

Barracudas Activity Camp

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY258083

Inspection date

21/08/2012

Inspector

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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

Barracudas Activity Camp was registered in 2003. It is one of a growing chain of privately run summer holiday schemes owned and operated by Barracudas in and around the M25 area. It operates from a purpose built, private secondary school building, which is situated in High Barnet in the London borough of Barnet.

The activity camp is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Child Care Register to care for a maximum of 120 children from four years to under eight years. Care is also provided for children over eight years. The group operates each weekday during school holidays from 8am to 6pm. All children share access to the large, enclosed school grounds.

There are currently 43 children in the early years age range on roll. The group supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The provision employs 33 staff, including the manager; over half the staff who work with children under eight hold appropriate early years play or teaching qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The enthusiastic, committed and fun loving staff team ensure children have a fun holiday time experience. Early years staff generally demonstrate a sound understanding of how to promote children's learning and development outcomes intermingled with the various fun physical activities on offer. Effective safeguarding procedures support children's welfare and safety, and excellent provision is made to encourage good health. A strong self-evaluation process is in place ensuring continuous development and improvement. Effective partnerships with parents and others involved in children's care helps to promote continuity and additional help if required for individual children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase children's opportunities to develop counting, sorting, matching, skills
- develop children's self-confidence and independence by encouraging them to help with the preparation and packing away of activities throughout the day.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of the clear, easily accessible policies and procedures to promote the safeguarding of children. All staff have access to safeguarding information and undertake training as part of their induction and training. This ensures staff thoroughly understand their responsibilities and the process to follow if they are concerned about a child in their care. Whistle blowing procedures are also in place to help safeguard the children. Staff undertake comprehensive risk assessments which helps them minimise potential dangers to children. Staff talk to children about potential dangers and encourage them to think about their actions. Children are in age groups, they remain in these groups for their activities and move around the camp as a group promoting their safety and security on the large site.

Robust recruitment procedures are in place, and all staff undertake a Criminal Record Bureau check. Roles and responsibilities are clearly established for management and staff. Some staff have specialist skills which they share, others act as assistants and some lead the various groups. Children become familiar with the staff and form good working friendships. Effective self evaluation involves the comments of the children, parents, staff, managers and feedback from inspections throughout the company. This comprehensive approach indicates a strong desire for continuous improvement and development. The enthusiastic professional staff team are a valuable resource to the camp. They are excellent role models to the children. The camp makes good use of the attractive sports facilities. The base rooms are less attractive classrooms although the children and staff work hard to decorate these with timelines and the children's creations.

Staff demonstrate they understand the importance of effective partnerships with parents and others. Parents are kept fully informed about their child's time at the camp. Clear information is displayed for parents in addition to a wealth of online information. They are encouraged to complete a short profile which indicates what their child can do and what they would like to be able to do in a variety of developmental aspects. This is then revisited at the end of the camp to see if children have made progress against their targets. Care is taken to ensure that children with additional needs have the support and supervision they need to benefit from the camp experience. The camp seek additional advice and support from a range of other professionals to enable this to happen. The camp have clear policies in place to promote inclusive practice.

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

The early years children at the camp are in groups with regular leaders and assistants. This enables staff to get to know children, consequently children develop friendships and feel confident. The plan for the day enables them to have access to a full variety of early years resources covering all areas of learning at

different times of the day in their base rooms. For example, children can look at books, draw, make play dough, participate in role play and do creative activities. Children are encouraged to make choices and planned activities are incorporated into a timetable. This is planned and great care is taken to ensure all children participate in the planning. They are kept well informed about what will 'happen now', 'what will happen next' and 'what will happen later'. A pictorial timetable is displayed to help them recognise the flow to the day. This helps children to feel confident and adds to a sense of security because they know what will happen next.

Camp staff demonstrate a good understanding of the learning and development requirements as indicated by their observations. Some staff include opportunities for children to use their developing awareness of sounds and counting skills to enhance the games. For example, they run under the parachute if they hear the first sound of their name. Opportunities to count are often missed and children do not often help to prepare or pack away the activities. These missed opportunities do not fully encourage children's independence and self esteem as they 'help' or promote counting and awareness of quantity. The effective yet simple system in place for observing, recording and planning for children's progress, takes into account the next steps as identified by the parents and child. This enables staff to complement children's learning and development and support them in their continuing development of their future skills.

The many physical activities children undertake increases their coordination, balance and fine skills exceptionally well. For example, they thoroughly enjoy swimming, playing with a very large lightweight ball, parachute games, and learn hockey and basket ball skills. The many opportunities children have to experiment and participate in physical activities increases their awareness and enjoyment of physical activity which contributes to a healthy lifestyle. The camp provides parents with comprehensive information regarding the healthy lunch packs and snacks physically active children need. Water is freely available and staff are exceptionally conscious of encouraging children to have a drink regularly throughout the day and to also put on sun cream before going outdoors. Children are encouraged to follow good hygiene routines such as hand washing after toileting and before meals. Regular head counts, and close supervision promote children's safety as they move between activities. Fire drills are undertaken each week ensuring all who attend are able and confident to follow the evacuation procedure.

Social skills develop well as children participate in team games, learning to take turns and share. Snack and mealtimes provide a relaxing and social opportunity for the children to enjoy their meals. Staff eat with them adding to the happy social atmosphere. Children see positive images of different cultures through the diversity of the staff caring for them and through the resources and posters around the environment. If children speak English as an additional language additional advice and information is gathered in order to help the child settle and mix.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
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