

Mortimer Out Of School Care & Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 312579 |
| Inspection date | 20 April 2007 |
| Inspector | Cilla Burdis |
| Setting Address | Mortimer Community Association, Reading Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 4UG |
| Telephone number | 0191 4566680 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Mortimer Out of School Care and Playgroup |
| Type of inspection | Childcare |
| Type of care | Sessional 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mortimer Out of School Club and Playgroup opened in 1993 and operates from three rooms located within Mortimer Road Community Centre. The community centre is situated within the grounds of Mortimer Secondary School, in a residential area of South Shields. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup, and a maximum of 100 children may attend the out of school hours club, at any one time. The out of school club is open 50 weeks per year, Monday to Friday, 08.00 to 09.00 and 15.00 to 18.00 term time, and 08.00 to 18.00 during school holidays. The playgroup is open each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 09.05 to 11.30, term time only. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 30 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll at the playgroup. There are currently 65 children aged from four years to under eight years on roll at the out of school club. Children come from a wide catchment area. The out of school club currently supports children with learning difficulties.

The playgroup employs three members of staff. There are two members of staff, including the manager, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

The out of school club employs six staff. There are four members of staff who hold an appropriate qualification and two members of staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into a warm and clean environment where they learn about the importance of good personal hygiene from an early age, through routines and practice. The playgroup children, however, do not use individual hand towels to dry their hands. This impacts negatively on the children's health as it poses a risk of spreading infection. The sickness policies implemented by the playgroup and out of school club protect children by reducing the risk of cross infection. Appropriate consents and records are in place for the administration of medication and the recording of accidents. All staff working in the provisions hold current first aid certificates. This positively safeguards children's health and well-being.

Children have regular opportunities to play actively and develop their physical skills. They have direct access to the enclosed, outdoor play area. The playgroup children enjoy outdoor play as part of the daily routine. The out of school club has free access throughout the session unless there is a mixed age range attending and the younger children need to be protected from the more boisterous activities of the older children. On these occasions children's access is rotated. There is a range of equipment that fosters children's physical skills appropriately, for example, wheeled toys, climbing frame, skipping ropes and slide. The children attending the out of school club are also involved in activities, such as football, basket ball and table tennis. They have regular access to a climbing wall, which is situated in the secondary school's sports hall. These opportunities result in children developing a positive attitude towards exercise. All children are able to rest or be active as they need.

Staff have a good understanding of children's dietary needs. A mid-session snack is provided in both provisions. Children in the playgroup enjoy a drink of milk and a biscuit. Some healthier options are also served. The out of school club provides a variety of snacks, such as sandwiches, pasta and fruit. When full day care is provided during the school holidays, the out of school club can also provide lunch. The club promotes healthy eating by making sure no fried or salted food is provided. There are set times for snacks and meals in both the provisions. The playgroup children sit on mats on the floor. This arrangement provides children with some opportunities to chat and socialise. However, it limits the opportunity for staff to develop the social occasion further by enabling children to develop skills, such as setting the table or serving themselves. It also has a negative impact on the hygiene practice as children occasionally put their biscuits on the floor. Children in the out of school club are involved in serving the snacks and they make choices about their food. They enjoy the social occasion of sitting around the tables and chatting with each other.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. All visitors to the building are monitored. Risk assessments and safety checks are carried out to ensure children's safety while on the premises. Procedures are in place to protect children when they are collected from school and when on outings. Children are informed of the safe procedures they must follow. Children learn

about fire safety in a variety of ways. The playgroup children have been visited by the fire brigade and the out of school club has visited the fire station. Fire drills are regularly practised.

Both provisions have access to a good selection of toys and equipment. The playgroup set out a variety of toys before the children arrive. This ensures children have easy access to toys and resources to enable choice and self-selection. The out of school club sets out some resources and the children are able to request more or help themselves. Focussed activities are planned for each session in both groups. Staff plan in advance to ensure they have the appropriate resources available and have a clear understanding of the learning intentions of the activity.

