. Children's attendance is appropriately recorded. However, staff do not sign out when they leave the premises. Consequently, in the event of an emergency there is not an accurate record of those present. Overall the children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to develop a lost child's procedure; a complaint procedure; a child protection procedure which complies with Area Child Protection Committee procedures; develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and ensure a separate incident book is maintained. In addition the provider was asked to devise the following; a written statement on behaviour management, including bullying; an equal opportunities policy and a written statement on special needs.

These have been done. All required documentation is now in place and staff are familiar with their contents. The manager ensures the procedures are reviewed and

shared with parents and staff. This means that procedures to protect children's welfare have been developed and improved. All staff have attended child protection training. Consequently, staff understand their role in protecting children. A separate incident book is now maintained. This means that children's confidentiality is maintained.

### **Complaints about the childcare provision**

Since registration, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to have procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and to keep a record of complaints and their outcome.

### **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 provision (space or partitioned area) is made for children who wish to relax or play quietly, equipped with appropriate furniture
- obtain a copy of the Government booklet 'Safeguarding Children'
- ensure there is a system for registering staff attendance on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2473)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)