

Victoria Centre Out Of School Activities

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 220257
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Inspector Susan Marriott

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

The Victoria Centre Out of School Activities was registered in 1992. It operates from The Victoria Centre in Wellingborough. Three main play areas are used these include the sports hall, Bailey Room and Sanctuary. There is a large kitchen and dining area. Children have use of an outdoor play area. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register to provide care for a maximum of 50 children under eight years, of whom 25 may be aged from two years to under five years. The provision operates a playgroup and out of school club during school term-time and a play scheme during school holidays. The playgroup runs from 9.15am to 12.15pm each weekday, although, extended care is also available from 9am to 12.30pm if required. The out of school club opens everyday from 7.30am to 9am and 3pm to 6pm and caters for children aged four to 11 years. The holiday play scheme is open every weekday from 8am until 6pm. There are currently 14 children on roll at the playgroup, of whom, seven receive funding for nursery education. There are children attending who speak English as an additional language. There are a core group of four staff who work at the facility. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

This is a welcoming, friendly and inclusive setting where the children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Staff sustain generally good quality interaction with children to promote positive attitudes and to guide children's learning from play. Many aspects of children's welfare are promoted well and management systems are sound. There are satisfactory partnerships with parents and carers. The capacity of the setting to improve is satisfactory and the setting has begun to use self-evaluation to support the ongoing review of their work.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve the educational programme to provide opportunities for children to develop their knowledge of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- improve the use of observations and assessments to identify learning priorities for each child and link these to the educational programmes
- ensure the accessibility of records of information used to assess staff suitability including the unique reference numbers of Criminal Records Bureau disclosures obtained and the date on which they were obtained
- ensure that there are suitable hygienic changing facilities for changing children in nappies (this refers to the changing mat)
- develop a collaborative culture of reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality

of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Required policies, procedures and paperwork are in place to support the promotion of children's welfare and the setting. Staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to protect children appropriately. Staff have undergone appropriate checks and been deemed suitable to work with children. However, evidence of Criminal Record Bureau Checks is not readily accessible in the absence of the manager. Staff check the identity of visitors before admitting them to the premises. Regular risk assessments and daily checks ensure that practical hazards are minimised. For example, the supports for the covered outdoor area have been padded to prevent children from inadvertently injuring themselves. Appropriate daily practice, such as, regular fire evacuation drills and teaching children to take care when negotiating the steps to the outdoor area, reinforce children's understanding of practical safety issues.

Whilst the staff have to make the best of the adapted premises, they generally make effective and efficient use of the building and resources to promote children's learning and development across all areas of learning. However, only three colours of paint are provided at the art easel, a new wooden resource trolley is not fully equipped for the children to self-select items and aprons and overalls have not been recently washed. Staff acknowledge the differing learning styles of boys and girls and recognise the value of outdoor play. Staff work well as a team, are well-trained and deployed effectively to provide individualised support to their key children. When staff members attend external training, information is cascaded to colleagues, ensuring that knowledge and good practice is shared appropriately. This helps to create a positive environment, where children feel secure and happy.

Managers and staff have a clear understanding of anti-discrimination, enabling them to implement appropriate policies and provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. For example, the snack table system is well thought through and shows that staff understand issues surrounding inclusion. For example, children self-select from fromage frais, raisins and breadsticks but staff remove the strawberry ones for all children to avoid allergy sufferers in the group.

Sound communication with parents means that staff are able to work well in partnership with them. Parents receive thorough information about the setting and their child's progress, for example, through newsletters, daily talks with staff and review meetings with key workers. The setting has established partnership links with other professionals, such as, speech therapists and the local schools. The senior management of the centre has a vision for the future, but the manager of the setting has completed the self-evaluation form in isolation from the staff team, who are unaware of its content. Therefore, self-evaluation identifies numerous priorities for improvement but staff are not consulted about the purchase of new furniture for the group and does not pick up the staff's acknowledged weakness in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Consequently, self-evaluation does not fully secure suitable action to drive continuous improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children make suitable progress in all areas of learning in this friendly setting. They are sufficiently supported in their achievements because staff have a competent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Many of the children have limited communication skills, so emphasis is rightly given to the development of speaking and listening. Children attempt to recognise their names on entry and basic words are posted in the environment to promote children's ability to link words with meaning. For example, the name of the day of the week is stuck to the whiteboard. Children are welcomed into the registration group and staff use the whiteboard to provide visual cues for all children including those with English as an additional language. For example, staff ask the children how they are feeling today and record happy and sad faces in response to the answers. Staff discuss the weather and draw pictures to show that it is icy this morning and that children may need to wear their coat, hat and gloves when they want to go outside. Staff reinforce the behaviour expectations and remind children that they must use 'kind hands'.

Staff members have made a diary book of pre-school, showing a photographic record of the activities offered over time and the links to the six areas of learning. This also demonstrates the increasing levels of knowledge of the staff following their attendance at the Early Years Foundation Stage course. Early entries are only referenced to the area of learning covered. Subsequent entries are more detailed and use the criteria from the 'Development Matters' and each aspect of each area of learning. The planning, observation and assessment system continues to develop and is not fully effective in securing children's progress towards the early learning goals. For example, in recent weeks, there is only one reference to the calculation aspect of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy and only two more vague references to mathematical learning. Staff admit that they lack confidence in their own knowledge and understanding of numeracy and identify this as an acknowledged weakness in the provision.

Improved use of the key worker system, means that staff know the children well and can, therefore, provide appropriate individualised support. Staff build activities around the children's interests. For example, the recent windy weather raised children's curiosity and they loved making kites from carrier bags and string. Children use a painting programme on the computer and staff have made a delightful display of their work. Children develop their creativity through a suitable range of imaginative activities and the use of a sand and water tray. Children have free flow access to the outdoor area which is increasingly utilised to offer children an extended range of opportunities across all six areas of learning. For example, children throw and catch balls, ride wheeled toys and play with sand and water.

Staff oversee children's visits to the toilet areas and promote good habits of hand washing and independence. A mobile hand wash machine ensures that children can wash their hands before snack time without having to visit the toilets. Children pour their own drinks and place dirty cups and bowls into a container in readiness

for washing up. However, the changing mat is split and presents the potential for cross-infection. Children have opportunities to talk about healthy lifestyles as they chat with adults, learning new words and phrases. They develop their imagination as they dress up and enjoy shop role play. Children develop skills for the future as they develop independence, share ideas and work together. For example, staff encourage them to try to fasten their own coats. Children develop a good understanding of appropriate behaviour as they discuss and implement the setting's rules. They show care and concern for each other, for example, older children readily involve younger ones in their play, often taking them by the hand to help them join in. Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe. They smile and laugh and form confident relationships with their peers and staff.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met