Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Sonic Out of School Club

The Old School
The Highway
New Inn
Pontypool
NP4 0PH



Date Inspection Completed

16/07/2024

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2024.
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.

About Sonic Out of School Club

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Out of School Care
Registered Person	Christine Caddy John Turner
Registered places	44
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	12 June 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Well-being	**Good**
Care and Development	**Good**
Environment	**Good**
Leadership and Management	**Adequate**

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children make choices about how they spend their time and show enjoyment in their play and learning. They develop good relationships with their peers and are learning social skills such as sharing and turn taking. They are confident to voice their likes and dislikes.

Staff are nurturing and caring towards the children and plan suitable opportunities for children to play and learn. They engage with children well and build good relationships and understanding of children's individual needs. They implement procedures to keep children safe and healthy and manage behaviour in a calm and consistent manner.

The environment is spacious, safe, clean and has a good range of resources to engage children in play. Leaders ensure that mandatory maintenance checks are completed and emerging risks minimised.

Leadership and management of the service is effective. The Person in Charge (PIC) has recently become a Registered Person (RP) in order to take over duties from the previous RP. She is motivated to further develop the setting and is keen to make improvements to benefit children and their families, this includes improvements to record keeping, paperwork and supervisions.

Well-being — Good

Children are comfortable to make choices about how they play. They are confident to speak and express themselves and to communicate their needs. Children approach staff to chat, to ask for assistance or invite them to play. They are able to access a majority of resources independently, allowing them free choice. Children's views are listened to by staff so that their interests are reflected in their choice of resources and play equipment.

Children behave kindly and considerately towards their peers. They are learning to take turns and share during games. They readily follow instructions from staff and respectfully say please and thank you to their friends. Children play happily alongside other children or on their own. Older children interact well with one another and develop friendships. Children develop a sense of belonging as their work is displayed and celebrated in some areas of the club, whilst other crafts and colouring are taken home to share with their families. Children clearly build good relationships with staff. For example, when presenting a member of staff with a card they had made, wishing the staff member a happy holiday. Children clearly understand and appreciate the routines established by staff. For example, when staff lowered lighting levels at the end of the session, children immediately stopped what they were doing and understood it was time to tidy up and prepare themselves for school.

Children enjoy the play opportunities available to them. They are free to explore their environment and spend time on activities that interest them. They can relax and have quiet time or choose more creative activities. Children really enjoy crafting, playing pool, dressing up and playing with small world and action figures. Children concentrate for good periods of time and show real satisfaction in their play choices. For example, one child played pool on their own, expertly potting all the balls and repeating the game, clearly absorbed in the activity and enjoying themselves. Other children built castles with magnetic blocks or played table-top games.

Children have suitable opportunities to gain independence in line with their age and stage of development. They hang their own coats on pegs and organise their bags in the hall. Children wash their hands before breakfast or snack and after using the toilet. All children eat their food independently and put any remains into a recycling caddy. Some opportunities are missed at breakfast time for children to practice their independence skills as staff prepare and serve breakfast to the children.

Care and Development Good

Staff understand and implement the service's policies and procedures confidently, with a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy at all times. They implement procedures, such as recording accidents and incidents and respond to them appropriately. Staff's knowledge of safeguarding is good and they are clear about signs of abuse and their own responsibilities to report a concern themselves, should the need arise. Staff undertake daily checks to make sure the environment is safe. They complete records promptly. For example, registers are accurate and they have a clear understanding of the children they are caring for. They follow good hygiene practices, wiping up spills immediately and encouraging children to wash their hands when needed. They encourage children to develop an understanding of healthy eating habits, providing fruit for snacks and plenty of water so that children remain hydrated. Staff are clear and confident in implementing procedures regarding any food allergies or intolerances. When staff walk children to and from school, they conduct procedures in a calm well organised manner maintaining good supervision and observation of children.

Staff are kind and patient when interacting with children. They promote good manners and ensure children say 'please' and 'thank you' and act as good role models themselves. They praise and encourage children and use positive incentives, such as acknowledging good behaviour and effort with gold stars that children proudly show us. They communicate well with their colleagues so that children are supervised properly, and children's needs are met. When children request particular items for crafting activities and colouring, they listen and respond promptly speaking respectfully to children. Staff ensure children understand the routines and rules of the club so they are clear about boundaries.

