

Toddington After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 511695 |
| Inspection date | 04 July 2007 |
| Inspector | Paula Jane Hayhow |
| Setting Address | St. George's Lower School, Manor Road, Toddington, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU5 6AJ |
| Telephone number | 01525 875400 |
| E-mail | 07752 100947 (no of chairperson Tina Cocking) |
| Registered person | Toddington After School Club |
| Type of inspection | Childcare |
| Type of care | Out of School care |

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Toddington After School Club opened in June 2001. It is run by a parent committee.

It operates from St Georges' Lower School in a terrapin structure, in the village of Toddington, in Bedfordshire. There is an outdoor play area adjacent to the building.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the after of school club at any one time. The club is open each weekday from 7.45 to 8.45 and 15.20 to 17.30 term time only.

There are currently 40 children aged three to under eight years on roll. Children come from within the local catchment area. The after school club has a system in place to support children with disabilities and learning difficulties or those who speak English as an additional language. Children can attend on a variety of sessions.

Eight part-time staff work with the children. Five of the staff, including the two managers hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment. They are offered healthy snacks such as fruit, cucumber sticks, pitta bread, cheese and biscuits. Their understanding of healthy eating is developed as they become involved in projects such as recognising foods which are good for them and discuss what foods promote strong teeth. They have tasting sessions, documenting their likes and dislikes and enjoy discovering unusual fruits such as figs. Children are aware of their own needs and are able to independently meet these, for example, pouring their own drinks, washing their hands before snack time and after using the bathroom facilities. However, children's health could be compromised as parents are not consistently asked to countersign the accident record and children's understanding of the relevance of washing hands thoroughly before snack time is not always promoted because staff do not always discuss and explain this. Children's special requirements with regard to health and diet are well documented and met, and parents' wishes are respected. Staff's understanding regarding keeping children healthy is promoted through policies and procedures thus improving their well-being.

Children enjoy a range of activities, which contribute to their good health. They have regular physical activities in the outdoor area which includes cooperative games such as football, rounders and team games. On inclement days the children enjoy games using the parachute and self-devised obstacle courses where they have opportunities to twist, balance, climb, jump and stretch. This is helping them to develop control of their bodies and improve their coordination skills and spatial awareness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and generally safe environment. Their safety is effectively promoted as staff have a practical understanding of identifying hazards and take some steps to minimise these. They check the premises before the children arrive for any issues and monitor safety throughout the session by reminding children about not running, sitting properly on chairs to prevent accidents and packing away toys so that other children cannot fall over them. This ensures that children are able to move around safely and independently during the play session. They independently select toys and activities from a good range of play resources. They are supervised by staff who ensure that the resources are appropriate for the ages, interests and developmental stage. However, children's safety is affected as they have access to the kitchen which contains hazardous items and the record book for visitors is not consistently filled in.

Staff develop children's understanding of issues such as stranger danger, road safety and the importance of recycling through discussion ensuring they have the rudiments of what action to take. The children's welfare is further promoted as there is an appropriate child protection policy and staff have a clear understanding of the procedure to use should they suspect abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happily occupied and are able to fully participate in the opportunities offered, because staff ensure that these are adapted to an appropriate level, and provide sufficient

support. When participating in the cutting and drawing activity, staff encourage the older children to complete the task of making masks, cutting out the shape and eye pieces and threading the wool through unaided, whilst giving the younger children more practical help such as templates and help with threading, thus enabling all the children to feel that they have achieved. The staff also respond to children's immediate interests such as an imaginative game of Doctor Who or developing a frieze about the solar systems, providing the correct resources and craft mediums.

