



## Alton Activity Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123055
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 April 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Judith Mary Scott
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<b>Registered person</b>	Wandsworth Borough Council Play Services
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

The Alton Children's Centre has been registered since 1996. It is based in self contained, purpose built premises, which are situated in Roehampton on the Alton Housing Estate. The local authority is the London Borough of Wandsworth. The Alton Children's Centre operates as an Open Access facility during term times, and as a Holiday Play Centre during school holidays. The holiday play centre is open from 09:00 to 17:15 every weekday when schools are closed, apart from the Christmas period. It serves the local community.

The indoor space is arranged as a main playroom, a sensory room, a kitchen, an

office and toilets. There is also an enclosed outdoor play area with an impact absorbing surface and large fixed equipment for climbing, balancing and imaginative play. The Open Access facility accommodates up to 60 children in total, aged from five upwards. Whilst the Holiday Play Centre provides care for a maximum of 33 children in total, aged from 3 to 8 years.

There are currently 31 children in total on roll which includes 11 children under 8 attending the Easter holiday play centre. Children attend a variety of sessions. Currently, there are no children who speak English as an additional language and 3 children with special needs. 14 children in total were present at the time of this inspection.

There are sufficient staff on duty to meet child/staff ratios, with additional staffing provision made when there are children with special needs who require additional support. Five members of staff are qualified with level 3 qualifications, social work qualifications, B.TEC and B.SC Sports Science. One other member of staff has suitable experience but is unqualified. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and reasonably clean environment that is welcoming and friendly to children and their families. Children's needs are effectively met by staff through the daily routine and positive interaction. Children are able to express their feelings through discussion with staff. They benefit from staff's physical and emotional care and are given attention and reassurance.

Children's meals are provided by parents and stored appropriately. Children's healthy eating is promoted by the centre and parents are given advice regarding the contents. The centre maintains records of any specific allergies, dietary requirements and any relevant health issues. Children are provided with water throughout the day, enjoy snacks of fresh fruit at two break times and participate in cooking activities.

Children find out about healthy living through discussion, quizzes, competitions and topic work. They learn about the importance of physical activity in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and display positive attitudes towards exercise with plenty of opportunities for physical play, plus chances to socialise and relax in the multi-sensory room.

Children's health is well protected by the staff's knowledge of First aid, health and safety, documentation and general good hygiene practice. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines, they know for example, that it is important to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating.

Children benefit from physical activity and exercise to help them develop control of their bodies. The large outdoor play space is used regularly under supervision and

has an impact absorbing surface with various levels and a stage area. There is a good range of fixed equipment, games, activities and sport. The children also enjoy music, dance and gardening. Children have plenty of opportunities to let off steam, improve physical skills, make choices and interact with others. They can use their own initiative to extend play activities and staff encourage them to develop their confidence.

The children's individual needs are met and information is shared with parents by the scheme maintaining effective records regarding accidents, incidents and medication.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a well organised and friendly environment that is safe and secure. Children can move around the play room and outdoor play areas because staff take suitable measures to reduce potential hazards. They are aware of the importance of risk assessment and effective safety measures are in place.

Children are made aware of the importance of using toys and play equipment safely through discussion and guidance from staff, plus anticipation for the younger ones. Children are well supervised and staff act as positive role models encouraging children to develop self awareness and reiterating rules for behaviour and games.

Children are given clear boundaries of behaviour and the scheme's expectations are discussed before outings. No outings have taken place in the Easter holidays. Staff ensure children are safe and good systems are in place, for example, they are briefed beforehand on the importance of their own safety and contact details are maintained. There is close supervision, head counts, an emphasis placed on staying together and staying where you can be seen in public areas with a designated assembly point and labels for group identification.

Children have access to a variety of toys, equipment, books and play materials that are stored and presented appropriately. This includes arts and crafts materials, puzzles, imaginary and role play, books, construction, table top and floor games and covers the whole age range from 4 to 11. Children can independently select some activities.

Children's welfare is paramount and they are safe and protected as staff are aware of child protection issues and procedures. This is included in staff induction and a confidential recording system is in place.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a regular routine that includes team time, free and planned play activities, snack and lunch times, outdoor physical activities, plus quiet times with opportunities for board and table top games, books and puzzles and use of the multi-sensory room to relax and rest. Children are able to have fun, enjoy themselves

and make friends.

