



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

Childcare Inspection Report on

Playworks Usk

**Usk Church in Wales Primary School
Monmouth Road
Usk
Monmouthshire
NP15 1SE**



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Description of the service

Playworks Usk was registered in September 2016 and provides an after school care service exclusively to children attending Usk Primary School. The group runs on five afternoons a week, during term time, and is registered to care for a maximum of 32 children at any one time. Children have access to the main school hall and when the main hall is in use they use two classrooms; they use the school playgrounds as well.

The service provider is Playworks Childcare Limited who employ a Person in Charge (PiC) to manage the service on a day to day basis.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy, confident and relaxed and the club provides a safe place for them to meet after school and play with friends. One of the strengths of the service is the emphasis on listening to children and ensuring they participate and have a voice. Staff are qualified and professional and we saw there were warm and caring interactions between staff and children. There is a consistent staff team who are familiar to the children. The space the club uses generally meets the physical needs of the children but does not provide a cosy, comfortable environment. The day to day management of the club was efficient and the PiC said they received good support from Playworks Childcare Ltd who operate the service.

2. Improvements

This was the first inspection of this service.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We did not identify any non compliance issues at this inspection.

We made a small number of recommendations in relation to administrative matters and these are detailed in full at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are happy, confident and relaxed. The club provides a safe place for them to play with friends after the school day.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

There are activity plans in place. These are drawn up by staff but children contribute ideas and can ask for particular games or favourite activities. Children play an active part in the running of the club and their opinions and ideas are listened to. Full implementation of the participation of the children is in the early stages for the group but one of the children proudly told us they were the vice captain of one of the three 'house' teams. The PiC described how the children had nominated the captains and vice captains and elections had been held. This had led to discussions about democracy, voting and having a voice.

The ethos of the club ensures that children's right to express themselves and make independent choices is encouraged and respected.

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

The sessions are structured around a clear routine which is understood by the children and provides a sense of security and consistency. The children we chatted to said that they enjoyed being at the club and had fun while they were there. We observed that they were familiar with the staff team and this was evident in the relaxed and informal exchanges that took place. We saw children approach staff readily if they needed anything and heard lots of laughter, banter and chat between staff and children.

Children's self esteem is promoted by good relationships with staff and their peers.

1.3 How well do children interact?

We observed children chatting and playing together and saw older children were happy to support younger children when playing team games. Politeness and good manners were encouraged and reinforced. There was a calm and positive atmosphere throughout the visit.

Children experience positive interactions and there is a strong emphasis on friendship and tolerance.

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

The plans in place incorporate a good range of activities appropriate to the age of the children attending. Children can choose from the activities on offer but the PiC said they could ask for favourite games. We saw that this was the case when a child didn't want to take part either of the planned activities and asked to do colouring which she told us

was her favourite thing to do. Outside play was part of each session which gave children an opportunity to run and play in the fresh air. Children's scrapbooks contained photos of them taking part in a wide range of activities and included some examples of their art and craft work.

Children enjoy fun, interesting and age appropriate play opportunities.

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

The ethos of the club is to enable children to make their own choices. At snack time children took turns to be a helper, handing out plates to other children. Children helped themselves to food from a buffet and poured their own drinks. Staff trust children to behave responsibly and the level of adult supervision is based on their knowledge of individual children and their abilities. This helps children to learn self help skills in a nurturing and positive environment. There was little evidence of Welsh being used during the session but the PiC was open to developing this.

Children develop confidence by having opportunities to accomplish tasks appropriate to their age and ability.

2. Care and Development

Summary

On the day we visited there was a calm and pleasant atmosphere. Staff were competent and professional and there were warm and caring interactions between staff and children. There were activity plans in place which were relevant to the age group

Our findings

2.1 How well do staff keep children safe and healthy?

There is a range of policy and procedures in place to promote children's health and well being and keep them safe. Our observations of staff practice indicated that they had a good knowledge of their role and responsibility in implementing those policies. There had been no safeguarding concerns but the process for addressing any concerns about children's well being was clearly laid out. We noted that the PiC had undertaken online training in relation to the Prevent Duty; however the policy and procedure had not been updated to incorporate this legislation.

