



Childcare Inspection Report on

Saplings Out of School Care

**Evenlode Primary School
Evenlode Avenue
Penarth
CF64 3PD**



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Description of the service

Saplings After School Club is located at Evenlode Primary School in Penarth and operates from a hall within the school. The club is for the use of the children who attend the school. The club is registered to care for up to 40 children aged from four to twelve years. It is open during term time from 7.30am to 9.00am and 3.30pm to 6.00pm Monday to Friday and during some school holidays from 8.00am to 6.00pm. The Responsible Individual (RI) is the current Head Teacher of the school and there is also the Person in Charge, (PiC) who manages the setting on a daily basis. Care is provided through the medium of English with the use of incidental Welsh.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Saplings After School Club delivers a high quality service to the children and parents of Evenlode Primary School. It provides a very good range of activities, which are supported by quality resources and motivated staff, in a spacious environment which meets the needs of the children who attend the setting. Children are happy and engaged and enjoy their time at the club. Overall leadership of the setting is good and some aspects such as adult to child ratios operate above the requirements of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare for children up to the age of 12. (Revised April 2012)(NMS). However, we did find some of the management records were not being kept in line with The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010. A non compliance notice has not been issued, as these requirements have now been explained to the PiC and RI, who we believe will act immediately to rectify the situation.

2. Improvements

This is a first inspection, since being registered in June 2016

3. Requirements and recommendations

The following areas of non compliance have been identified and discussed with the RI and the PiC. A non-compliance notice has not been issued as both the PiC and RI gave an undertaking that they would address the areas immediately. In general the club was managed to a very high standard and this contributed to the decision not to issue a non-compliance notice:

- Regulation 28(2)(b)(Schedule 1.33) as the staff files did not contain all the relevant information and documentation required by the regulations.
- Regulation 31(1) (Schedule 4.02)(1)(b) as the RI had not kept CIW informed of recent staff changes at the club.

There were a number of good practice recommendations made; these were mainly concerned with policies and procedures for the setting. Information relating to this can be found in a section towards the end of this report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Outcomes for children are very good. They enjoy a wide selection of activities and have access to resources which are suitable for the age range of children who attend the setting. Children are supported by qualified and trained staff. Children have developed positive and warm relationships with one another and those who care for them.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children have a voice and they are encouraged to share their views. There is a “Feelings Board” which the children complete on arrival to the setting; they can move their name if their feelings change. Any sad/negative feelings are addressed immediately by a staff member and children are given the opportunity to talk about their day and any issues they have. There is a comments box, which we saw is frequently used by the children and some of their requests for new toys or resources have been met. The setting has recently distributed annual questionnaires to the children and their feedback was very positive. We saw that children had contributed their ideas to the planning of activities, a good example of this was “the making of slime” which the children thoroughly enjoyed making. Staff ask children their views when evaluating the activities too. We noted that children are confident to speak out, ask for resources and seek clarity. Resources and toys are placed throughout the hall and this enables children to make choices over their play options. Children were able to choose to play outside or stay in the hall; their voices are heard and they are confident to speak out as they know they will be listened to.

Children’s choice is promoted and the culture within the club supports and enables children to share their views and to have a voice.

1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?

Children feel happy and safe at the club as those whom we spoke with told us that this was the case. Feedback from parents and from the annual satisfaction survey completed by parents and children also confirmed that this was the case. We saw that there was a “Proud Cloud” display, whereby those children who have achieved something, either within the club, school or outside activities had their names and photos are placed on the board, with an explanation of their achievement. There is also a system called “Rainbow Rewards” where children’s names are placed on a colour of the rainbow, this is in recognition of good work or kind, helpful behaviour. As there are lots of reception aged children starting at the club in September, the PiC and Deputy Managers told us about plans to introduce a Buddy System, to support their transition into the club. There are clear routines in place which the children are familiar with, which supports a sense of well being and familiarity. We heard lots of praise for good behaviour and staff took time to show an interest in what the children were doing.

Children feel happy, safe and valued at a club where their well being is promoted, valued and at the heart of the service.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Nearly all children's interactions were positive and respectful and in line with their ages and stage of development. Nearly all display excellent manners, consideration for their peers and respect for the people caring for them. They take care of the resources and share them appropriately. We saw that a small group of children worked well together to erect a tent on the school field, whilst others worked hard to try and fly a kite; with mixed levels of success. Snack time was a calm and relaxing time, where children enjoyed sharing stories about their day at school, they chatted to one another and the staff who sit and eat with them. Throughout our visits we heard lots of chatter, laughter and friendly banter. Children were keen to co-operate and help one another and we saw lots of examples of excellent turn taking and sharing.

Children's interactions are positive, warm and friendly.

1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?

Conversations with the children and feedback recorded demonstrate that children enjoy their play and time at the club. We noted that they were at ease and comfortable at the setting. The choice of activities and resources made available, ensure that there is something for everyone. The children are able to access the school grounds which provide further space and additional activities such as football. Outside a group of boys had a thoroughly lovely time playing in the mud kitchen, whilst another group played in the forest school area and were delighted when they found a frog amongst the leaves and trees. Others played football and swing ball, whilst some chose quieter activities such as colouring and junk modelling. Throughout our visits we noted that children were occupied and stimulated and were having a lovely time, supported by a very good range of resources and enthusiastic staff.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the club and benefit from the range of activities that are on offer.