Children participate in variety of suitable play activities on a weekly basis that contributes to their enjoyment and learning. This includes arts and craft activities, organised group games, sport such as football, basketball, hockey, pool and table tennis, dance, imaginary and role play, drama, music, use of computer software, videos, free play, construction and cooking. This week the children make flapjacks and pizzas. Currently the topic is Super Heroes and their powers. This includes lots of discussion to extend the children's imagination, quizzes like "Who am I?", associated games, devising secret codes, practising invisible writing and related arts and crafts activities. In the summer holidays play centre, children benefit from interesting outings such as nature walks, cinema, bowling. They have opportunities to see different places, have new experiences, learn about things in an enjoyable way.

Children are interested in the activities available that staff ensure meet their needs, are suitable and age appropriate and also present a stimulating, challenging environment for exploring and developing skills. Children are confident in their relationships with staff and are happy, comfortable and settled. Team time utilises the key worker system to promote a sense of belonging. Children name their team, discuss and evaluate the success of activities and their likes and dislikes. The key worker is responsible for the children's well being and is the specific link for parents to exchange information about the children's care.

Children are friendly and generally relate well to each other and adults. They are encouraged to talk and express themselves by staff individually and in groups by extending conversations, asking open questions, talking and listening and sharing their thoughts and ideas. Children are given responsibility as "helpers" and staff encourage them to develop their confidence. They are encouraged to develop their communication skills through discussion, music and drama and are given opportunities to experiment and express themselves, for example, children are organising a talent show of music and dance with the staff's help.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are settled in, introduced to staff and to one another and offered plenty of attention and reassurance. They are valued as individuals and benefit from positive partnerships that staff have developed with parents. There is good communication with a regular exchange of information between team leaders and parents who have access to the centre's policies and procedures. Children's welfare and achievements are discussed with parents.

Children are given clear boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and the centre's rules are discussed and agreed. The first time a child misbehaves he or she completes a "dos and don'ts" contract, if it happens again, a behaviour management chart is maintained in conjunction with parents. Children are encouraged to share, take turns, help tidy up and play together co-operatively. Staff are caring and consistent and use effective suitable and age appropriate behaviour management strategies. Children are generally well behaved and respond to staff's

requests and guidance.

Children are encouraged to develop a positive view of others and have access to the full range of activities offered. Gender discrimination and stereotyping are discouraged. All children are treated as individuals and with equal concern. They are encouraged to respect and value others. Staff are aware of importance of positive images, attitudes, role models and how this is reflected in recruitment, care and play provision. Children have access to resources that promote positive view of wider community and increase children's understanding of diversity. Children with special needs benefit from the staff's positive attitudes and the aim of the centre is to offer an integrated service. Staff plan to be proactive to accommodate children's needs with additional support, shared information and individual play plans.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are settled, happy and well occupied within safe and stimulating surroundings. Children benefit from a flexible, regular routine of lunch time and snacks, quiet times, both free and planned indoor and outdoor play activities and outings in the summer holidays. Children's needs are well supported so they can enjoy and achieve within an organised environment with appropriate resources. Younger children's needs are always considered and activities adjusted to suit ages and abilities.

The centre keeps the required records that contribute to children's health, safety and well being. However, Ofsted is not notified regarding movement and placement of centre managers and there is no complaint log maintained on the premises. Overall, the provision meets the range of needs of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the previous inspection, the provision has ensured that a qualified first aider is on the premises at all times, that a procedure for lost children is in place and that staff know precisely what care they must provide for a child who has an allergy or a particular health issue.

With regard to obtaining written parental permission for emergency medical treatment or advice, the following information is provided for parents. In the event of an illness or accident, resulting in a child requiring medical treatment, Play Services staff will administer first aid and contact all relevant emergency services. In the absence of the parent/carer a member of Play Services will accompany the child to hospital and stay with the child until the parent/carer arrives. In the absence of the parent/carer, the emergency services personnel, who will be provided with the child's registration form, may take decisions about necessary treatment. Parents are asked to check their child's information regularly to ensure it is accurate.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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):

- ensure Ofsted is notified of the movement and placement of centre managers, update the complaints procedure and maintain a complaints log

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)