



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Childcare Inspection Report on

Simply Out of School Cowbridge

**Y Bontfaen Primary School
Borough Close
Cowbridge
CF71 7BN**



Date of Publication

Tuesday, 24 April 2018

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2018.

You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.

Description of the service

Simply Out of School Cowbridge was registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in 2011. It operates in Y Bont Faen Primary School in Cowbridge. It provides an after school service for up to 40 children attending this school and also Ysgol Iolo Morganwg during term time, and all-day care during specific weeks of school holidays. It is one of two settings owned by Joanne Hopkins, who is the Person in Charge at this venue. English is the main language of the service.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy and receive appropriate care at the after school club where they can enjoy a suitable range of activities both indoors and outside. Children relate positively with the staff caring for them. The staff team is experienced and appropriately qualified and use their knowledge and understanding to meet the children's needs. Children benefit from an adequate indoor and outdoor environment, although there is scope for development of areas within the premises to improve children's experiences and their sense of 'ownership' of their club.

2. Improvements

The provider had met the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. These included some noncompliance matters which were promptly dealt with at the time.

3. Requirements and recommendations

The provider is meeting their legal responsibility in providing a safe child care service. We made some good practice recommendations to develop the service and improve outcomes for children, including increasing children's independence at snack time, improving the children's complaints procedure, and the use of the Welsh language.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children's views are valued and they are able to make choices within their activities, although there is some scope for developing this practice. Children are made to feel welcome and have formed positive relationships with the staff. Children enjoy an adequate range of activities indoors and can spend lots of time outside.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children can make choices within the range of activities available to them. We saw children moving freely around the play space and choosing what they wanted to play with, such as construction games, dinosaurs and play mat, board games, dolls and dressing up clothes and the play station. Children told us they especially liked using the play station, and explained the system for sharing screen time with friends. Other favourite activities included Lego and crafts. A small group of children told us about the sports group they were planning. Children were asked by staff what they wanted to do after their snack and we observed the choices being prioritised and put into practice, including a game of 'statues'.

Children are listened to by staff and are able to make choices within their activities.

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

Children are relaxed in the care of the staff, who know them well and gave lots of praise and encouragement during the session. We spoke to the PiC who told us that the 'buddy system' is still in place and now enables younger children to take part, increasing their self-esteem. Children told us who they would talk to if they had a concern about something, and pointed out the suggestions box on a side table that they can use any time. Several children attend with their siblings and retain friendships with students they spend their day in school with.

Children feel secure and comfortable in their care with staff who provide a relaxed approach to the service.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact well in this service and we observed lots of co-operative play, such as children enjoying board games together, larger group games like 'statues' and outdoor football. Children from another school attend some of the after school sessions, although none were present at this inspection. We were told that those children already know several children from this school who make them feel welcomed. We observed some light hearted banter between children as well as some quietly serious chats on a one to one basis between children. Children played in large and small groups, across the age range of all present, such as when they played 'statues', carefully checking who stayed still and who moved when the music stopped.

Children feel comfortable and confident within their group setting.

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

Children are interested in their play activities and enjoy outdoor and free play. They had age appropriate activities and moved freely around the play space. They enjoyed their outdoor play session, with some children playing a game of football and others practising goal scoring and catching skills. We observed lots of fun and laughter. Lego was a popular indoor activity, and children spent time creating vehicles and buildings, following their imagination.

Children are engaged and enjoy their time at the service with positive support from adults.

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

Generally children have an opportunity to develop and become independent. We observed that children engaged in various age-appropriate activities and were able to help themselves to drinking water as they wanted. Children are able to do their homework if they want. However, the PiC told us that setting up a specific homework space has not proved popular. Children prefer to relax after school with their friends, in line with the ethos of the service. We observed that children accessed the toilet facilities independently as appropriate for their age and stage of development. Snack time was a sociable time, and children chatted among themselves while they ate. However, opportunities to value children's ability to be independent could have been made more of. Children attend from a local Welsh medium school, although none were present at this session. We heard no Welsh spoken during the session, although we understood a member of staff is a fluent Welsh speaker.

