



Childcare Inspection Report on

Stepping Stones 4 Schools Out of School and Holiday Club

**Christ the King Primary School
Everest Avenue
Llanishen
Cardiff
CF14 5AS**



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Description of the service

Stepping Stones 4 Schools out of School and Holiday club operates from Christ the King Primary School in Llanishen, Cardiff. The before and after school club is open throughout the school year from 7.45 to 8.45am and 3.30 to 6.00pm. The holiday club element of the service is open from 8.00am to 5.30pm for three weeks during the summer holidays and all half term holidays. The club is operated by Stepping Stones 4 Schools who also run a number of other before and after school clubs in neighbouring Cardiff primary schools. There is a Responsible Individual (RI) who acts on behalf of the company. There are two Person in Charge (PiCs) who manage the setting; one is responsible for the holiday club element of the service and the other is responsible for the before and after school service. There are another two PiCs who are the owners of the company. For the purpose of this inspection, only the holiday club was inspected. However, both elements of the club share the same policies, procedures and management systems and some of the core staff work in both the after school and holiday club. Care of the children is provided through the English language.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Outcomes for the children who attend the holiday club are good. They are provided with a range of resources and activities that are suitable and meet the different needs of the children who attend the setting. Management systems are effective and the PiC and the staff team are suitably experienced and have the necessary skills and attributes to provide a safe, secure and stimulating holiday club. The environment is adequate and provides children with plenty of space in which to spread out and play. However, certain elements of the environment such as the toilets were of a poor quality and in need of refurbishment.

2. Improvements

The following improvements have been noted since the last inspection in August 2015:

- Statement of Purpose and other policies have been updated to include the correct contact details for Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and
- children are counted into the setting following outside play, to ensure all are present and the register is correct.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no areas of non compliance identified at this inspection. A small number of good practice recommendations have been made relating to some health and safety issues and policy updates. Further details can be found in section 5.2 which is located near the end of this report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Outcomes for children are 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 suitably qualified and trained staff. Most 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. On the notice board we saw that there was a display 'You asked for' and 'We provided' which demonstrated that some of the children's requests in the last quality of care review had been acted upon. The setting distributes questionnaires to the children following the delivery of the holiday club and annually to the before and after school club and their feedback was generally positive. At breakfast time we saw the children were able to make choices from a varied menu and were able to ask for more food/drink. The club is managed by splitting the children into two groups based on their ages. However, children could choose to stay in which ever group they wanted to, sometimes children wanted to stay with their younger siblings or preferred an activity in one base room to another. We noted that children are confident to speak out, ask for resources and seek clarity. Resources and toys are placed throughout the hall and adjoining classrooms and this enables children to make choices over their play options. Their voices are heard and they will 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. We also spoke with several parents and they too confirmed that their children are happy at the club. One parent stated "*My child won't go anywhere else, they can choose what they want to do and it's not lots of sporting activities, which is great for those children who don't like sports.*" Many of the children know each other from school or other settings. For those children who are new to the club, they are closely supported by the play staff and are introduced to the other children. There are clear routines in place which the children are familiar with, which supports a sense of well being and security. 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 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. The older children took turns to undertake a craft activity of making a very large octopus to put out on display as well as making and decorating clay pots. They were keen to co-operate and help one another and we saw lots of examples of excellent turn taking and sharing. Children listened well and followed instructions; they knew the expectations and rules of the setting and followed them well. Snack and meal times were calm and relaxing times, where children enjoyed sharing stories about their holidays or plans, they chatted to one another and the staff supporting them. Throughout our visits we heard lots of chatter, laughter and friendly banter.

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 playing on scooters or with balls. There is a timetable of activities and this includes time spent playing outside with a good selection of resources. Throughout our visits we noted that children were occupied and stimulated and were having a lovely time, supported by a good range of resources and enthusiastic staff. For example a small group of older boys enjoyed playing on computer game, which they had set up and organised themselves. We also noted that some of girls had brought in hair bobbles from home and a member of staff spent some time plaiting their hair, which they thoroughly enjoyed.

Children 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?

Children are generally independent and are able to care for themselves. They bring in packed lunches from home and all were independent in serving themselves their lunch. Children were able to access toilets and hand washing facilities with a high degree of independence. However, we did note at breakfast time that the children queue up to be served their breakfast. Children were not able to pour their own drinks from jugs, or butter their own toast etc.

Children are generally given opportunities to be independent but routines at breakfast time could be reviewed to support further independence in this area.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are enthusiastic, positive and appear to enjoy their time working at the club. Many of them told us that they were undertaking further professional development and were studying for a play work qualification. They provide a 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 regular head counts before and after the children go outside to play. Each base room also have their own registers, which are regularly checked. Parents complete an application form which contains relevant information regarding their child's specific health needs or any dietary requirements; these are appropriately recorded and acted upon. There is a clear child protection policy in place which has incorporated 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 range of risk assessments in place for the setting and risks are assessed on a daily basis. However, the holiday club does not undertake emergency evacuation drills and we saw from the after school club records, that although evacuation are completed, they are not full evacuations, as they do not leave the school hall and go the appropriate assembly point. The club provides a healthy breakfast and follows the guidelines on healthy eating stipulated by Cardiff Council. Children are encouraged to wash their hands prior to snack and meal times and after using the toilet; all of which encourages good, healthy habits for a lifetime. However, suitable supplies of hand soap were not always present for the children to use.

