

Inspection of Barracudas Colchester

Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester CO3 3US

Inspection date: 15 August 2024

**The quality and
standards of early
years provision**

**This
inspection**

Met

Previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

This provision meets requirements

The enthusiastic and dedicated team of staff happily greet children on arrival. They are welcomed into a very well-organised holiday club that is designed to offer children a broad range of exciting and fun experiences. Children eagerly arrive and are keen to start their day. They leave their parents with ease as they happily chat to their friends and the familiar staff. The team of staff know the children well. They take time to ensure all relevant information is in place, including the children's interests, before they attend. There is a strong focus on the young children's welfare. Staff are keen to ensure they are confident and happy and that their individual needs are fully met. An effective key-person system is in place and children have established close and trusting bonds with their familiar adult. The staff are caring and offer children reassurance when needed.

Children are grouped into different age groups and located in a base room. Here, children can organise their personal belongings. Their artwork and creations are displayed, creating a sense of belonging. Children start the day with a group discussion and story. They are gently reminded of the club's expectations, and activity safety rules to ensure they stay safe. The timetable of the day's activities is also discussed, and children can make choices about what they want to do. Staff are calm and nurturing and are good role models. Children's behaviour is very good. They are confident and settled. For example, they engage visitors to the club in their conversations as they excitedly explain they are having a 'dress up' day and discuss what they are going to wear.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Children have immense fun at the holiday club. The fully inclusive environment is extremely well organised. While it operates over a large secure site, there is a friendly, calm, and cosy atmosphere throughout. Children fully engage in activities of their choice. Staff are skilful in their interactions. Children have made friendships and work well together. For example, they negotiate how to make a fort, using construction, and take turns when using the large parachute. They also learn the skills to work as a team as they participate in skittle ball.
- Children also enjoy quieter activities after a busy morning or after meals. For example, they sit and relax and enjoy stories of their choice. They show sustained concentration as they participate in creative activities. They draw pictures and make models of things important to them to store in a 'time capsule' that will be opened at the next summer camp.
- The club is one of many within the company, which are run by directors and regional managers who are very 'hands on'. They are very organised and professional. A stringent recruitment process, induction programme, training and

support ensures staff are confident in their role and are fully equipped to care for the children attending. Staff morale is good, and they speak positively about their role. They say they feel very supported and valued as part of a team. Staff retention is good and many return for the next holiday season.

- Robust risk assessments are completed and evaluated each day to ensure children's safety during activities. Extra training is provided for staff for specific supporting activities, such as the role of lifeguard or the delivery of archery sessions. An online training programme is also readily available to all staff and is positively supported. The management team routinely observe staff practice to ensure it meets the high expectations of the company.
- Children's emotional well-being is fully supported. For example, staff are respectful of how children may be feeling and are offered reassurance if they feel anxious or sad. Children have ample opportunities to keep hydrated throughout the day as drinking water is readily available. They are supported as required when using the bathroom and are made comfortable if they feel tired.
- A secure online booking system enables parents to share relevant information to ensure continuity of care for the children attending. This includes dietary needs, medication, and any additional support their children may require. In addition, they complete 'All About Me' flags that are displayed within the base rooms. These includes activities completed for the day. In addition, a secure QR code system in place ensures the children's safety on collection.
- Parents speak very highly of the 'trusted' team of staff, and the incredible activities provided. Several commenting that they travel long distances just to attend each year. Parents say the programme of activities are 'fantastic', commenting how their child's confidence in the water and swimming has improved since attending. Parents express their complete satisfaction in the communication at the end of the day and say their children return home 'beaming' and full of excitement to return the next day.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2689931
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10355382
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Out-of-school day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	4 to 14
Total number of places	96
Number of children on roll	187
Name of registered person	Young World Leisure Group Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900856
Telephone number	01480 467567
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Barracudas Colchester registered in 2022. The club is open Monday to Friday, from 8am until 6pm, during Easter and summer holidays. The club employs 11 members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one with qualified teacher status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hartigan

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The regional manager and club manager showed the inspector around the club and explained how the play environment is organised.
- The inspector had several discussions with the regional manager and the camp managers to explore leadership and management issues.
- The inspector spoke to staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the provider's documentation, including policies and procedures and training certificates.
- Parents told the inspector what they thought about the provision and staff, and their views were considered.
- The children told the inspector about what they like to do when they are at the club.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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