

St James After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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15/05/2012

Inspector

Liz Caluori

Setting address

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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

St James After School Club registered in 2012 and is run by a management committee. The club operates from a hall and rooms within the infant school at St James County Primary in Tunbridge Wells. The club also has use of the school's playgrounds and fields.

The club is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 32 children from four years to under eight years may be cared for any at one time and, of these, no more than 16 may be in the early years age group. The club operates Monday to Friday from 8am-8.50am and 3.15pm to 6pm during school term times and from 8am to 6pm on inset days and during some holiday periods. There are currently 60 children on roll of whom eight are in the early years age group.

There are seven staff employed to work with the children of whom six hold appropriate childcare qualifications. They are supported by an administrator and two bank staff who are able to provide cover in case of staff absence.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the play club and take part in an interesting range of activities. The respect given to their individuality and diversity is not fully reflected in the resources provided. Many of the systems and working practices are still evolving but regular self-evaluation takes place and the staff team demonstrates an appropriate capacity to promote continual improvement. Safety precautions are effective although some of the related records are not sufficiently confidential. Positive relationships exist with parents. Friendly interaction also takes place with the other early years practitioners who work with the children although information is not routinely shared about their learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the maintenance of records relating to accidents and incidents to make sure that references to individual children are only accessible to those who have a right to see them
- develop further relationships with other practitioners involved in delivering education and care to children, to promote continuity and coherence by sharing relevant information with each other
- extend the range of resources and pictures on display to show a positive attitude to social diversity.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective arrangements are in place to prioritise children's safety. Staff have two-way radios, which they use to communicate when collecting children from their classrooms and as necessary throughout the session. Risk assessments are in place and daily checks are undertaken of the premises. The manager takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children and appropriate procedures exist to deal with any concerns that may arise about the welfare of a child. Staff with first aid training are present at all times and records are made of any accidents or incidents. Whilst detailed and clear, these are not always sufficiently confidential. They are shared with the parent of the child about whom the record was made but include the names of the other children involved.

The staff team works effectively together, creating a friendly and relaxed environment. The club receives support from the local authority advisory team to identify and prioritise areas for improvement. This has led to a number of successful changes, such as reorganising the arrangements for teatime to create a calmer atmosphere. Staff have yet to address a range of identified improvements as they are prioritising those that will have the greatest impact on the provision for children.

Staff undertake observations of the children as they play to build a picture of their abilities and interests. However, these are not particularly evaluative and do not provide a clear picture of children's levels of achievement and areas for development. All of the children in the early years age group come from the two reception classes within the school. Play club staff have positive relationships with the class teachers but do not routinely share information about children's learning and development. This means they do not have the support to provide coordinated and cohesive care.

Staff set out an interesting range of resources at the start of each session and children confidently select additional items from the storage cupboard to extend their games. Space is generally well organised although, on occasion, staff have to intervene to manage some over-exuberant games in the hall. Effective arrangements are in place to allow children to move independently through the short corridor between the indoor and outdoor play areas. Staff use their two-way radios to advise each other when children leave one area to go to the other.

Staff respect children's individual personalities and listen to their views and opinions. This helps them to develop positive self-esteem. They plan some activities to mark festivals and special days throughout the year. There is a welcome poster in a range of languages but, other than this, there is little to promote positive images of diversity.

Parents receive a friendly greeting as they arrive to collect their child. Staff take time to speak with them and share any relevant information and provide written

information, for example through notices and newsletters.

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

Children show a strong sense of security in the play club and respond well to the warm, caring interaction of staff. They take an active role in devising an appropriate set of rules for behaviour. They generally know how to play safely but sometimes need a reminder from staff, for example to avoid other people when kicking foam footballs in the hall.

Good arrangements are in place to promote children's health. Meal times are very positive, social experiences. Children enjoy nutritious light cooked meals, have a choice of fruit and constant access to drinks. They enthusiastically take part in planning menus and preparing food. They learn the importance of following good food hygiene procedures and several choose to take part in the washing up and tidying away. Staff use interesting and fun strategies to promote healthy eating, for example borrowing a special bike from the local authority that has been adapted to power a food blender. An activity to use this for a 'berry breakfast' offers a good incentive for children to make their own fruit smoothies. Children benefit from the regular opportunities they have to engage in physical games and to play outside in the fresh air. Football is extremely popular and there are also resources to promote balance and coordination.

Children have fun at the play club but systems to plan activities that reflect their individual interests and preferences are still developing. The lack of effective coordination between all those delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage means that staff are unable to ensure that children are routinely offered an appropriate level of challenge. This is an area that has been prioritised for improvement. Overall, children are enthusiastic, happy and motivated as they play. They concentrate well on their chosen activities and play very cooperatively with their friends.

Children benefit from many opportunities to express themselves creatively, such as drawing, sewing, painting and role-play. They also enjoy junk modelling and are imaginative and ingenious in their designs. They show pride in their achievements and staff support this effectively by encouraging them to display their work on the wall. A games console is a popular resource although staff have yet to determine an arrangement to enable all children to have equal access and ensure that some children do not take over.

The opportunities that children receive to select resources and choose the games they want to play help to develop their independence. They are also confident to interact with staff and other children. They are well behaved, polite and friendly. These attributes, along with the practical skills they are developing such as food preparation and use of information and communication technology equipment, helps to prepare them for the future.

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	2
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