Children are relaxed and confident in their care, while opportunities for developing independence and use of the Welsh language could be improved.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff know the children in their care well and provide care that meets their needs. They create a space where children can play and relax. The staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues, are able to identify children at risk and have the confidence to follow appropriate procedures. They have realistic expectations of children and treat them with warmth and respect and carry out appropriate hygiene routines and promote healthy eating.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The provider and practitioners are clear about their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe and they promote a safe and healthy environment. The provider keeps a good range of policies and procedures to support and manage a safe child care service. We looked at the safeguarding policy and noted that it includes a statement about the Prevent Duty 2015, and staff had received training to support their understanding. This is a new responsibility to prevent children who attend child care settings from being drawn into extremism. We spoke with a member of staff who was clear about what action to take in the event of a safeguarding situation. We found that equipment safety certificates, risk assessments - including fire safety and outings - are in place to maintain a safe service, and drills are logged and relevant training is undertaken by all staff. Children were given freshly cut fruit when they arrived after school and enjoy a healthy snack later in the session. A four-week menu is kept, and includes hot meals, wraps or sandwiches. These are served with a choice of fillings such as ham, cheese, chicken, tomatoes, cucumber and coleslaw, with water or milk to drink. Water is also freely available throughout each session. There is an effective recording system in place for pre-existing injuries, accidents and attendance. We observed staff carrying out appropriate health and hygiene routines at snack time, as well as throughout the session.

The provider maintains effective systems to promote children's health and welfare.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff model positive behaviour and interactions. We heard staff chat to children in a respectful manner and respond appropriately to their questions and requests. Play was mostly child-led and we saw staff support children in their play, such as ball games, Lego and craft activities. Staff praised children for their achievements, such as a Lego construction and we saw cheerful chatty exchanges between staff and children. We observed no areas of tension and children were suitably occupied throughout the session.

Staff set and hold realistic expectations of children's behaviour and celebrate their achievements.

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

The service provides care which is child centred and meets children's individual needs in a cheerful and caring atmosphere. We found an adequate range of toys, activities and resources that are suitable for the children who attend. This is an English speaking service, and heard no Welsh spoken although we were told that the Welsh language is promoted through some activities. A member of staff is Welsh speaking, and children attend from a Welsh medium school. We recommended that the provider considers ways to promote the Welsh language as routine. Planning for play-based activities usually follows seasonal themes and multicultural celebrations. After school sessions include free play, snack time with focused group games such as parachutes, music and dance, and traditional games such as 'granny's footsteps'. Outdoor games and activities are always part of the session, unless prevented by poor weather. Staff hold play-work qualifications and play is mostly child-led, when they choose activities from the range on offer. All-day care in school holidays includes trips out to places where children's natural interests are nurtured, such as the Amelia Trust Farm and the Welsh Hawking Centre.

Children's play and learning are promoted by practitioners who have skills and knowledge to meet their individual needs.

3. Environment

Summary

The provider ensures that children receive care in a safe, secure and child friendly setting. Children are given a range of resources and experiences that support their play, learning and development both indoors and outside, and where staff minimise risks. However, presentation and accessibility of resources are somewhat restricted by the premises.

Our findings

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

Practitioners take a measured approach to ensuring the environment is safe. Safety checks are carried out on a daily basis and maintenance issues are recorded and dealt with. The fire blanket and first aid kit were easily accessible to all staff. Safety maintenance certificates were in place and effective risk assessments were completed for premises, activities and outings. Insurance certificates are up to date. Records showed that regular fire alarm testing and evacuation drills are carried out on a regular basis. We noted that all areas were clean and free from hazards. Entrance to the child care area is locked and although school staff walk through the area frequently, out of school care staff were clear about who should, and should not, be on the premises.

The staff are clear and pro-active about their responsibilities for maintaining a safe environment for children.

