



Childcare Inspection Report on

Sonic Out of School Club

**The Old School
The Highway
New Inn
Pontypool
NP4 0PH**



Date of Publication

Wednesday, 19 September 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

Sonic Out of School Club is registered to care for up to 44 children under the age of 12 and takes place in the Family Learning Centre in New Inn. It provides a before and after school childcare service for children attending New Inn Primary School. Children are escorted to and from the school on foot. The club has use of two rooms plus a kitchen and toilets within the centre. Children have sole use of the rooms during their sessions, although there are other centre staff working in office space in the building at the same time. There is a Registered Person (RP) who has overall responsibility for ensuring the service complies with legal requirements and a Person in Charge (PiC) is employed to manage the service on a day to day basis. English is the language used at the service.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Sonic Out of School club provides children with the opportunity to play, develop friendships and relax in a safe, stimulating environment. Staff are appropriately qualified, warm and responsive to the children's needs. Risk assessments are in place for school collections and the general play environment. Whilst some practices still need to be embedded within the service, leadership of the service has continued to improve ensuring that it is meeting its legal requirements and managers are motivated to ensure that the service operates smoothly and in line with National Minimum Standards.

2. Improvements

The service has increased its numbers from 40 to 44 to accommodate demand for after school child care and we were told it has addressed recommendations from the previous inspection as follows:

- reviewed how children are kept occupied during school transitions;
- improved opportunities for tasks that children can perform during snack provision;
- developed the complaint's policy so that it reflects ways in which children over eight can raise a complaint and
- ensured cover staff have staff files evidencing that all recruitment procedures are maintained.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no non compliance issues raised during this inspection and the service is meeting all of its legal responsibilities. We did discuss some recommendations which are detailed at the end of this report.

1. Well-being

Summary

The club aims to promote children's well-being and children are given opportunities to develop their confidence and independence. Children are listened to and feel secure within their surroundings and with the staff who support them. They are offered choice in their play opportunities and are encouraged to develop their social skills.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children of all ages are allowed to make choices and staff actively support this. Throughout the inspection we saw all of the children had a wide choice of activities and free play opportunities. The resources were easy for children to access which ensured their play choices were met and children were well engaged in activities of their choice. We heard children speaking and talking with staff during our observations, approaching staff confidently to chat or to ask for assistance. Staff listened and responded in a warm manner which encouraged children to engage further, explore their ideas and voice their opinions.

Children are confident to express themselves in this service and know their views will be respected.

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

Children feel safe and are happy at this service. Children are settled and there are systems in place to promote children's feelings of security and emotional well-being. We saw that staff sat with children and supported them at appropriate times. Children chatted and smiled during play which suggested they were happy and relaxed. Children seemed to know the routines of the club and were confident moving from one area to another, approaching staff and playing with their friends. Children told us that they liked attending and had friends at the club that they also knew through school.

Children are settled and have a sense of security within their surroundings and with their carers.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children at the service experience positive interactions with each other and there is a strong emphasis on friendship and co-operation. We saw that staff acted as good role models and demonstrated politeness and good manners so that children would understand expectations of social behaviour. Children were happy to adhere to rules and older children demonstrated appropriate behaviour towards one another playing together co-operatively, sharing resources and taking turns. We saw very good behaviour and staff managed this in a positive way, offering lots of praise for good behaviour. We saw that staff encouraged a buddy system so that when children needed extra support or someone to talk to they could go somewhere quiet and talk with a peer if they preferred. During one such occasion a staff member praised a child

saying “Look you made her smile!” This encouraged kindness and empathy towards others.

Children are encouraged to develop and practise appropriate behaviour and respectful social interaction.

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

Children are engaged and focussed in their chosen activities. Many children had chosen to do table top activities and were busily colouring, doing jigsaw puzzles, reading or building with construction blocks. We saw one child really enjoying making paper aeroplanes for themselves and their friends. Staff explained to us that due to the very hot weather children could play outside but had chosen to remain inside in the cool after their school day. We saw that staff were supervising children appropriately, that there were enough staff to support children’s play and attend to their needs. We saw one staff member sat with a younger child showing them how to tell the time and the child was clearly enjoying themselves, interested in their play and learning.

Children are active and find enjoyment in the play opportunities available to them.

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

Children are provided with opportunities to gain independence, develop and learn through play. At snack time children were given the role of helper and helped give out snack options to their peers. Staff supported children to wash their hands independently and find their belongings when being collected. The storage of resources enabled independent choice and the different activities such as the home corner, books and construction helped encourage children to develop different skills.

