

Inspection of Barracudas (Chelmsford)

Chelmsford County High School, Broomfield Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1RW

Inspection date:

30 July 2025

**The quality and
standards of early
years provision**

**This
inspection**

Met

Previous
inspection

Not Met (with actions)

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

This provision meets requirements

Children are excited as they arrive, keen and eager to start their day. They happily leave their parents and are warmly greeted by an enthusiastic team of staff who help them organise their personal belongings in their base room. Children settle quickly and engage in activities provided as they wait for their friends to arrive. The club is very well organised and is designed to offer children a broad range of exciting, fun experiences and sporting opportunities, such as archery and swimming sessions.

Through a robust registration process, and completion of 'all about me' information, staff get to know the children well and are familiar with their interests and backgrounds. There is a very strong focus on supporting children's welfare and in particular, the youngest children who attend. An effective key-person system is in place to ensure young children are appropriately supported throughout the day. Children have established close and trusting bonds with the familiar adults. They confidently approach the attentive and caring staff if they need help or reassurance. The staff have a calm and consistent approach to behaviour management. They gently remind children of the rules and expectations of the club. Children are continually praised for their efforts and overall, their behaviour is good.

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

- The club is one of many within the company and is very organised and professional. The managers are reflective and there is a culture of evaluation. However, following the last inspection, a review of staff practice and reporting of accidents took place to ensure improvements were made. This now means the club's expectations and its robust policy is fully understood by all staff members, who are aware of procedures to follow and how to respond to any accidents, however minor.
- Young children demonstrate they are confident and comfortable within their base rooms. Children are grouped according to their age. A wide selection of quality toys and resources are available and easily accessible to ensure inclusion. Displays of children's artwork, along with a self-registration process, all contribute to a sense of belonging. A timeline of the day is displayed for those that may need a little support or extra reassurance.
- Parents were keen to share their views. They comment that their children have 'a fantastic time' at the club and are always exhausted when they return home. Parents say they feel reassured their children are in safe hands as the club communicates well and is efficiently run.
- Children's emotional well-being is fully supported. For example, the gentle staff

Speak with respect to the children and acknowledge if they may feel a little sad or anxious. They have comforters from home, if required, to help them settle. Children are softly encouraged and supported to join in. Children make choices as to what the activities they want to do and soon fully immerse themselves in the fun opportunities available to them.

- Children are excited at snack time. They come together and socialise with their friends as they enthusiastically chat about their day. Staff closely supervise children as they eat. Children have regular opportunities to keep hydrated throughout the day as drinking water is readily available. They are supported as required when using the bathroom.
- A stringent recruitment process, induction programme, training and support ensures staff are confident in their role and are fully equipped to care for the children attending. Staff morale is good, and they speak positively about their role. Staff retention is good and many return for the next holiday season.
- A secure online booking system enables parents to share relevant information to ensure continuity of care for the children attending. This includes dietary needs, medication, and any additional support their children may require. In addition to assure children's welfare, a secure QR code system in place ensures the children's safety on collection.
- Swimming is very popular and stringent risk assessments are completed to ensure children's safety at all times. Children excitedly talk about their time in the pool, the buoyancy aids they wear, and giggle as they explain the water was a little chilly.
- Children have opportunities to join in quieter activities after a busy morning. For example, they listen to a popular story of Jack and the Beanstalk. They work collaboratively as they try and find the hidden beans around the premises. They show concentration as they colour, cut and make puppets relating to the story.

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	203427
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10369318
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	280
Number of children on roll	717
Name of registered person	Young World Leisure Group Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900856
Telephone number	01480 467 567
Date of previous inspection	19 August 2024

Information about this early years setting

Barracudas (Chelmsford) registered in 1999. The club is open Monday to Friday, from 8am until 6pm, during Easter and summer holidays. The club employs 27 members of staff, of whom all have appropriate qualifications, which include six members with qualified teacher status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hartigan

Inspection activities

- The regional manager showed the inspector around the club and explained how the play environment is organised.
- The inspector had several discussions with the regional manager and the camp managers to explore leadership and management issues.
- The inspector spoke to staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the provider's documentation, including policies and procedures and training certificates.
- Parents told the inspector what they thought about the provision and staff, and their views were considered.
- The children told the inspector about what they like to do when they are at the club.

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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