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

After school care takes place in the school hall with occasional use of the nursery class room. Resources are stored in a small room just off the main play space and are brought out and replaced as needed each day. While there was a suitable range of resources overall, they could have been presented more attractively in the play space. We saw play zones such as a play station, a craft table, a table with Lego, a box of dolls, and another of dressing up clothes. Many resources were left in storage during the session. Consideration should be given to ensuring the play work principles are fully implemented, so that children can lead play and use their imagination with resources without having to ask for items. The provider's self-assessment of service for the previous year noted their intention to develop a relaxing quiet area for children to chat and read in small groups. This had not yet been fully developed. The manager told us that they use a blanket, but it had been taken away for laundering. We discussed the possibility of providing bean bags to create a relaxing and separate quiet space. Indoor play activities make use of the school's tables and chairs. Outdoor play is accessed via a corridor off the play space and children can use the school's field, running track, tables and seating areas. However, there is no facility to store the after school care's outside resources and this somewhat restricts the children's after school activities. However, they keep folding scooters, balls, hoops and ropes for outdoor play. Children told us they can put suggestions for new resources or inform staff about any concerns into the box provided. We saw the suggestions box was placed on the staff table in the main play space and recommended that consideration is given to where the box would be best placed so that children could maintain anonymity if they chose.

Children are cared for in an environment which provides adequate opportunities for play, relaxation and learning.

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

Children are provided with a range of resources that are appropriate to their age and stage of development, and which are clean and well maintained. We were told that staff carry out daily checks of resources as they get them out and put them away, as well as recorded periodic risk assessments and quality checks. Toilet facilities are easily accessible and maintained in a clean state, although we found that the electric hand drier did not work. The provider informed the school caretaker during the inspection and steps were taken to remedy the situation. We recommended that the provider ensure this is completed, or to provide individual towels for children to use. Snacks are prepared in the school staff room, and we saw appropriate hygienic routines maintained. We saw the Food Safety Hygiene rating was 3, and the provider described steps taken to improve the rating since it was awarded.

Practitioners maintain adequate routines to ensure resources are suitable for children's use.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Children are cared for in a service that is appropriately run and organised, meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care (NMS) and relevant regulations. Paperwork and records are kept in a clear system and accessible to those who need them. Parents are given the information they need to make an informed choice about using the service. Practitioners are appropriately qualified and experienced, and there are effective systems in place to ensure that required training is maintained. Some additional relevant training opportunities are offered to staff to ensure that experiences for children are positive. This is a service where practitioners work well together, reflect on their practice and include parents' and children's views in the process.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leadership is adequate with some effective monitoring systems in place. It is compliant with the relevant child care regulations and national minimum standards for registered child care providers. There is a range of well written policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed and ensure all who use and work within the service are clear about roles and responsibilities. We noted that the children's complaints procedure should be further developed to include information about people and websites they may contact. We spoke to staff who are competent, feel supported and enjoy their work. We observed staff worked well as a team and as individuals, supporting positive outcomes for the children who attend.

The service delivers a consistent and improving standard of care to children.

4.2 How effective is self-evaluation and planning for improvement?

Children benefit because practitioners take a reflective approach to running the service. It is formally reviewed annually and we looked at the latest summary which was completed in July 2017 and sent to CIW within the Self- Assessment of Service form. Parents, children and staff contributed to the review and the provider has made changes in response to some comments about the menu and activities in the sessions. Plans to develop imaginative play for children were identified, although there was no evidence to suggest they had been completed. However, plans to increase activities for older children were carried out, with the addition of some board games. The provider is a franchisee of the Simply Out of School business, which provides support, oversees policies, procedures and some staff training.

Leaders ensure there are effective self-evaluation and future planning systems in place.

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

The provider is organised in the management of the service, with an appropriate recruitment process and promotes staff development. We found all staff are supported to maintain regulatory and required training. Children's care benefits from a member of staff who is voluntarily undertaking additional training. Discussion with the provider showed that she is aware of changes to staff qualifications requirements and is taking steps to meet them. We were told that some staff had

attended behaviour training which was identified in the professional development plan in the provider's latest review of the service.

