

Inspection of Ultimate Activity Camps at Thornton College

Thornton College, College Lane, Thornton, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK17
0HJ

Inspection date: 24 July 2024

**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 enter the holiday camp happily. They are very quick to settle and engage in play. Children who are new to the camp meet friendly staff and feel safe and secure. Staff set out activities and resources that they know interest the children, which helps them to settle quickly. There is a happy and calm atmosphere at the camp, where overall the session flows seamlessly. Children understand the rules of the camp and how and why they need to be safe, as well as kind to each other. However, children know that the most important rule is to have fun.

All children show extremely positive attitudes to play. They talk fondly about the activities they like to do when they attend the camp. For instance, younger children are excited to swim in the afternoon and the older children have an introduction to a fencing activity. Children show good manners and are polite and respectful to each other. For example, younger children enjoyed playing a game of snap with staff, while others enjoyed a range of arts and crafts, creating pictures of their favourite holiday destinations. Children behave well. They enjoy playing competitive games and feel that they can trust the staff or ask them for help. Children always have the choice to play outside, or in the large hall and access a range of sports equipment. For example, on the day of inspection, children negotiated the large parachute outside. They demonstrate good levels of concentration as they flap the parachute up and down and negotiate keeping the beanbag on the parachute together. In addition, children enjoy competing in a range of team games, such as playing dodgeball and 'duck, duck goose'.

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

- There is a strong leadership team, who give good support to the staff. Professional development opportunities are given to staff who want to develop further, through training and further career progression. Staff report that they feel valued and listened to as they make suggestions to improve activities and benefit from daily huddles and evaluation of camp, at the end of each day. The Head Office team provide ample training, robust induction and an extensive amount of support to ensure that staff are capable and feel confident in their roles.
- Staff have a good understanding of out-of-school care. They ensure that children can relax and socialise with their friends. They balance this well with opportunities for children to engage in stimulating activities that support their formal learning.
- Children benefit from skilful interactions provided by staff. Overall, staff use effective interactions, such as asking questions to promote children's thinking skills. However, some transition times are not as smooth as they could be. For

example, there are times when children line up and wait for long periods, as staff collect children's belongings or make another head count, before moving from base room to the hall. While children behave well, it means children can become restless because at times they have to wait for adults.

- Staff have carefully considered the needs of younger children. For example, they have allocated a base room specifically for early years children with a lead member of staff. This ensures younger children do not get overwhelmed, but allows them to gain a sense of security. In the base room, staff reinforce the rules of the camp and the daily routine, so all children become familiar with the day's content. For new children, staff introduce them to their peers and make sure they feel welcome and part of camp.
- Children are independent and confident. They form friendships with each other and demonstrate that they are kind and caring. Children show high levels of engagement, both during planned activities and times of free play.
- Parents are full of praise for the organisation and safety of the camp. They feel staff are very approachable and there is a good mixture of mature and younger staff. Staff work with parents ahead of children attending camp, to ensure they know as much about the children in their care before they arrive. For example, parents of younger children complete a questionnaire to find out information about children's interests, as well as their learning at school.
- Staff support children to follow good hygiene practices, such as washing their hands prior to meals and snacks. Children understand the routines and remember to tell a member of staff when they are going to go to the toilet, to support their safety and security.
- Staff are excellent role models and set out the expectations of the camp each morning and throughout the day. Children are confident, behave well and feel safe and secure at the holiday camp.

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	2671247
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10339430
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 14
Total number of places	104
Number of children on roll	176
Name of registered person	The Ultimate Activity Company Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP901335
Telephone number	0330 111 7077
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Ultimate Activity Camps at Thornton College registered in 2022 and is one of several holiday camps operated by The Ultimate Activity Company Ltd. It is located in Thornton College, Thornton, in Buckingham. The camp is open on weekdays, during the Easter and the summer school holidays, from 8am until 6pm. The provider employs seven staff to work at this setting, three of whom hold qualified teacher status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Amanda Perkin

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the operations manager and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The operations manager gave the inspector a tour of the premises and explained how the provision was organised.
- The inspector observed interactions between children and staff.
- Parents and children shared their views.
- The inspector spoke with the operations manager, camp manager and staff at convenient times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of key documentation.

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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