

The Ivy Link

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY301598
Inspection date	26/01/2009
Inspector	Michele Anne Villiers

Setting address	Ivy Street, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 5NZ
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Telephone number	
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Email	
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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.

Description of the setting

The Ivy Link Out of School Club was registered in 2005. It is one of two out of school clubs owned and managed by a private individual. The club operates from one large room in a purpose built building in Runcorn, Cheshire. The club is registered to care for a maximum of 32 children aged from three to under eight years, although children up to the age of 12 years may attend. The club is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is open Monday to Friday from 15.00 to 18.00 term time, and from 07.30 to 18.00 during school holidays. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 12 children in the early years and 48 children in the later years age group on roll. The provision employs four members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years or play work qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children play in a warm and welcoming environment where they grow in confidence and make progress in all areas of their development. They are respected as individuals and the provision promotes inclusion and equality of opportunity. Most safety measures are in place, although risk assessments do not clearly identify all possible hazards, and some records are not always kept up-to-date. Most staff are qualified and understand their roles of responsibility. However, a key worker system has not yet been fully implemented. The manager is keen to maintain continuous improvement and has met previous recommendations.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop systematic observations, to include the children's starting points, and use the information to monitor the children's progress towards the early learning goals, and inform future learning experiences for each child
- ensure records are kept about vehicles in which children are transported, including insurance details
- update risk assessments to cover all areas which a child may come into contact, and include each type of outing
- continue to develop effective methods of self-evaluating the provision in order to identify and address weaknesses and take into account the views of children and parents.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- assign a key person to each child.

11/02/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The provision is suitably organised and staff work well together, providing the children with good support. However, children have not been assigned a designated key worker who is responsible for overseeing their individual needs and sharing information with parents. This is a breach of regulations. Appropriate steps are taken to promote the children's health, and safeguard their well-being. Staff are aware of child protection issues, and the premises are secure, with some risk assessments conducted to help minimise hazards to children. However, recorded risk assessments do not clearly identify all areas that children access, such as the outside play area, where some hazardous materials are stored. On outings children learn about safety. They wear wrist bands with contact numbers, and staff ensure venues are safe and suitable prior to the visit. However, recorded risk assessments are not always available on individual outings. Vehicles are used to transport the children and documentation is available about the drivers, but information regarding current insurance certificates is not kept up-to-date.

Appropriate steps are taken to help prevent the spread of infection, and children have a good understanding of personal hygiene. They learn about dental care through planned activities, such as 'Look after your teeth', and food is suitably nutritious and balanced throughout the week. During the summer they grow fruit and vegetables outside, and discuss the importance of healthy foods, using posters and pictures. The manager monitors the provision through observation and since their last inspection they have successfully completed a quality assurance scheme through 'Aiming High'. However, there is no formalised method of self-evaluation in relation to the new Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to effectively identify areas for improvement. There is a close partnership with parents and parents speak very positively about the care provided and their children's development. Links have been forged with other provisions that young children attend in order to provide continuity of care. Previous recommendations have been met, with updated written safeguarding policies, and the provision of more resources reflecting disability. The manager is keen to improve upon her personal development and is currently working towards a level 4 qualification in order to benefit the welfare of the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff enthusiastically support the children, motivating their learning and interests. For example, they sit with children in small groups, or one-to-one, playing games, taking turns and discussing colour, shape, number and position. Children form close relationships, eagerly interacting and chatting to staff. They confidently explore their environment and help themselves to toys. The children's independence is very much encouraged and they are given roles of responsibility, such as toilet monitor, and setting the table for snack and stacking chairs. Staff use informal planning to provide a good balance of adult-led and child-directed play, with emphasis on enjoyment. They use observation to monitor the children's progress and have started to implement children's portfolios containing their paintings, drawings and written work to chart their development. However, these

are not linked to areas of learning. The information is not used for future plans, or identifying the early learning goals or the children's starting points in order to clearly measure their achievements.

Children progress well in their communication, language and literacy skills. They enjoy conversation with each other and adults. Staff encourage them to use their imagination, and play games linking letters and sounds. Children eagerly attempt to write their name and captions on artwork. Storage boxes are labelled with pictures and written words, and displayed writing around the room helps children learn that print carries meaning. Children show an interest in books, helping themselves and reading quietly and looking at the pictures. Staff make picture flash cards for those children who have English as a second language, to help in their understanding and communication. Children also enjoy planned musical events where they sing and make a compact disc recording with a teacher.

Throughout play children are encouraged to problem solve, count and calculate. For example, they calculate and position where the coloured sticks go in a game to allow the ball to pass through. They confidently count how many chairs are required at snack time, and paint numbers on paper plates. Children develop a good awareness of technology as they access music systems and computer games. They regularly go on outings to places of interest, such as the zoo, learning about their environment, animals and seasons. Outside, children develop stamina and coordination as they run around and play games. Staff organise team sports, such as 'Crazy Olympics' where children compete using rubber javelins, skittles and relay batons. They become aware of diversity through some toys and resources, and learn about different festivals, such as Chinese New Year, making dragon pictures. Children develop a strong sense of belonging and contribute their thoughts and ideas to the planning of activities and house rules.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	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