Children are settled and confidently choose activities throughout the session. They relate positively to the staff and each other and respond to the staff's interaction. Children's independence is developing as they make choices about resources and their play. They enjoy a stimulating range of activities that cover all areas of development, encouraging them to explore and learn about their environment. They have been working on a theme relating to planting, tending the sunflowers, grass heads and cress to make sandwiches with. The children are aided in their learning by the skill of the staff who encourages their understanding through informal planning and dialogue such as effective questioning and verbal encouragement. For example, a staff member suggests making a paper bag for the pirate's jewels and shows a child how this can be made, encouraging them to complete this task unaided.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and staff ensure that specific individual needs are well documented and met. Staff have experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and are confident to judge how well individual children's needs can be met within existing routines. All children are able to fully participate in the opportunities offered. Children's welfare is well promoted by a positive partnership with parents where their views and needs are actively sought and valued through the use of questionnaires, a supportive key worker system and daily dialogue. The parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and daily activities through regular discussions with staff, policies, newsletters and an informative notice board.

Children's behaviour is generally good and they are confident within the setting, happily making choices about their play. This is further reinforced by the staff's good role modelling and respectful attitude. Children show care and respect for each other and the staff, playing together and learning about sharing and turn taking. They are polite remembering to say please and thank you and are sensitive to other children's plights, for example, listening and comforting a friend when they are hurt or upset. The staff have a good understanding of the importance of setting consistent and appropriate boundaries for all children and children have been involved in forming the club's behaviour rules. The children's understanding of other cultures and the wider world is promoted well through the use of play resources such as books, dolls, puzzles and through craft activities such as exploring different cultures and festivals like Hanukah, Diwali, and Chinese New Year. They also explore special days like Mother's Day, Pancake Day and Saints days such as St George's Day where the children make flags and iced biscuits in the colours of the flag.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall, children's needs are met. Their welfare and safety are being promoted by the organisation of the environment and the effective paperwork kept, such as policies, group prospectus and children's registration sheets. However, Ofsted has not been informed of staff changes to the running of the club, the permission for the seeking of emergency care is not in place which could compromise the children's medical health and some policies have not been reviewed in line with the latest changes. This means that parents could be given out of date or incorrect information thus affecting the group's relationships with the parents. The children's safety and security are being soundly promoted as the group use robust recruitment procedures which ensure that staff are suitably vetted and qualified. The induction programme ensures that staff are fully conversant with the policies and procedures to promote the children's well-being and there is a good commitment to further training.

Children are able to feel relaxed and comfortable in an organised environment. The play area is set up in designated areas which are familiar to the children so they can access their own activities. Staff pay attention to the organisation of space, rotating some resources and developing projects and hobbies such as the solar system, football, planting and music. They take individual children's needs and interests into account when organising and planning the sessions, ensuring that children are given sufficient time and support to enable them to complete their chosen activity. Children's individual development and welfare are always considered and staff are committed to reviewing and improving their work and the care provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

The group was asked at the previous inspection to put in place an attendance record, a procedure for collecting children in the event that the usual adult is unavailable and a record book noting all visitors to the group. They were also asked to maintain confidentiality in the accident book and clearly record what had occurred. They were asked to display a complaints procedure for parents which includes the regulator's details, ensure that children's registration forms are kept up-to-date and review the system for safe arrival and collection of children, and adults. The club were asked to develop a procedure for appointing new staff and their induction should be part of organisational plans.

The group has a procedure for collecting children, if the usual carer is unavailable and this is displayed prominently on the notice board. The club has a visitors' book in place. The group have a chalk board and a register to record all the children present and they amend the chalk board once children leave the premises. The club records any accident on a separate page of the accident book for confidentiality and this clearly documents what has occurred. The complaint's procedure is displayed on the notice board for parents to view. The children's registration forms are regularly reviewed and the selecting, vetting and induction of new staff is thoroughly carried out. The system for collecting the children before the beginning of the after school club is carried out safely, with staff collecting the children from the school hall and walking to the provision. Staff position themselves at the front, in the middle and at the

end of the line of children. These measures further improve the children's safety, welfare and security.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that all accidents recorded are consistently countersigned by parents and develop procedures at snack time to encourage children's understanding of hygiene practices such as the importance of washing hands thoroughly before eating
- ensure that the visitor's record is consistently filled in and children cannot access areas out of bounds to them such as the kitchen area
- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency advice or treatment and review and update policies on a regular basis
- ensure that Ofsted is informed of any changes such as those relating to staff changes; this refers to the club leader and person who has responsibility for the after school club.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk