



Abacus After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY341426
Inspection date	26 February 2007
Inspector	Cheryl Langley
Setting Address	Engayne Primary School, Severn Drive, UPMINSTER, Essex, RM14 1SW
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Registered person	Abacus 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Abacus After School Club is one of four out of school care provisions run by the private partnership, Abacus. It opened in November 2006 and operates from the hall within Engayne Primary School, Upminster. A maximum of 26 children may attend the club at any one time. There are currently 20 children on roll. The setting welcomes children with learning disabilities and/or disabilities or those who speak English as an additional language.

The club is open each weekday from 15:10 until 18:00 during school term times. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. The club is provided for the children attending the primary school. There are six members of staff. These include the partners who are joint managers, they both hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two members of staff hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) to Level 3 and two members of staff have NVQ Level 2 qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good procedures and routines are followed which keep the children healthy. For example, they are cared for in a welcoming and clean environment. All the required documents and systems are in place which enable staff to act in the children's best interests if they require medical attention, such as parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. The programme offered after school includes activities in the fresh air and time for children to relax and rest. This promotes their well-being and ensures they feel comfortable and content.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which develop and enhance their physical skills. They use the outside area to balance and co-ordinate their bodies playing team games, such as football and hockey or having fun on the space-hoppers. Children are aware of others and negotiate space as they move around the hall following instructions to move starboard or port. They enthusiastically take part in games to pass the balloons to their team to be first over the line. Children practise their hand and eye co-ordination to control computer equipment or with a range of art and craft materials.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They are aware of the benefits of washing their hands at appropriate times to prevent the spread of infection and to cover their mouths when they cough. A variety of planned activities, reading books and discussions with the staff promote their knowledge and understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

Children are nourished and encouraged to eat a healthy diet. New foods are introduced regularly and fresh fruit and vegetables available at every session. Children have access to water at all times to make sure they are hydrated. The staff take account of the wishes of the parents and the children. They work with them closely to provide nutritious meals that appeal to the children as well as meeting their dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is a high priority. Regular risk assessments are carried out and action taken promptly to remove any potential hazards. Staff supervise the children closely so that they arrive at the after school club safely and access areas freely to play and take part in all activities. Children choose their play from a broad range of good quality toys and resources, appropriate to their age and ability. This gives children a sense of belonging and independence. All of the required documents and procedures have been devised and are followed to support the safety of the children. They learn how to protect themselves through sensitive reminders from the staff and topics linked to those covered in school. Children practise the fire drill regularly so that they know how to keep themselves safe in the event of a fire.

The children's welfare is safeguarded. The staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child in their care. Training in safeguarding children is updated on a regular basis and there is a

designated member of staff responsible for this area. All of the staff are aware of their responsibilities. The relevant information to seek advice or make a referral is available if required.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a broad variety of exciting play and activities which are child-led. There are also some planned activities to extend their enjoyment and experiences. Children receive adult guidance to give them extra support if needed but their independence is promoted as much as possible. The staff make sure they have fun after school and take part in a range of stimulating play. This keeps them interested and sets them challenges to aid their development.

Children develop their knowledge and skills through play. For example, they count in sequence to add up their score during games, pick out the colours of different materials to make collage pictures and take part in quizzes about history, geography or science. They use their imaginations and express their feelings during role play with small figures, to care for dolls or make pretend meals for their peers and the staff. Children are confident using technology. They use the computer keyboard and mouse to play educational games. Staff are attentive, they join in with play, listen and talk to the children to extend their thinking. Children follow instructions to take part in games, join in with discussions to express their ideas and opinions. For example, after talking about it they vote to decide what the club will do for Red Nose Day to raise money for other children. They read books and if they choose, have support to complete homework from school or practise exercises to help with their Standard Attainment Tests.

Children use and understand positional language. They delight in moving left or right around the hall or laying down to be 'submarines'. Access to toys and equipment for differing abilities encourages the children's progress. They become confident and adept at using different tools and implements. They cut with scissors, complete puzzles and jigsaws and use fine paint brushes and pens for drawing. Regular use of art and craft materials encourages the children to represent their ideas and be creative. They enthusiastically produce a picture of a brightly coloured butterfly using glitter and tissue paper.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

An extensive range of interesting and meaningful resources and activities promote a positive view of the wider world. Children enjoy books, various arts and crafts and food, as well as celebrating different festivals and cultures. For example, they draw and decorate Russian dolls, learn about Australia and make Australian flags and pretend to make pancakes for Shrove Tuesday.

Children are valued and respected. They work closely with the staff to plan activities, choose resources and initiate play. Staff compliment them on the achievements acquired at school and at the club. This develops the children's confidence and self-esteem. They feel able to try new experiences and rise to challenges. Children behave very well. They understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods used by the staff to

manage behaviour. Children are considerate, share, take turns and are polite, remembering to say please and thank you. They make positive relationships with the staff and children of all ages from the school. They enjoy socialising at meal times, taking part in whole or small group activities as well as having the benefit of one-to-one attention. Older children delight in helping the younger ones to take part and join in with all the games.

Children benefit from a strong partnership between the staff, parents and staff of Engayne Primary School who exchange information frequently. The parents and staff have discussions after sessions and can speak at anytime over the telephone. Parents are provided with clear and comprehensive information about the club. They receive regular newsletters and a detailed parent pack on introduction. Contracts, policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. However the complaints procedure lacks some detail to ensure parents are aware of all the steps followed should they have any concerns. Parents are invited to take part in activities and make suggestions about the care and activities on offer. The staff and Ofsted have received positive and complimentary feedback from parents about the Abacus After School Club. For example, parents state that their children "have a great time at the club and rarely want to leave". They also say that the staff are friendly and approachable and they have every confidence in them to care for their children. The systems in place and the positive relationships helps provide consistency in the children's care and keep parents informed of how their child's needs are being met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children's needs are met through effective organisation and good communication with parents and staff at the school. Space and equipment is prepared so that children can access resources easily and independently which enables them to make choices. Children play an active part in the setting. Their views and ideas are respected. The emphasis is on child-led activities which ensures the children feel part of the club and enjoy play that they have initiated. They benefit from routines which make them feel secure and relaxed. Children play, eat and rest as they need to.

Documentation is stored securely and information shared appropriately with parents. All of the required policies and procedures are in place to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Robust vetting procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure children are cared for by adults who are appropriate to work with children. Staff have the knowledge and expertise to support the development of the children and make sure they have fun after school. They work well as a team and have a clear sense of purpose and commitment to continual improvement for the benefit of the children. Regular appraisals highlight staffs' strengths and any training needs. The staff are keen to update their knowledge and understanding of childcare

The after school club receive support from Engayne Primary School and work closely with the teachers to provide consistency in the children's care. Staff at Abacus After School Club are enthusiastic and have a great sense of fun. They provide a stimulating and enjoyable environment for all those who attend. At home time children are keen to stay and tell their parents about all the exciting things they have done. All of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and four of them hold a current first aid certificate. Overall, the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 good. 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):

- make parents aware that if they have any complaints, complainants should be notified of the outcome within 28 days and that a record of all complaints is maintained and appropriate information from that record is shared with parents on request.

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