

Viking Junior Academy

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 14/09/2011
Inspector Fiona Robinson

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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*.

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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

Viking Junior Academy is run by Viking Junior Academy Limited. It was registered in 2010 and operates from a designated demountable classroom within the grounds of Wentworth Primary School, in Maldon, Essex. All children share access to a securely enclosed outdoor play area. It is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There is support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

A maximum of 20 children aged between two and eleven years may attend at any one time. Before and after school and the holiday club provides care for children between the ages of four and eleven years. Currently there are 60 children on roll, of whom 20 are in the early years age group. Of these, 10 children receive funding. During school term times, out of school care is offered from 7.30am until 9am and from 3pm until 6.30pm. The pre-school cares for children from two to the end of the early years age range each weekday from 9am until 11:30am Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and on Wednesday and Friday sessions are from 9am until 11:30am or all day from 9am to 2 pm. During school holidays the setting is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of the sessions on offer from the local community and surrounding area.

There are five members of staff who work with the children. Of these, four hold Early Years National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at level 3; and one holds an NVQ at level 4. One member of staff also holds a Foundation Degree and has Early Years Professional status and another is a qualified teacher and holds a BA Hons in education. The Academy receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy participating in a wide range of well-organised activities and experiences and achieve well. Staff take into account their individual needs and interests and ensure they are included in indoor and outdoor play. Partnerships with parents and carers and the host school are good and information is shared effectively. Staff are skilled at increasing children's understanding of making healthy choices and staying safe. The manager and staff have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement and demonstrate a good capacity for continued improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the use of technology resources and programmable toys in activities to extend children's learning

- develop further assessment systems and ways of recording the children's experiences, achievements and progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is good because staff have a clear understanding of their responsibility to keep children safe. They follow rigorous procedures during collection times and ensure parents are fully aware of these arrangements. Staff regularly carry out risk assessments to minimise danger and record these effectively. Comprehensive policies and procedures are reviewed and implemented to ensure children's safety. There are robust staff recruitment and vetting procedures in place to check the suitability of staff and adults working with the children. Fire evacuation procedures are practised regularly to familiarise children with the routine and children have access to well-maintained resources and equipment. Children are supervised well in the indoor and outdoor environments.

The Viking Junior Academy is well-led and managed. There are good self-evaluation systems in place which have a positive impact on the children's experiences. The manager and staff take the views of parents and carers and children into consideration when identifying areas for improvement. They have a clear idea of their strengths and areas for improvement. Currently, they are further developing the layout and organisation of the outdoor area. Activities are regularly monitored and staff set realistic targets for the children. However, opportunities for children to use a wider range of technology resources, such as the digital camera and computer, are not fully exploited to support their learning. Staff evaluate their planning; however systems for recording the achievements of the youngest children are not fully developed to show their activities and progress over time. Staff actively promote equality and diversity and ensure children are integrated into team games, sporting activities and outdoor play.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. They are kept well-informed of special events and activities through the website, parents' notice board, informal discussions and newsletters. They say that staff work hard to provide a bright, welcoming and inclusive environment. Key staff regularly keep them informed of their children's achievement and progress. The relationship with the host school is good and the setting benefits from the use of the activity trail playground, playing field and outdoor environment. Staff liaise regularly with the Early Years Foundation Stage staff. They are experienced in caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and forge good links with children's parents, the host school and outside agencies. Staff ensure children experience a smooth transition to and from school.

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

Children benefit from well-planned activities and achieve well in all areas of learning. Staff value their views and include these in the topics and choice of activities. Themes, such as People Who Help Us, Countries Around the World and Harvest enrich children's experiences and give them a good appreciation of lifestyles, customs and cultures. Children make their own choices of play activities with good support from staff. Children behave well because staff have a consistent approach to managing behaviour and are very good role models. Children are considerate of one another and share their resources sensibly. They helped to compile the rules for the club and cooperate well when they play parachute games. Staff actively promote their independence in decision making. Festivals such as Diwali, Eid, Christmas and the Chinese New Year give the children a good appreciation of other festivals and cultures.

Children have a good understanding of keeping themselves healthy and safe. They learn how to make healthy choices at breakfast time and snack time and help to prepare fruit kebabs and vegetable soup. They understand the importance of exercise and are keen to practise their balancing skills on the beams and bars in the adventure playground. Children learn to use equipment safely as they prepare fruit salads and pizzas with healthy toppings. They benefit from talks on fire and road safety and have a good understanding of the work of the doctor, nurse and dentist as part of their People Who Help Us topic.

Children are keen to participate in a wide range of interesting activities and make good progress. Their communication, language and literacy skills develop well. They enjoy listening to a story about a bear hunt and talk confidently about where the bears may be hiding. Most count up to fifteen and beyond and identify two-dimensional shapes in the indoor and outdoor environments. They tunefully sing songs, such as 'Five Cheeky Monkeys' and 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'. Their creative skills are developed well as they print patterns with fruit and vegetables and draw and paint pictures of water melons and sweetcorn. Children enjoy going on bug hunts and building dens in the outdoor area. They are encouraged to use their imaginations well in role play as they plan holidays in their travel agents and post letters and parcels at their post office. Children also skilfully practise their juggling skills. They dress up as pirates and eagerly use their maps to find the hidden treasure. Trips to the library, local park and Monkey Puzzle Activities Centre are well-organised and enhance their experiences. They talk with interest about life in Italy, China, India, France and England and enjoy making and tasting food from each of these countries. Overall, children are prepared well for life outside the school day and their future learning experiences.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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