Staff demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of child protection issues. The child protection policies, however, do not include the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff; this represents a weakness in safeguarding the welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children attending the playgroup enjoy a good range of planned activities to promote their all round development. The planning of activities is developed from the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and covers all six areas of learning. Children's development is monitored by the staff who keep records showing children's achievements. This helps staff to identify those children needing more support or extra challenge, which ensures the continual development of each child. The children are very happy in the playgroup. They confidently select activities from the good range made accessible to them. They remain focussed on activities for periods of time. They relate well to staff and are developing very good friendships with other children. The children are very enthusiastic, excited and eager to learn. They gain good levels of self-esteem and confidence as they receive consistent support from staff. Children's early language and number skills develop through their enthusiastic singing of nursery rhymes, the sharing of stories and books and when they play imaginatively with others.

Children attending the out of school club display good levels of confidence as they chat to staff and help themselves to resources. They show high levels of involvement in the range of activities provided, including board games, physical play and creative activities. Some of the children prefer outdoor games and physical activities, such as football and basket ball. Many of the children enjoy creative activities, for example, making butterfly pictures using colourful, acrylic paints. Staff are fully involved in children's play and provide good levels of support and guidance. During school holidays the children enjoy a variety of outings. Photographs show them on trips to a variety of settings including Plessey Woods, the Glass Centre and the Stadium of Light. The children's artwork is displayed and reflects some of the projects the children have been involved in. For example, staff recently planned a healthy food topic with the children. The children were involved in preparing a shopping list, buying the ingredients and then making fruit smoothies and pizzas. Staff are broadening children's experiences by involving them fully in the planning and preparation of such activities. Creativity is encouraged as the children experiment by combining different fruits to make a smoothie and choose from a variety of toppings for their pizzas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are highly valued as individuals. The staff ensure they receive clear guidance from parents to ensure the individual needs of each child are met appropriately. The provisions have suitable arrangements to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Children gain a satisfactory awareness of the wider world through activities and access to resources. Resources reflecting positive images of disability, however, are limited. Visitors to the provisions broaden children's awareness about themselves and their local community.

Children behave well and are learning right from wrong because the staff are consistent in the way they actively promote positive behaviour. The younger children play very well together by sharing and taking turns. The older children are involved in the drawing up of ground rules for the out of school club. This encourages children to take responsibility for their actions and to consider the needs of others. Staff act as good role models as they say please and thank you to the children. Children develop respect, with the support of staff, who encourage them to consider the impact their behaviour can have on others.

Children benefit from relationships that are developed between staff and parents. Parents are very complimentary of the provisions and value the partnerships that have developed. Information is gathered from parents before their child starts to ensure staff have a clear understanding of the child's requirements. Parents are kept regularly updated on their child's progress and time at the setting through daily discussions. Information is shared on the notice board and they receive an information booklet, which includes policies and procedures. There is a written complaints procedure, however, the playgroup procedure does not inform parents of the regulator's current contact details. Most relevant parental consents have been obtained. Parents of children attending the out of school club, however, are not clearly informed about the mode of transport used for their children. This compromises children's safety.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Effective recruitment procedures ensure that children are cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child care and development. The induction programme makes sure staff are aware of how the clubs operate. Staff attend training and development sessions whenever possible to increase their understanding of good quality care. The provisions are well organised, enabling children to select their own resources and take part in activities safely.

Relevant policies and procedures are in place. The provider is currently in breach of regulations because the child protection policy does not include the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff.

Additionally the provider has not informed Ofsted of the appointment of a new manager in the playgroup. This represents a further breach of regulations and compromises the safety and welfare of the children. It is the responsibility of the provider to inform Ofsted of any significant changes or events.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three recommendations were raised. The provider was requested to keep a copy of all staff's qualifications and to make them available for inspection; to ensure activities and resources, which address all aspects of learning, are made available during each session; and, to include in the child protection policy, details of the action to be taken should an allegation of abuse be made against a staff member.

The provider has ensured copies of all staff's qualifications are kept in files and they are available for inspection at any time. The playgroup plans activities to ensure all aspects of learning are addressed and available to children during every session. As a result, the care and developmental needs of the children are supported well.

The provider has not yet included in the child protection policy, the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff. This compromises children's welfare and an action has been raised at this inspection.

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:

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop a procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff or volunteer
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters.
- notify Ofsted of the change of the person who manages the playgroup and ensure her suitability is confirmed by Ofsted.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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