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 conduct 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. 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. This is particularly effective within the craft provision and a very good selection of activities is offered to the children, which are evaluated to ensure that the children enjoyed them. Resources are of a good quality which supports and engages children in their play. There are structures and routines in place, such as snack and meal time which the children are aware of and adhere to. We saw that children were encouraged to tidy up the toys before meal times and most did with a high degree of enthusiasm and co-operation. Within the daily routines, children are able to spend time both inside and outside which helps to develop a range of skills.

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 with the use of additional classrooms within the school. Space is plentiful, resources and furniture is of a reasonable standard. Managers are mindful of their responsibility if providing a safe and secure environment for the children to play in.

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 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 regularly reviewed. Children are counted when returning from playing outside. There is door bell which is used by visitors and parents dropping off/collecting their children as the door to the main hall is kept locked. Any maintenance issues are dealt with by the school.

Leaders have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities 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 and holiday 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 and classrooms. 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, we found that nearly all of the toilet hand basins lacked soap and many of the hand basins in the classrooms also lacked suitable provision of hand soap. We also noted that the toilets were in a poor condition and dirty, used toilet brushes were left discarded in at least two of the toilet cubicles.

Overall the environment is of an adequate quality and is suitable and safe for an after school and holiday club service. It meets the needs of the children. Closer consideration needs to be paid to the provision hand soap and the general cleanliness and upkeep of the toilets.

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

Quality of resources and equipment is 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, classroom 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 appropriate quality.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Management of the setting is good as the RIs and PiCs are experienced in managing a registered child care setting. The management team are aware of the regulatory responsibilities and work hard to ensure that the service is compliant with The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations (2010) and the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare for children (2016). 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 is effective. The PiC and RIs 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. Parents are provided with a hand book which includes an overview of the main policies and procedures for the setting. The management team ensure the environment is safe 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. Staff are encouraged to undertake further training and development and we noted that for those staff members who had completed their six month probationary period, they are given the opportunity to undertake training and gain a recognised qualification in play work.

Leadership is effective and the service provided is of a good quality.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Self evaluation and planning for improvement is ongoing and the RIs understand the importance of effective evaluation within the service; there are systems in place which support 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. Their feedback is fed into the annual quality of care report. However, staff views are not included in this report. Team meetings are held at least termly and provide staff with an opportunity to give feedback and make suggestions for improvement. Managers meet on a monthly basis and this enables them to share good practice amongst all their settings. Following each holiday club, the RI meets with the PiC to evaluate the service and identify what worked well and if anything could be improved.

Self evaluation and planning for improvement is on going and effective.

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

Management of staff and resources is effective. Staff told us that they felt supported by the PiC and enjoyed working at the setting and for the company. We saw that staff meetings were held regularly, action points agreed and acted upon. Individual supervision sessions are undertaken and these help to identify areas for improvement. We saw from records that there is a thorough induction process which supports staff to undertake their roles and responsibilities. We viewed staff files and all the necessary security checks such as Disclosure and Barring Security checks had been undertaken. Agency staff are not used as staff can be utilised from other settings to cover sickness or training. We saw from rotas that the club frequently exceeds adult to child ratios which ensures that there are plenty of staff available.

The after school and holiday club is well managed and provides a good quality service.

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: *“My child loves coming here, won’t go anywhere else.”* Another told us *“Staff are fabulous, my child comes home happy and exhausted.”* Parents are provided with information outlining the main policies and procedures of the club and all new children to the club are invited to meet with the PiC prior to attending so that they have a familiar face when attending 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 for improvement were discussed with the PiC whilst we are at the setting and also with the RIs during a feedback meeting:

- Emergency evacuations should take place during the operational times of the holiday club;
- emergency evacuations should be completed in full. For example, the children and staff should evacuate to the relevant assembly point, register taken and children counted etc.;
- include staff points of view in the annual quality of care review and report;
- update Missing Child policy to include that the local safeguarding board would be informed if a child were to go missing;
- ensure that the toilets have enough resources such as hand soap and remove all toilet brushes and
- increase opportunities for independence at breakfast time, by allowing children to serve themselves their own food.

6. How we undertook this inspection

An unannounced full inspection which examined all four themes was undertaken by one inspector over two visits to the school on Tuesday 7 and Wednesday 8 August. An additional visit was made to the company's offices on Wednesday 5 September 2018; spending a total of nearly eight hours at the service. The following methodology was used to gather evidence for this report:

- discussion with PiC, RI, staff, parents and several children;
- examination of records, policies and procedures;
- 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	Clare MacOmish
Person in charge	Kate Downes Danielle Phillips Brigid Lee Clare MacOmish
Registered maximum number of places	40
Age range of children	Aged from 3 to 12 years.
Opening hours	Before and after school club is open from 7.45 to 8.45am and 3.30 to 6.00pm, term time only. The holiday club is open from 8.00am to 5.30pm.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	5 August 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	7 and 8 August and 5 September 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years' education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	No
Additional Information:	