Children were encouraged to learn and practice their social skills such as sharing and listening and this will help in their general daily interactions.

2. Care and Development

Summary

This was a focused inspection to look at the well-being of children and the leadership and management of the service. Care and Development will be looked at in greater detail at the next inspection. However, staff are appropriately trained and experienced, keep children safe and healthy and develop good relationships with the children.

3. Environment

Summary

This was a focused inspection looking at well-being and leadership and management of the service. Environment will be looked at in greater detail at the next inspection. However, we found that the environment is safe, clean, spacious, light and airy with easy access to good quality, stimulating resources for children. Children have independent access to toileting facilities and have access to an outdoor play area. Although the building is a shared facility with other community groups, including a playgroup for younger children, whilst the club is in operation, the rooms available to them are for the club's sole use.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

We found that leadership and management of the provision operates within National Minimum Standards and provides a good service to children attending. Systems are in place to ensure staff are appropriately trained and supported. However we found some records needed to be streamlined and embedded to prevent duplication and to ensure that the service records were maintained separately from the communal buildings records.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leadership has ensured that there are systems in place to operate the service effectively. The service has a clear statement of purpose clarifying how the club operates. When discussing this with the PiC she was clear about the age ranges of children attending, that is, aged three upwards and stated that currently the youngest child attending was four years old. Public Liability insurance was in place, as were record keeping systems and policies and procedures to keep children safe. The PiC stated that whilst their registered numbers had increased they rarely operate at full capacity so that they know that there are a few spare places in case of emergencies. We noted that some records would benefit from a review and the PiC was open and responsive to our suggestions.

Leadership of the group is effective and ensures the service operates in line with its conditions of registration.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The service has appropriate systems in place for self evaluation and planning future improvements. An annual quality of care review is undertaken with parents, staff and children providing information and feedback. A complaints policy and procedure is in place with a complaints/suggestion box for opportunities for more anonymous feedback. We were told that accident and incident records are monitored regularly to identify any emerging risks.

There are systems in place to ensure that planning and evaluation of the service feeds into improving outcomes for children.

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

The management of staff and other resources is generally appropriately managed. We were told that staff are suitably trained and Disclosure and Barring Safety checks are in place for all staff. Staff told us that they felt supported and happy in their work. We saw that staff were well distributed on school transitions and throughout the indoor environment when children were playing. Staffing ratios were well maintained throughout the inspection. However, we have recommended that when completing registers, children are promptly signed in and that the service keeps its own staff register, in addition to signing into the building. Also that they ensure staff sign out so

that an accurate record is maintained of staff numbers. We have also discussed the need for certain procedures to be further embedded into the service, particularly the wearing of high visibility jackets when out with children as this is stated as a working practice but had not happened during our inspection.

Leadership is sufficient, although management need to ensure that all working practices and procedures are consistently adhered to by staff.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

All staff understand the importance of building and maintaining good partnerships in order to fully understand and meet the needs of the children. We heard good communication between staff and parents as children were dropped off and collected. Communication between the RP, PIC and staff is well maintained as the RP visits the service on a weekly basis. We were told that good communication is maintained with the school as children attending the club all attend New Inn Primary School and are collected by club staff every day. We have recommended that the service initiates its own visitor's records as currently it uses the buildings records. However, these may not clarify who visitors are meeting, historical records may not be easily accessible if required and the service is required to take responsibility for this information. The service has a website which further informs parents about the club.

The service seeks to provide information and build good relationships in order to deliver a good service to children and their parents.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Ensure staff use staff registers correctly and are consistent in signing themselves out;
- ensure children are signed in promptly;
- keep a visitors log for the service not just communal building and
- when supervising children outside staff need to wear high visibility jackets as stated within their procedures.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a focused inspection to look at a concern raised with CIW. An inspector undertook two unannounced visits on 12 and 17 July 2018 with feedback provided to the PiC after the inspection. Evidence for the information held within this report was gathered via:

- Discussion with the PiC and staff;
- observations of care practices, interactions between the staff and children and of the activities undertaken;
- a visual check of the premises;
- reading a selection of daily records including children's and staff registers, policies and procedures and
- speaking with children.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Out of School Care
Registered Person	John Turner
Person in charge	Christine Caddy
Registered maximum number of places	44
Age range of children	Under 12
Opening hours	7.30am – 8.50am and 3.15pm – 6pm Monday to Friday during school term time
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	27 and 28 February 2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	12 and 17 July 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:	