



Childcare Inspection Report on

Castle Kids Childcare

**Gaer Community Centre
Gaer Road
Newport
NP20 3GY**



Date of Publication

Thursday, 21 February 2019

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Description of the service

Castle Kids Childcare operates from Gaer Community Centre on the outskirts of Newport. It has been registered since July 2017 to provide care for a maximum of 32 children up to the age of 12 years. The Responsible Individual (RI) is Lynda Goodwin, on behalf of Newport City Council (NCC). The service operates a variety of care including playgroup, flying start provision, wraparound and after school care from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. A Person in Charge (PiC) is employed to take responsibility for the day-to-day running of the service with an additional PiC employed to take responsibility for the after school club. This is predominantly an English speaking service with use of incidental Welsh.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children's individual needs are well met. Most children interact and behave well, forming close relationships with friends and staff. Relevant health and safety procedures are followed, including risk assessments for all play environments. Staff frequently praise the children's achievements and deliver the service effectively. Although activity planning and observations to monitor children's progress could be improved, staff facilitate and nurture children's learning and development appropriately. Whilst leadership and management of the service is generally strong further improvements to the After School element of the service are needed.

2. Improvements

Since the previous inspection in October 2018 we were told that daily checks are carried out in the after school club outdoor area. We were told that resources had been ordered to improve the play and learning environment and saw that a new mud kitchen for younger children had been delivered on the day of our inspection.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no areas of non compliance identified during the inspection. We made some recommendations to further improve practice and outcomes for children. These included, developing a mobile phone/technology policy for children, improving planning of activities and access to resources for children in the After School Club. These are outlined at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

This was a focused inspection concentrating on the 'Care and Development' and 'Environment' themes. Well-being will be looked at more closely at a later inspection. However children are happy and settled at the service and have formed positive relationships with staff and their peers. Children have a strong voice and are regularly consulted about their opinions. Consultation with children is central to the service and, for example, children proudly explained to us that they had helped to devise menus for the after school club. We saw a 'Wall of ideas' where children could attach stick it notes with their ideas and they confirmed suggestions for new resources had been acted upon. Relationships with staff are warm and children told us that they had made new friends at the club. Children played well together, showed respect to their peers and said they really enjoyed attending.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Children benefit from staff who understand child development and who want to make a positive difference to the children in their care. Children remain safe and healthy because staff have a sound understanding of their responsibilities and of the policies and procedures in place to support them in their roles.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff have a thorough understanding of the policies and procedures and implement them within their daily working practice. We spoke with staff and they had a very good understanding of child protection procedures including 'Prevent' duties and what their own responsibilities were in order to safeguard children. We saw that food hygiene principles were followed when supporting children with their snack and we saw that healthy options were offered to children. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the session. Fire drills are practiced regularly with children. Staff ensured that children had good opportunities for physical play and we saw that, for example, a new mud kitchen had been installed for younger children in the outdoor area. Children in the After School Club have good access to the outdoor area and they moved easily between the indoors and outdoors in order to engage in physical play. We were told that a bid had been placed to secure funding for an all weather play surface so that football and more robust games could be undertaken all year round. Older children can play on games consoles but do not have access to the internet. Staff understand about the appropriate use of mobile phones and their own internet policy, however children do not have specific guidelines regarding this.

There are effective systems in place to ensure that children's health and safety is maintained at the service but it would benefit children to have clearer guidance regarding the use of technology whilst at the club.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff work in line with the behaviour management policy and are able to manage children in a positive manner. Staff engage well with the children. We heard lots of positive interactions between children and staff and staff gently prompting children when needed. Staff gave good eye contact when talking with children and ensured children were listening when being given instructions. They ensured all children were engaged in activities although a painting activity with after school children could have been managed better. However, children remained polite and well behaved and were clearly aware of the rules and expectations of behaviour and this was confirmed in speaking with some of the children.

Staff have developed positive strategies to manage children's behaviour effectively.

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

Staff understand how to promote children's learning and meet their individual needs. We saw that staff evaluate and discuss each session to ensure activities meet children's individual needs. An overview of planning is completed termly and we saw child centred planning displayed on the walls which corresponded to activities offered to children. However, some planning had been wrongly labelled and some observations had not been completed consistently and the PIC said she would address this promptly. In the hallway leading to the playgroup we saw lots of photographic evidence of the types of activities children undertake throughout the year. Key workers complete weekly planning and evaluations for individual children. When we spoke to one keyworker she clearly understood the purpose of the cutting and sticking craft activity that she had undertaken with children during the morning session. She clearly explained the means used to develop children's fine motor skills and co-ordination. We saw within the after school club that children have free choice of activities, allowing children to follow their own interests. However, some children lost purpose with this activity which deteriorated and was abandoned due to the mess created and the painting was then thrown away.

Staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs and are experienced in the planning of activities and ensuring that they meet the children's next steps in play and learning. Improvements in the planning and delivery of structured activities within the after school club is needed.

3. Environment

Summary

The environment is clean, bright and maintained to a good standard. Care is taken to maintain safety in order to ensure the health and safety of children. The setting has an outside play area which is spacious, well-resourced and safe. Children have direct access to toileting facilities which helps promote their independence. Risks are assessed and where possible eliminated so that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Resources are appropriate for the age range of the children attending. However, the access to resources for older children could be improved.

Our findings

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

Systems are in place to provide a safe, secure environment for children to play and learn. The premises are very secure with a buzzer on the main entrance. This enables staff to monitor visitors, ensure they are supervised and complete the register and we noted our identification was checked upon arrival. We saw that inside and outside play areas were secure. Risk assessments and daily checks are completed for all areas. We were told and observed during our inspection of the outside play areas, that risks had been identified and eliminated where possible. When risks are identified we were told that they are promptly addressed by the buildings maintenance personnel. For example, we saw that overhanging branches had been removed from nearby trees. Staff followed suitable procedures to ensure the environment was clean and hygienic. The PIC explained that children are supervised when outside and that checks of the outside area are completed before children access these areas.

Leaders ensure that environment is safe.

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

The environment is generally set up to promote children's development. We saw that there was sufficient space for the number of children. Both inside and outside areas provided space for children to be physically active and we saw that children were encouraged to play outside with access to good resources to encourage development of gross motor skills through physical play. Displays of preschool children's work was limited but it was explained that as it was the first week back after the Christmas break staff were preparing new topics and displays of children's work to reflect current topics and themes of learning. The base room used by the after school club is a community resources and because it is a shared space there were limited displays relating to the club. Whilst quite a few of the children chose to play with hoops, bats and balls outside, indoor activities were limited and table top games and resources were not easily accessible to children. This was discussed with the RI and PIC who agreed to look at ways to improve the environment for children. Children did have easy access to suitable toilet facilities and tables and chairs to sit and eat snack.

Within the preschool area leaders are mindful to make the most of the environment and ensure it is suitable and stimulating. However, the after school club needs to be better organised and resources need to be more easily accessible to children.

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

Leaders ensure that resources and equipment are of good quality and suitable for the age range of the children. We were told that Newport City Council have invested significantly to ensure the playroom and outside areas are well resourced to nurture children's play and facilitate their learning. We saw that a new mud kitchen had arrived on the day of inspection and were informed that the service was waiting for the rest of the equipment to be delivered, including technology for the after school club. A number of low-level open storage units within the playroom help promote children's independent access to resources and free choice. The storage cupboard also housed a good deal of table top activities and resources for the after school children. Resources were seen to be clean, well maintained and complied with relevant safety standards. Good use was made of natural and recyclable materials. We saw that there were resources to promote cultural awareness such as dolls and books.

Children benefit from good quality resources.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

This was a focused inspection concentrating on 'Care and Development' and 'Environment' themes. 'Leadership and Management' will be looked at more closely at the next inspection. However, overall management of the service is effective, staff are well supported and partnerships with parents productive. We spoke with two parents whose children attend the after school club, and eight children and they all fed back that they were very happy with the service, staff and play opportunities.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Develop a mobile phone and technology policy;
- improve recordings around planning and observations of activities and children's development and
- improve organisation of activities and access to resources and table top activities within after School Club.

6. How we undertook this inspection

One inspector undertook an unannounced focused inspection in response to a concern received by CIW. Approximately four and a half hours was spent at the service looking at the playgroup and after school club specifically. The following methodology was used to gather evidence for this report:

- Observations of care routines and practices;
- discussion with the RI, PiCs and staff;
- conversation with eight children;
- discussion with two parents;
- visual inspection of both inside and outside play areas and
- consideration of information held by CIW such as the last inspection report.

Feedback was provided to the RI and PiC at the end of the inspection.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Responsible Individual	Lynda Goodwin
Person in charge	Rebecca Mifsud Susan Woodruff
Registered maximum number of places	32
Age range of children	Playgroup 2 - 4 years After School Club up to 12 years
Opening hours	Playgroup 9.15am – 11.30am / 1.00pm – 3.00pm Flying Start 12.30pm – 3.00pm Wraparound 11.30am – 1.00pm After School Club 3.15pm – 5.45pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	04 October 2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	10 January 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Is early year's 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 the service. This is because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area. However, we recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just words' strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.
Additional Information:	