The premises were clean and children washed hands before eating. The staff followed food hygiene procedures when preparing snacks and handling food. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and the snack provided was balanced and nutritious and children ate heartily, many going back for second helpings.

Staff promote a healthy lifestyle and have the knowledge to keep children safe.

2.2 How well do staff manage interactions?

There is a behaviour management policy in place and there are club rules and expectations around children's behaviour. We saw that staff were polite and respectful to each other, which set an example for children to follow. We heard children being praised for helping each other and being encouraged to think about other people's needs. Any incidents of unacceptable behaviour are recorded and discussed with parents and if necessary strategies are put in place to support the child and family.

Staff promote a caring environment which promotes tolerance and kindness.

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

Staff respond to individual needs and provide support to children to ensure they integrate fully into the club and are able to benefit from the play and learning opportunities provided. The main aim of the club is to provide a fun experience in a safe setting and we saw that this was achieved on the day either through staff joining in the children's play or being alongside to provide encouragement and ideas. There was a routine to the session so children could anticipate what was happening next which provided a sense of security and familiarity. Our conversations with staff and observations of their practice indicated that they had a good understanding of children's individual children's needs.

Staff provide fun activities that meet the needs of the children attending the club.

3. Environment

Summary

The club uses the school hall and when this is being used by the school they use two classrooms; they also use the school playgrounds. The hall and classrooms are functional spaces so it is difficult to create a 'cosy' atmosphere but the space was sufficient for the number of children attending. There were no hazards observed and staff were aware and vigilant in relation to safety.

Our findings

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

General risk assessments are in place along with risk assessments for specific activities, such as craft activities and physical play indoors. There are daily safety checklists in place. There were emergency evacuation plans, which were practised regularly, along with reverse evacuation plans if children were playing outside and needed to be taken indoors quickly for safety reasons. We recommended that the records of fire evacuations could be more detailed.

The accident and incident records we looked at did not raise any concerns about the safety of the premises or the supervision of children. We recommended that the format of the accident and incident records be changed to establish a clear link between accidents and risk assessments and show any follow up action taken in response. The school carries out safety checks on the building but we recommended that the provider obtain copies of any safety certificates for their own records.

Children are cared for in a safe environment.

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

There is sufficient space for the number of children the club is registered for. The club were using the hall and a classroom on the day we visited and there were sufficient tables and chairs for the children to sit in small groups for snack. Due to the fact that the school uses the hall for activities after school on some days the club does not have a permanent base. This means they cannot establish a sense of ownership of any particular space, although we saw that they did have one small display board and had put up a small portable display board in one corner of the hall. The classroom was used for children to watch a DVD but there were no comfortable chairs or cushions so children had to sit on classroom chairs. The spaces and facilities available to the club were clean and well maintained.

Children have sufficient space to move about freely but there is little in the way of comfort for them.

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

There was a good choice of toys, games and equipment, which were suitable for the age group of the children attending. The club has use of a storage cupboard for their equipment but children did not have access to this. The PiC said that they could ask for

particular games and these would be provided but this obviously restricted spontaneous choice. The DVDs children watched were suitable for the age group and parental permission was in place for the service to use DVDs with a Parental Guidance rating.

Daily safety checks and ongoing monitoring ensure that the quality of the resources and equipment is maintained.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The service complied with the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 and met the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare for 0 – 12 year olds. Day to day management of the club was good and the PiC said that regular support from Head Office was available. We identified some areas for improvement and made some recommendations which were received positively. The providers understand the value of involving children in the operation and development of the club.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The documentation and records maintained at the club were generally well kept. We found that some policies required minor amendments. Routine records such as accident forms, children's records, registers of attendance and daily checklists are maintained appropriately and are monitored by the person in charge. There was a clear aim and purpose for the club, which was to provide care and fun in a safe environment and we saw that this was met on the day. The PiC plans ahead in conjunction with the school so that the activities they plan are appropriate to the space they are using each day. The PiC leads the team but stated that she considered that a team approach was the best way to manage the service and achieve their goals. We observed that staff worked well together as a team and that roles and responsibilities were shared. Overall management of the service is the responsibility of Playworks Childcare Ltd. and there was evidence to show that they visited the club regularly to monitor and advise. The PiC confirmed that she received ongoing support from the provider.

