

Inspection of Club Excel at Dame Alice Owen's School

Dame Alice Owens School, Dugdale Hill Lane, Potters Bar EN6 2DU

Inspection date: 29 May 2025

**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

Children receive a warm welcome from staff as they arrive at this well-organised camp. This helps children to settle in and feel confident. Children quickly and safely store their belongings, then meet new friends who invite them to join in their game. Staff plan a varied and rich range of activities with a focus on having fun through art and crafts and sports activities. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-led activities enabling children to make independent choices about how they prefer to spend their day.

Children show high levels of engagement as they choose from craft resources, such as pom poms, patterned feathers and shiny shapes to decorate a paper plate to create the shell of a snail. Children learn that they need to apply lots of glue for large pom poms to stick. This activity stimulates children to share previous experiences of seeing and gently touching snails with each other. Staff are attentive to children's emotions and regularly ask how they are feeling. This motivates less confident children to express their thoughts and ideas. Staff are positive role models. They consistently model the behaviour they expect from the children and praise them for their achievements. This helps to increase children's self-esteem. Staff support children to solve simple mathematical problems, such as addition and subtraction as children work out what they can purchase for 50 pence at the camp's tuck shop.

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

- Leaders are highly reflective on the provision they provide. They actively seek the views of staff, parents and children and act on their suggestions to improve the camp. For instance, they adapt the camp programme and provide specific resources in response.
- Leaders have a secure understanding of their staff team and embrace their individual strengths. They deploy staff well to meet the children's needs within their groups. Leaders regularly meet with staff on an individual basis and observe staff practice, clearly identifying any areas for improvement. There is an effective system in place to provide in-house support, complete training and monitor the impact of this to further enhance the quality of practice. Staff feel valued members of the team and appreciate how leaders consider their well-being.
- Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour and conduct. The camp rules focus on fostering high levels of respect for each other and remaining safe. These are shared with all children at the start of the session. Children know to put up their hand and wait for their turn to speak as they share with staff their understanding of why rules are in place. Consequently, children behave well

creating an enjoyable and fun time for all. Staff use whole group time effectively to help children build early relationships with those they are unfamiliar with, as all children and staff introduce themselves to one another.

- Staff work in close partnership with parents to gather a wealth of information about their children prior to attending the camp. They use this well to ensure children's individual needs are consistently met. Parents are welcomed to contact the camp at any point where staff provide them with an update of their child's day. Parents are highly complementary about the camp. They appreciate the feedback they receive about their child's day and are impressed with the range of activities on offer. Parents comment how their children are excited to attend and eager to share what they have enjoyed at the end of the day.
- Children learn about healthy lifestyles through physical exercise and hydration. Children enjoy a variety of exciting team games and physical play. They divide into teams and take turns to scramble through large inflatable obstacle courses, eagerly searching for their teams designated coloured ball and strive to reach the end first. Children jump up and down cheering on their teammates, showing a strong sense of team spirit. Staff actively involve any children who choose not to participate in alternative roles, such as helping to keep score. This values children's choices and ensures an inclusive approach. Staff provide children with frequent reminders to drink water. They encourage children to take responsibility for their own belongings by keeping their water bottles with them as they move around the camp, promoting independence. Good hygiene measures are consistently followed. Children develop an awareness of portion control as staff support them to choose a snack from their lunchbox, considering the need to leave enough food for lunch and later in the day to maintain their energy. Lunchtime is a calm social experience. Staff engage in meaningful discussions with children about the importance and benefit of eating vegetables.

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	2729865
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10394719
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 12
Total number of places	150
Number of children on roll	190
Name of registered person	Club Excel Leisure Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP530522
Telephone number	01923 469475
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Club Excel at Dame Alice Owen's School in Potters Bar registered in 2023 and is independently run. The camp employs six members of staff, two of whom hold qualified teacher status. The camp operates from 8.30am until 5.30pm, Monday to Friday during school holiday periods.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lorraine Pike

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the setting to gain an understanding of how the camp is organised.
- The provider carried out a joint observation of an activity with the inspector, and they discussed their findings.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The views of children and parents spoken to on the day were taken into account.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the camp.

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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