1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?

There are many opportunities provided for children to develop their independence. At breakfast we were told that children are encouraged to serve themselves from a selection of cereal choices, as well as fruit and yoghurt. During our second inspection visit, they had introduced a new routine where children served themselves their snack, again promoting independence. Jugs of water and plastic cups and kept on a tray so that children can help themselves to a drink throughout the session. We noted that they helped one another to access the resources and asked staff for help when it was needed, demonstrating good self help skills. Toilets and hand washing facilities are appropriate for the age range of the children and children of all ages are able to use these facilities independently. We observed that children's all round development is promoted and they are able to make independent choices about their care needs, play and activities.

The club promotes children's independence and children respond in a positive way.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are enthusiastic, positive and appear to enjoy their time working at the club. Staff told us that they were undertaking further professional development and were studying a play work qualification. They provide a very good level of support and care to the children using the club.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff and management are clear about their responsibilities in keeping children safe and healthy. There are routines in place such as staff ensuring the school gates are shut before allowing children out to play in the school grounds. There is a clear child protection policy in place but the policy has not incorporated any information about "Prevent." "Prevent" is guidance from the government to support child care staff to identify and respond appropriately to issues of radicalisation. We also looked at the Lost Child Policy and noted that this did not include that a referral to the local safeguarding board would need to be made if a child were to go missing. There is a selection of risk assessments in place for the setting and risks are assessed on a daily basis. The club provides a healthy snack such as fruit and vegetables and have also been awarded a Gold Award for healthy snacks. Children are encouraged to wash their hands prior to snack and meal times; all of which encourages good, healthy habits for a lifetime.

Staff work well in supporting children to keep safe and be healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff manage interactions well and provide a range of interesting and varied activities to suit all of the age ranges of the children. Staff are good role models as they conducted themselves with professionalism. They were courteous and treated each other and the children with respect. The atmosphere was calm and purposeful, with quiet reminders being given for politeness and good manners. Staff were on hand to offer advice and oversee the children in an unobtrusive manner. There is a clear behaviour management policy in place and children are aware of the rules and expectations of the club. The club is very much an extension of the school and whilst it is probably far more relaxed and informal than the daily school environment, standards of behaviour and conduct are the same. Children know what is acceptable and adhere to the rules.

Interactions are managed well by staff in a quiet and unobtrusive manner and children respond in a positive manner, resulting in the club having a calm and friendly atmosphere.

2.3 How well do practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?

Staff promote children's development as they plan and undertake some evaluation of the activities and resources which they provide for the children. Activities and resources are of a good quality which supports and engages children in their play. There are structures and routines in place, such as snack time and registration time which the children are aware of and adhere to. Within the routine, children are able to choose from both inside and outside play activities. We were told that staff had started to keep development records for the children attending the club, but these are not necessarily needed for all children in an after school club provision, unless staff had concerns over a child's development. Children are encouraged to do as much as they can for themselves and we noted that a small group tried for quite a while to fly a kite, which was a lot trickier than it looked and this activity promoted a range of skills as well as endurance and perseverance.

Staff promote children's play well by providing a range of activities which are supported by good quality resources and engaged staff members.

3. Environment

Summary

The club is run from a hall within the school and space, resources and furniture is of a very good standard. The Head Teacher has allowed the club to put up some displays and this supports the club to have a sense of belonging and their own space. Children are able to access the outside play area freely and another larger hall, therefore there is plenty of space for the number of children who attend the club.

Our findings

3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?

The PiC is very mindful of her responsibilities in providing a safe environment. Overall the environment is safe and clean with a range of suitable resources and space for the age range and number of children who attend the service. Risk assessments are thorough and detailed and are given a colour rating of green, amber or red to help identify the level of risk. We saw staff undertake a review of the forest school area, before allowing children to play there. Children are counted when returning from playing outside, as in line with the setting's policy. The club has its own entrance and parents ring a bell to gain entry to the club, ensuring the environment is safe from potential intruders. Any maintenance issues are dealt with by the school. Emergency evacuations are practised every other month which helps to ensure children are aware of the drill and would know what to do in the event of an emergency.

Leaders have a very good understanding of their role and responsibility to ensure the environment is safe for the children.

3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?

The environment is suitable and appropriate for an after school club provision. The PiC and staff set up at the start of each session and there is a wide variety of toys and resources placed throughout the hall. The club benefits from having suitable storage space for toys, resources and management records. There is sufficient space, both indoors and outdoors for children to play and be with their friends. However, on checking the toilets, during our first visit we found that three of the four girls' toilets lacked suitable resources such as toilet paper. However, the toilets had been cleaned and were of a good standard.

The environment is suitable and safe for an after school club service and meets the needs of the children.

3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?

