

The After School Club Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	130617
Inspection date	18/10/2011
Inspector	Anne Sheldon

Setting address	Cloisters Hall, The Cloisters, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 1HL
Telephone number	01923 773938
Email	debby@theholidayclub.net
Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 After School Club Ltd, is privately owned and was first registered in 1997. It takes place at The Cloisters Hall, Rickmansworth and cares for children from four to twelve years. The premises consist of a large hall, smaller hall, kitchen, six toilets, storage facilities and an outside play area. The after school club is open from 3pm to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday, term time only. The holiday play scheme is open every school holiday from 8.15am to 6pm

Children who attend the after school club are collected from 10 primary schools in the local areas of Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Mill End and Chorleywood. They attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 50 children aged from four to eight years at any one time and currently has approximately 169 children on roll.

There are 13 staff who work with the children on a full-time or part-time basis, including the owner/manager. Eight staff hold a relevant early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

The needs of the children are not met because four legal requirements are not fully met, which limits the effectiveness of measures to safeguard the welfare of children. Children are not safeguarded as risk assessments do not identify or minimise risks to children. Staff are unclear of their roles and responsibilities and unclear on reporting procedures. Requirements in terms of recording of attendance, administration of medication and hydration for children are not met. In the main children make appropriate progress in their play and learning because the staff plan and provide a suitable range of activities.

Self-evaluation processes are ineffective in identifying key weaknesses in the provision that impact on children's welfare.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure that risk assessments identify risks in the environment and that actions are taken to minimise risks and reduce hazards for children, including safety
- 02/11/2011

- and security of the premises in and outdoors (Suitable premises, environment and equipment)
- ensure that children have access to fresh drinking water at all times (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 02/11/2011
- ensure all documentation which is required for the efficient and safe management of the provision and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children is accurately maintained and includes the relevant details with particular reference to the administering of medication and attendance registers (Documentation) 02/11/2011
- implement an effective safeguarding children policy and procedure that includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff; ensure that all members of staff understand the policy and procedure. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 02/11/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- use the self- evaluation and quality improvement process as the basis of internal review assessing what the setting offers against robust and challenging quality criteria, involving the whole staff team
- ensure that children are supervised at all times
- improve the use of observation and assessment to support the planning and provision of enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences that are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, receive induction training and that practice is monitored and regular appraisals identify training needs that are met through professional development

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and security is compromised because risk assessments and daily checks of the outdoor environment fail to identify potential hazards, such as, an open side gate, beyond which, unsafe materials are stored and a jagged broken gate post. As a result the risk to children is not minimised. There are times when groups of children are left unsupervised whilst staff members attend to routine function, such as, opening the front door. In addition, procedures relating to security around the area, linking the outdoors to the main hall are not always followed. An appropriate safeguarding policy and procedure are in place but not all staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities in terms of safeguarding nor are they aware of the correct procedures to follow.

Two large rooms serve the setting, one of which, is used for meals and quieter

activities. A sufficient range of resources are available, although few books are accessible for quiet reading or story times. In the main resources are in a reasonable condition and support children's progress across most of the six areas of learning.

The management has completed a self-evaluation of the setting. Neither staff nor parents have had involvement or have seen the documentation. The self-evaluation fails to identify the weaknesses of the setting as it does not use robust and challenging quality criteria. As a result the limited plans for improvement have failed to raise standards of practice or address the issues. Two of the recommendations regarding the risk assessments and documentation made at a previous Ofsted inspection have not been addressed.

There are suitable relationships with parents and carers, some of whom, choose the setting despite travelling long distances and some, of whom, have used the setting with older children. Parents are warmly greeted by the staff when they arrive to collect their children. The members of staff provide them with verbal feedback about the activities children have participated in. During the first five settling in sessions, written observations of the children's progress is shared with parents. The setting forms appropriate relationships with other provision that the children attend. Themes followed at some local schools are mirrored but observations and details of children's progress are less well shared with the other settings they attend.

An effective equal opportunities policy is reviewed annually as are all policies and procedures. Records needed for the safe and effective running of the setting are generally well kept. However, the times by which children arrive and depart are not recorded accurately and medication consent forms are not always clearly recorded with dates. This means that some aspects of children's safety are not promoted well.

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

Children are happy and well settled in the setting, although, their learning and development is less well catered for. Staff sometimes miss opportunities to question and challenge children effectively. There is however, an emphasis on child led activity with staff supervision. Consequently, some children's progress is less well supported. Observations of the children are completed but the next steps they need to take are not always identified appropriately. The management team plans a wide range of activities for each week but does not always consider the individual needs and interests of the children.

In the main staff interact well with the children and form warm relationships with them. Generally children are developing appropriate skills in their language and vocabulary. Most children display the ability to reason and solve problems in their play with a good range of varied building materials. However, there are some missed opportunities to further children's mathematical skills. For example, at meal times opportunities are lost to calculate the number of sandwiches required.

Children are developing some creative skills, as they create their own models from the junk.

Children are developing suitable skills in being healthy. They are offered healthy afternoon snacks, although, staff serve the children and pour their drinks, rather than allowing them to do so independently. Drinks are not always readily available throughout the afternoon session and as a result children are less hydrated.

Children receive and make healthy choices in the food at snack time, although the staff sometimes miss further opportunities to reinforce this in discussion. Children are encouraged to wash their hands prior to eating, developing good hand washing practices and the setting has been awarded the highest rating for food preparation hygiene practices by the Local Authority. The outdoor play area provides basic opportunities for fresh air and exercise in good weather. Children make reasonable use of the spacious hall for ball games when they first arrive, expelling energy and moving around the hall excitedly and without restriction.

Staff pay insufficient attention to keeping children safe as they fail to carry out robust risk assessments and minimise potential hazards. However children are confident and settle in very quickly when they arrive at the setting after school. They laugh and smile and make free choices of activities throughout their time at the setting. They know and understand what is expected of them and their behaviour is good. They are cooperative in their play with one another and form good friendships. The setting has an ethos of respecting all children and as a result the children show respect for one another. Children are provided with an acceptable range of play resources which enable them to learn about other people's lives and cultures.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	4
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:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take actions as specified in the early years part of the report (Welfare of the children being cared for, Suitability and safety of premises and equipment, Records to be kept, Arrangements for safeguarding children). (Also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 02/11/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take actions as specified in the early years part of the report (Welfare of the children being cared for, Suitability and safety of premises and equipment, Records to be kept, Arrangements for safeguarding children). 02/11/2011