Effective leadership ensures the service runs smoothly.

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

The service seeks the views of parents and children as part of their evaluation. We saw that there was a suggestion box where parents and children could leave comments and ideas and the PiC told us there were plans in place to introduce meetings with the children to discuss their ideas and views. The provider has an evaluation system in place that seeks formal feedback from parents and children through questionnaires. The staff we spoke to said that they were encouraged to undertake further training that would develop their skills and knowledge. Following the inspection the service provider was open to suggestions for improvement that would benefit the children and the service as a whole.

There is a complaints policy in place which includes a robust process for how children could raise a concern. We were informed that no formal complaints had been received by the setting.

There are effective procedures in place to plan for an improving service.

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

We looked at staff files and found that recruitment processes are in place with the provider undertaking checks and references prior to employment and induction processes to be followed when staff took up posts. There are records of regular supervision meetings taking place in order to monitor and support the performance of staff.

The day to day management of staff is mostly undertaken by the person in charge. The provider manages financial matters and strategic matters such as booking of places and contingency planning in the event of staff absences. There were staff rotas and attendance registers in place, which confirmed that there was sufficient staff for the number of children attending and we saw that there were sufficient staff on the day we visited which enabled the service to run smoothly. The PiC said that the staff team had stabilised following some recent changes and we saw that they worked together as a team.

Overall management of the club is effective, which benefits the children and supports forward planning.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Policies and procedures and a copy of the statement of purpose that sets out the facilities provided are available to parents when they start using the service. The provider has systems in place to ensure that they have the information they need to meet children's individual requirements. This information is held at the club but we noted that not all documentation had been signed by parents as required. Staff talk to parents when they collect their children at the end of the day and parents can contact Head Office if they have queries about any aspect of the care provided. We saw that each child had a 'learning journey' scrapbook which had photographs and examples of art and craft activities which they took home every term to share with their parents.

Effective partnerships ensure children's and parents needs are met.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Areas of non compliance identified at this inspection

None

5.3 Recommendations for improvement

We made the following recommendations.

- The use of Welsh should be promoted;
- The safeguarding policy and procedure needs to be updated to incorporate information about the Prevent Duty legislation;
- The provider should keep copies of safety checks carried out on the gas central heating system in the school along with any electrical safety certificates and dates when fire safety equipment is checked;
- The format of incident records should be developed further to ensure a full record of any follow up action;
- The format of accident records should be developed further to ensure there is a space for parents to sign the record and
- Children's information records should be signed by parents as soon as they join the club.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a scheduled inspection looking at all aspects of the service. We used the following methods to gather evidence for this report and inform our findings:

- We looked at what we already knew about the service, including any notifications of changes and the Self Assessment of Service.
- The inspection was carried out by one inspector and one visit to the service was made.
- We spoke to children and staff.
- We observed activities and interactions between the staff and the children.
- We sampled documentation and records, which included the statement of purpose, policies and procedures, records of accidents and attendance registers and staff files.
- We viewed the parts of the premises used by the children, looked at risk assessments and took account of the safety measures in place.
- Our findings were fed back to the PiC at the end of the inspection.
- A telephone discussion took place with the provider the following day and was confirmed by email the same day.

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

About the service

Type of care provided	Out of School Care
Responsible Individual	Katherine Watkins
Person in charge	Kathryn Jones
Registered maximum number of places	32
Age range of children	3 to 12 years of age
Opening hours	Monday to Friday term time only – 3.15pm to 5.45 pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	Not applicable – 1st inspection
Dates of this inspection visit	13/02/2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	No
Additional Information:	