

Ashdown Club for Children with Special Needs

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Carly Reigler
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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

Ashdown Club for Children with Special Needs operates from an adapted ground floor building in the centre of Worthing, West Sussex. The club supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities from the local area. The provision is part of the Guild Care charity, based in Worthing. The charity has a board of trustees and a nominated registered person. The respite centre is organised and run by the centre manager at each session.

The club provides respite care for children and vulnerable adults aged from five to 30 years. It is open on Saturdays between the hours of 9.30am to 4.30pm. The club also operates on Wednesday evenings and provides weekday sessions during school holiday periods.

A maximum of 12 children aged five to eight years may attend the club at any one time. There are currently 79 children aged five to 18 on roll. The club is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The club employs 18 members of staff; of whom nine, including the manager, hold an appropriate early years qualification. A trained paediatric nurse is employed and all other staff members are experienced in caring for children with special needs. The club receives support from the local authority and the local social services department.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Ashdown Club for Children with Special Needs supports children and families whose caring responsibilities lead to huge pressures by providing a safe, accessible recreational environment. The club aims to increase children's self-confidence, independence and social skills and to reduce isolation. Adults effectively meet children's requirements with outstanding care and dedication and children make significant progress towards the early learning goals overall. Staff sustain a consistently high standard of interaction with children of all ages. Exceptionally strong partnerships and excellent relationships with parents, carers and other agencies ensure that individual needs are extremely well met. The senior management team and staff have inspiring visions for the future and demonstrate a very high level of commitment to continuous improvement that ensures improving outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person

should consider:

- strengthening existing systems for carrying out observations and assessments to accommodate children's individual patterns of attendance, for example, by improving consistency of evaluation across all aspects of the curriculum to more accurately identify their next steps in learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There is a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues among staff at all levels. Regular training supports the knowledge and understanding of staff, and promotes an effective approach. There is an excellent induction system in place, which includes staff reading all policies and procedures and signing to acknowledge their acceptance and understanding of these. Well-written, in-depth policies and procedures and an extensive recruitment and vetting procedure are maintained. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and therefore support children in being safe and well protected. Thorough risk assessments are carried out regularly and a daily safety check ensures any potential hazards to children are minimised.

The manager of the club is an inspirational leader. The passion she has for her work wholeheartedly motivates those around her. Staff have an extreme commitment to offering an exceptionally inclusive environment for all children. New members of staff quickly integrate into the team. The club is well managed and rigorously monitored both by the immediate team and by senior management. This ensures that actions are well targeted and therefore effective.

Children flourish with the calm, friendly environment and easily access the wide range of good quality resources. High quality furniture, equipment and resources are used very well to support children's learning and development. Children experience excellent levels of direct support and attention because the manager organises the staff to ensure the adult to child ratios are high, often exceeding the minimum requirements. Staff support children in instigating their own play, for example by fetching fabrics and blankets from accessible storage areas to help them develop their constructive play.

The promotion of equality and diversity is at the heart of the club, and staff clearly recognise this as essential to the care and learning of each of the children. The club is highly successful in helping children to integrate and prosper, because of the team's exceptional knowledge of children's backgrounds and interests.

Exceptional partnership working enables the team to develop excellent action-plans and support children and their parents to access high levels of further support. Therefore, staff are successful in taking well-planned steps to close gaps in children's achievements. Highly positive relationships are enjoyed with all parents and carers, who are heavily involved in decision making. For example, parents are part of a forum that meets regularly throughout the year, and the club actively takes any views on board. Parents are warmly welcomed to the setting and know

that they can approach their key person or the manager for support and advice whenever they wish.

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

Children enjoy a wide range of safe, clean and attractive toys and resources. They participate in an interesting range of activities and experiences indoors and outdoors. Children have opportunities to use a good variety of construction toys. They show great enthusiasm playing with small world toys and sharing them with their friends. The children's positive attitudes are impressive. They settle well and enthusiastically select their own activities. Children particularly enjoy making their own greetings cards. They choose their own paper and collage materials, such as fabric and ribbon, confidently apply glue, and create patterns and pictures on their cards. They chatter animatedly about family and friends, saying who they are making their cards for and why.

Staff use their knowledge of children's interests and abilities to plan stimulating activities and resources. For example, when staff observed a child who was hesitant in participating in messy play had developed an interest in dinosaurs at home, they ensured that messy play activities incorporated dinosaur toys to support his learning. Comprehensive observations are made so that staff can ensure that the developmental needs of each child is met. However, current assessment systems do not clearly evaluate children's progress across all aspects of the curriculum over their individual attendance patterns to provide accurate identification of their next steps in learning.

Children develop independence as they expertly use knives to prepare vegetables for their lunch. They are extremely competent in showing a mature response to taking responsibility for their own and other's safety. For example, children remind their peers that they need to take care as they chop the vegetables. They have high levels of self-esteem and confidence, and enjoy strong relationships with staff and each other. Staff are outstanding role models with high expectations of behaviour, which is consistently admirable.

Excellent and highly effective hygiene practices are followed across all areas of the setting. Areas for physical play are available both indoors and outside for all children on a daily basis. For example, children join in excitedly with a game of 'hide and seek' and build dens with cushions and beanbags. Children create pizzas, chatting together about their chosen toppings, such as onion, peppers, pineapple and tomatoes. They gain a good understanding of healthy eating with healthy choices provided at lunchtime.

Appropriate questioning techniques by adults enable children to think through problems for themselves; for example, how to construct a wooden train track around the room. Children use their own initiative and work with their peers exceptionally well. They are thoughtful, curious and interested in the environment and resources around them. Activities, such as 'hide and seek' and reading,

support children to develop communication and numeracy skills. Children freely use equipment, such as a CD player, games consoles and laptop, and the equipment in the sensory room to learn more about technology. Children are prepared for transitions to other settings and school with very well planned and thought out strategies.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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