

# Activate

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	260711
<b>Inspection date</b>	23/07/2012
<b>Inspector</b>	Lindsey Cullum

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<b>Type of setting</b>	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**

Activate is a holiday activity programme which opened in 1999. It operates from the pre-preparatory building of Town Close House School in the city of Norwich. Children have the use of a hall, computer room, art and craft room, heated indoor swimming pool, playing fields and scenic woodlands.

A maximum of 80 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting opens each weekday during two weeks of the school summer holidays, from 8.30am until 5.30pm. There are currently 120 children from four to under eight years on roll. The activity programme also caters for children aged from eight to fourteen years in separate areas of the school.

The facility employs 26 staff. Sixteen of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate qualifications. Six qualified staff work with the younger children at any one time, supported by five student team leaders.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Activate provides a happy, enjoyable experience for children during the school holidays. Children's learning and development needs are successfully supported as they eagerly take on new challenges and acquire new skills, while enjoying the exciting range of activities which are provided on a daily basis. The strong leadership from the management team, alongside competent and enthusiastic staff, ensures that children's welfare is appropriately promoted and sessions generally run efficiently. The setting works in close partnership with parents, ensuring that children's individual needs are known and children are valued and respected. The setting is committed to continuously improving and developing the provision, with effective systems of self-evaluation in place.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- promote children's health further, by ensuring fresh drinking water is more obviously easily accessible to children and by providing alternative healthy snacks
- consider further ways of managing the transitions between planned activity sessions to maximise the time children spend engaged in activities.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are well protected because staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and know when to take action to safeguard children in

their care. The management team and core staff attend appropriate training, which is cascaded to student team leaders through the induction process. Rigorous checks ensure that all those working with children are vetted prior to employment and are suitable to work with children. Staff are vigilant and carry out checks on a daily basis to ensure that the provision is safe for children, any hazards are quickly identified and appropriate action is taken. Furthermore, risk assessments are conducted to ensure that children taking part in organised sporting activities, such as swimming, do so safely. Fire drills are practised with the children to ensure they are familiar with the procedure in the event of an emergency. All documentation is clear and accessible, to promote the welfare of the children. The premises enable staff to offer children an exciting and very varied range of activities including arts and crafts, swimming, dance and drama, cooking, music and ICT. The outdoor environment is used well to supplement indoor activities, including den building or games in the wooded areas. Resources and equipment are effectively monitored by the staff, so these are of a high quality and remain safe and suitable for children's use.

Staff are well qualified, enthusiastic and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They are highly committed to the children, joining in activities wholeheartedly and sensitively supporting the very youngest, so that all children thrive and achieve their potential. Children are organised into mixed age groups with at least one key adult, so they begin to build trusting relationships. Planned activity sessions are timetabled throughout each day and children choose which activities they are interested in. However, some of the transitions between the planned activities become extended, particularly while children are deciding which activities they wish to do next, which sometimes detracts from the smooth flow of children from one activity to another.

The management team demonstrates a clear vision and commitment to continuous improvement and value the feedback they receive from staff and families when considering ideas for the future development of the provision. Relationships and communication with parents are good. Staff keep parents and carers well informed about their children's activities and achievements. Parents and children are very complimentary about the provision, with parents stating that staff are 'friendly and helpful', the environment is 'relaxed' and their children 'thoroughly enjoy the choice of different activities'. Many of the school teaching staff work in the setting, therefore know the children well and are able to consistently support children's learning and ongoing progress.

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

The setting makes an effective contribution to children's learning and development, complimenting that received in schools or settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have a secure understanding of the ways in which children learn and plan an extensive and varied range of activities. They help children to set achievable goals and celebrate their success. Children are offered an excellent choice of sporting and non-sporting activities, with opportunities to try new challenges such as basic martial arts techniques. They join

in with great delight, listening avidly to explanations and then practising their new skills with a partner. Games of dodge-ball develop children's physical skills and spacial awareness, as they move in inventive ways to miss the ball rolled by other children. There is a strong sense of team and working together. Older children actively support the younger ones and are very kind and considerate. Many friendships are apparent and new ones forming as children play together. Children cheer each other on as they complete the obstacle course and celebrate when they achieve a personal best time. Staff are sensitive to the needs of the children and adapt or modify activities accordingly, to ensure that all children can take part and are included.

Children thoroughly enjoy the opportunities to swim and have fun in the water. Skilled assessment by the staff ensures that children's skills are enhanced, they become confident in the water and they are safe. Good use is made of opportunities to build on children's academic development, such as counting and weighing during cookery. They relish opportunities to be freely creative and carefully select the materials they would like to use from the abundant supplies which are available. Children are very proud of their achievements and they are frequently encouraged and praised by staff. Many of the children are confident speakers who communicate effectively, sharing their ideas and experiences, joining in conversations and answering questions. These exchanges do much to add to children's speaking abilities and thinking skills. Staff are constantly on hand to offer their support and advice. They listen to any problems the children might have and help them to find a solution. As a consequence, children's behaviour is exemplary and they are developing excellent social skills.

Use of the outdoors is a key strength of the setting, promoting all areas of children's learning and development. Children choose from a broad range of sporting activities, including tennis and football, which promotes a positive attitude to the enjoyment of physical activity and exercise. They energetically bounce around on bouncy castles and complete challenging obstacle courses. As a consequence, children require frequent drinks and snacks to maintain their energy levels and remain well-hydrated, particularly on hot summer days. Regular breaks between activities are timetabled, when a drink and biscuit are provided and water fountains are available around the school. However, not all children are actively encouraged to take responsibility for their own needs by accessing drinks or healthy snacks when their bodies require these. Staff are well trained to meet children's specific medical needs with health care plans drawn up in consultation with parents. Personal hygiene is a priority and good practices are reinforced, such as washing hands before eating or cooking. Staff have adopted many strategies to keep the children safe and these are explained to children during group times, for example, children only use the wooded areas in pairs or groups.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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