As all children attend school staff do not keep developmental records of children. However, they know children well and are familiar with their individual needs and family backgrounds. They consult with children about their interests and ensure the environment is set up to meet children's needs and create fun, relaxed play and learning opportunities. They work closely with the school should children require additional support. They encourage an awareness of the world around them and promote recycling within the club.

Environment — Good

Leaders have systems and procedures in place to provide guidance to staff on how to keep the environment safe and secure for children. Staff ensure only authorised entry to the club and keep a log of any visitors. The building is owned and maintained by Torfaen County Borough Council who ensure gas and electrical certificates are up to date, and fire equipment safety tests have been completed as required. Leaders of the service liaise with the council to verify all necessary checks are in place and to report any maintenance issues to satisfy themselves the building is safe. They undertake daily visual safety checks to identify any emerging risks, and none were identified during the inspection, however written risk assessments for the environment and activities are not formalised. Fire drills are conducted with children at least each term to ensure all children know how to respond in an emergency.

The club is spacious and equipped with suitable furniture and equipment to meet children's needs. The two base rooms are well equipped for older and younger children respectively and are large, clean, well-organised and spacious. All children have easy access to toileting facilities and storage of their coats and bags, to support their independence. Whilst they do not have direct access to an outside play space, staff ensure children can access a nearby local park, adjacent play yard and green space. During school transitions and when outside staff wear high visibility jackets. When playing in the park area children are required to wear high visibility arm bands so they can be easily identified and kept safe. Leaders gain parents permissions to take children outside to the park and field and conduct safe procedures when accompanying children to and from school. However, they do not have access to children's information when not on the club premises.

There is ample play equipment to keep children engaged and interested and prevent them from becoming bored or frustrated. They have systems to monitor the club to plan improvements. For example, leaders have improved the layout of the club and reviewed and separated base rooms for older and younger children, so they are equipped with suitable activities for each age group. Resources are monitored and replaced as needed to reflect the interests of children. Resources and equipment was seen to be clean and of a good standard.

Leadership and Management — Adequate

Leadership and management of the service is effective and enables the service to operate smoothly. The RP is new to the role but also works as the PIC with day to day oversight of the service. Some improvements need to be made to record keeping elements of the service and to the reviewing of policies and procedures, but overall paperwork is completed appropriately. The Statement of Purpose and Operational Plan have been updated since the inspection to reflect the new management structure. The RP has informed us that all other issues raised and discussed during the inspection have been initiated and put into practice. This demonstrates a positive approach to continually working to improve the service.

The annual quality of care review had been completed and the Self Assessment Service Statement (SASS) was submitted as required. All recommendations from the previous Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection have been addressed, showing commitment to making positive improvements. The current report is evaluative and identifies areas for development whilst also considering the feedback from parents and children. We saw specific improvements that have been made since the last inspection and it is clear leadership and management reflect on how the service operates and how best it can meet children's needs.

Leaders ensure appropriate levels of staff have a childcare and/or playwork qualification and current Paediatric First Aid training, food hygiene and safeguarding knowledge to care for children. Staffing ratios are maintained, and they supervise children appropriately. Regular staff meetings are conducted to share information. Records demonstrate that annual appraisals with staff have been conducted. However, regular reflective one to one supervision have not been undertaken. The RP has initiated this since the inspection and states that these will be completed termly. Staff report they are happy in their role, receive the support they need to feel confident in delivering good care and are well supported by leaders.

Staff understand the importance of building good relationships with parents. They communicate verbally with parents at the beginning or end of sessions to ensure they are kept up to date with any issues about caring for individual children.

Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	**What each means**
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
Standard 24 - Safety	Ensure that children's information and contact details are easily accessible during school transitions and when undertaking activities away from the building.
Standard 24 - Safety	A risk assessment of the premises is completed at least annually and is reviewed when there are any changes to the premises or the needs of the children.

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Best Practice
Recommendation(s)
Ensure that all staff have regular one to one supervisions.
Ensure all policies and procedures are regularly reviewed, and dated to reflect current legislation and working practices.
Ensure all documentation such as staff training matrix reflects up to date information.
Promote greater opportunities during breakfast and snack times for children to practice their independence skills.

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being.
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

Was this report helpful?

We want to hear your views and experiences of reading our inspection reports. This will help us understand whether our reports provide clear and valuable information to you.

To share your views on our reports please visit the following link to complete a short survey:

- Inspection report survey

If you wish to provide general feedback about a service, please visit our Feedback surveys page.

Date Published 20/08/2024