Management of practitioners and resources is effective and ensures the smooth-running of the service.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Practitioners work with parents and others to ensure children's needs are met. We observed a good working relationship with people who are employed in the school. We were told that although storage space for the after school care is limited, children enjoy good use of other facilities within the school, such as a large screen television for special occasions, and lots of outdoor facilities. Practitioners have use of some resources such as the photocopier or printer and reinforce the school initiatives like the '5 a day' scheme. We saw lots of information to help parents familiarise themselves with after school matters displayed on a notice board at the entrance. We observed chatty and relaxed exchanges of information as parents collected their children, and it was clear that care staff provided an important link between home and school for parents. We spoke to parents, some of whom have been using the after school care for several years for their children including older siblings. They commented that staff are "*Excellent*" and "*Great*" and that their children enjoy the variety of experiences, like games, outside, play and drawing. All parents and children gave positive comments, and raised no concerns.

Practitioners understand the importance of working in partnership to ensure that children receive the support they need.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

We notified the provider that the service was non compliant with the following Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010:

- Regulation 15 (4) (a) Statement of Purpose - This is because the RP had not updated the Statement of Purpose appropriately. It is the RP's responsibility to ensure the Statement of Purpose is kept updated and reflects the current service. CSSIW must be informed of any changes, where practicable, 28 days before the change takes place. Following the inspection, the RP provided CSSIW with an amended Statement of Purpose.
- Regulation 30 (1) (a), Schedule 3 6 – Records to be maintained – This is because the RP had not maintained clear daily records of the attendance of children and staff.
- Regulation 27 (b) –Staffing. This is because there was not a sufficient number of suitably qualified staff looking after the children. NMS 13.7 stipulates that at least 50% of non supervisory staff holds a qualification at least level 2 and at least half of these have a qualification at level 3.
- Regulation 28 (2) (b) (ii) (Part 2 Schedule 2. 34) – Suitability of workers. This is because the provider had employed staff without carrying out all of the necessary checks and references to establish their suitability to have contact with children.

We, (CSSIW) have not issued a non compliance notice in respect of these matters on this occasion because the provider immediately took action to achieve compliance in some issues and has made a commitment to CSSIW to fully rectify the matters identified without delay.

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

In order to develop the service and improve outcomes for children we discussed the following matters with the provider:

- consider where the suggestions box would be best placed so that children using it can maintain anonymity if they choose;
- consider how fully the play work principles are implemented, so that children can lead play and use their imagination with resources without having to ask for items;
- enable more opportunities for children to be independent at snack times;
- consider ways to increase the use of the Welsh language;
- further develop the children's complaints procedure to include information about people and websites they may contact; and
- ensure the electric hand drier is in working order, or provide individual towels for children to use.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This inspection was unannounced and undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. The inspector undertook one visit to the service on the one day, of approximately three and a half hours. Feedback of our findings to the manager took place at the end of the visit. Numbers of children varied during the session because some attended other extra mural clubs before joining the care, and parents collected them to suit their own working patterns. There was a total of eleven children present at the busiest time of the session. Evidence for the report was gathered using the following methodology:

- we looked at the range of paperwork kept about the service – including policies and procedures, risk assessments, contracts, children’s records, accident records and safety certificates;
- we observed the children interacting with the staff team and choosing their activities;
- we spoke with the children, and
- we spoke with the PiC, deputy, staff and parents about the service.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website www.cssiw.org.uk

6. About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Out of School Care
Registered Person	Joanne Hopkins
Person in charge	Joanne Hopkins
Registered maximum number of places	40
Age range of children	Three - 12 years
Opening hours	15.00 – 17.45 during term time 08.00 – 17.30 during specific holidays
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	30 July 2014 and 8 August 2014
Dates of this inspection visit	20 March 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 <i>'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'</i> .
Additional Information: none	