Quality of resources and equipment is very good and children have access to furniture, equipment, toys and materials that are appropriate and suitable for their needs, interests and ages. Resources are clean and well maintained. These are available in sufficient quantity to ensure children have a good variety of choice. Children are able to access a range of quality equipment and resources for themselves due to the layout of the hall and storage facilities. There is good financial investment in the club and this is evident in the

number and quality of resources made available to the children. The children benefit from being able to access a large play space, which ensures that they are engaged and stimulated.

Leaders ensure that resources and equipment made available to the children are plentiful and of very good quality.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Management of the setting is generally good but the RI and PiC are not experienced in managing a registered child care setting and they needed to have some areas of the regulations and national minimum standards clarified. However, both were keen to engage with the inspection process in order to move the service forward and maintain the high standards they strive to provide. There are clear policies and procedures in place which are detailed and well written.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leadership of the setting on a day to day basis is effective. The PiC and RI have a sense of purpose and vision for the club and this promotes on going improvement. There are many areas of the NMS such as adult to child ratios, which the club often exceeds. Policies and procedures are well written and provide clear guidance to the staff team. The management team ensure the environment is safe and inviting for the children and we noted that accurate records are maintained in relation to the registers. Children are signed in by the staff and parents sign them out, including the time, which ensures there is an accurate record of the children's attendance. Incident and accident records are maintained and these are monitored to establish if there are any problem areas or trends developing. However, neither the PiC or RI realised that they had to keep CIW informed of staff changes and they had not informed CIW of changes to the staff team and therefore, they were not compliant with Regulation 31 (Schedule 4.02)(1)(b). This was discussed during the feedback meeting and CIW are assured that the RI and PiC are now fully aware of their responsibilities with regards to this matter. We also saw that although accident forms are appropriately completed by staff members, these are not signed by parents or carers.

Overall, leadership is effective and the PiC is hard working and conscientious.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Self evaluation and planning for improvement is embedded within the service and there are systems in place which supports this process. We saw from the records that questionnaires regarding the evaluation of the service are distributed to both children and parents and where possible suggestions acted upon. There is a comments box for both parents and children available. Team meetings are held at least termly and provide staff with an opportunity to give feedback and make suggestions for improvement. We saw from the management files that they had recently completed an action plan following attendance at an Inspection Framework Training. This was a working document, which has identified areas for improvement and they were in the process of working towards implementing these.

Self evaluation and planning for improvement is very effective.

4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?

Management of staff and resources is reasonably effective. Staff told us that they felt supported by the PiC. We saw that staff meetings were held regularly, action points agreed and acted upon. However, individual supervision sessions were not embedded into the setting, although all staff had received an appropriate induction and training to work at the setting. We also saw that the staff personnel files did not contain the necessary information required by the regulations and therefore they were not compliant with Regulation 28(2)(b)(Schedule 1.33). However, all staff had suitable security checks such as Disclosure and Barring Security checks. We provided a list of documents to the RI that needed to be included in the staff files so that the club could become compliant with the relevant regulations. Agency staff are rarely used as both the PiC and deputy manager work out of adult to child ratio and will cover, if the need arises.

Overall the after school club is well managed and provides a high quality service, but attention is needed to ensure all the relevant documentation is made available at future inspections.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Partnership working with parents and carers is very good. We noted that feedback from parents/carers was very complimentary. Comments included: *“Lovely, friendly atmosphere, safe environment which puts the children first”* And *“I am delighted with the quality of care provided by Saplings.”* Parents are provided with information outlining the main policies and procedures of the club. Stay and Play sessions have been offered to give children and parents an insight into how the club is run. The management team hold an ‘Open Evening’ for new parents to share information about the club. There is a clear complaints policy in place for both parents and children.

Partnerships are effective and are mutually supportive.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

The following areas were discussed with the RI, PiC and Deputy Manager as part of the inspection process:

- Check toilets before the club starts to ensure there are enough resources in place;
- include information on Prevent in the Child Protection policy and ensure all staff receive suitable training in this area;
- update Missing Child Policy so that it makes it clear a referral should be made to the local safeguarding board, if a child were to go missing;
- ensure parents sign accident forms and
- develop a programme of regular one to one supervision meetings with all staff.

6. How we undertook this inspection

An unannounced full inspection which examined all four themes was undertaken by one inspector over two visits on Thursday 14 and Monday 18 June 2018; spending a total of nearly seven hours at the service. The following methodology was used to gather evidence for this report:

- discussion with PiC, RI, Deputy Manager, staff, parents and several children;
- examination of records, policies and procedures;
- return of parent questionnaires distributed by CIW;
- visual inspection of the environment;
- observation of care practices and routines and
- consideration of information held by CIW.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Out of School Care
Responsible Individual	Stephen Rees
Person in charge	Kath John
Registered maximum number of places	40
Age range of children	Four to twelve years
Opening hours	Term time 7.30am to 9.00am and 3.30pm to 6.00pm Monday to Friday. School holidays 8.00am to 6.00pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	First inspection since registration in April 2016
Dates of this inspection	14 and 18 June 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years' education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that does not provide an "Active Offer" of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people/children who use, or intend to use their service. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's "More Than just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care."
Additional Information: None	