



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

# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Bear Pak After School and Holiday Club**

**Trinity Methodist Church  
Woodland Place  
Penarth  
CF64 2EX**



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## **Description of the service**

The service is registered with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to provide out of school care for up to 50 children under the age of 12 years. The group operates as an after school club during term time and as a holiday club during school holidays from rooms within a large community church in Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan. A Responsible Individual (RI) has been nominated on behalf of the limited company to have overall responsibility for the service and a suitably qualified and experienced Person in Charge (PIC) manages the service on a day-to-day basis. This is an English language service.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children enjoy and learn from a wide range of interesting activities and experiences. They are well settled and relaxed in their surroundings and engage well with other children and their carers. Staff have good knowledge about the children's needs and provide nurturing care. The club is supported by the RI and a board of directors and staff are suitably qualified and experienced. There is a good ratio of staff to children which ensures that children's needs are consistently well met. The service offers a flexible service to working parents and offers collection services from several schools in the area. Holiday care is also provided; this inspection focused on out of school care, although we saw evidence of planning for the recent summer holiday and spoke to leaders about the operation and activities in relation to the holiday club. Some improvements are required which are outlined below.

### **2. Improvements**

The last inspection report recommended that all policies and procedures are dated for version control, which has been actioned. The 'Collection of Children' policy also needed reviewing. Whilst this has been done, further revision is now needed.

### **3. Requirements and recommendations**

The provision is meeting all of its legal requirements. Some recommendations have been made, mostly in relation to documentation and practice issues. These are specified at the end of this report.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

The out of school provision provides a good quality service for children and offers them a range of interesting and stimulating opportunities. Children are content and told us that they enjoy how they spend their time at the club. They are able to form positive relationships and are given a warm welcome. Children receive consistent and supportive care and their voice is strong within the club.

## **Our findings**

### **1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?**

Children make their own decisions about how they spend their time at the club and are able to direct their own play. They told us that they are consulted and that their suggestions about new games and resources are taken into account. We saw children initiating games and asking for support from staff when needed. We observed children and staff engaged in friendly conversations and it was clear that children are listened to and that their views are considered.

Children's voices are strong within the service. This promotes children's confidence and self-esteem.

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

Children are settled and comfortable in their surroundings. There is a busy atmosphere and children enjoy their time playing with others. We saw children laughing and running around the outside space. They were lively, engaged in their play activities and responded well when staff joined in their games. We heard staff acknowledge children's efforts and praise their achievements. For example, one member of staff joined in with a child building a big tower, she said "Well done, that's great. Let's take a photograph to show your parents tonight". Staff spoke respectfully and politely to children at all times and children were equally courteous to staff. Children told us that they liked the club and enjoyed attending. One child told us that "the club is good and I get to meet new friends".

Children are content and enjoy their time at the club. They are respected by staff and this promotes their well-being.

### **1.3 How well do children interact?**

Children are confident in their interactions with staff and their peers. Children were happy to speak with us and appeared to understand the rules and behaviour expected of them when attending the club. We saw that when children needed to be reminded or prompted regarding their behaviour, they responded appropriately and were calm, respectful and able to continue to enjoy their play. Supportive friendships between

individuals are evident and younger children are confident to ask for support when needed. Children play together cooperatively; we saw children taking turns with a skipping rope and other equipment outside. Older children were seen by younger children as role models and because children from several schools use the service, they have opportunities to form friendships with children from other schools. The PiC told us that for older children, this helps with transition to high school, as they will already know children from other primary schools in the area when they start.

Children are learning important social skills which benefit their social development.

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

Children have good opportunities to develop new skills with the play and learning experiences provided. They can also relax after their school day by reading or taking turns to play on the Wii. We saw that all children were engaged in their chosen activities, such as hunting for bugs in the plant pots outside, playing board games or undertaking craft activities. One child told us that they thought it was a “good club” with lots of things to do. The emphasis was predominately on free play but there were also adult led activities which children participated in and enjoyed, such as football outside, or painting indoors. Children enjoyed these activities and were smiling and engaged. We were told about various trips that are organised and the themes they follow for play during holiday club. Children concentrated on their games and activities together until they were completed and they valued the sense of achievement and companionship gained.

Children can influence the activities and tasks they undertake and enjoy their play. There are good opportunities for them to gain a sense of achievement in what they do.

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

Children are active and developing their all-round skills with support and encouragement from staff. Children have consistent relationships with their carers and their friends which helps them to gain confidence and overcome challenges. We saw that most children were self assured and that they valued the opportunities to self-direct their time at the club. We saw children reading, drawing, building small objects, imaginary play with dolls and some physical activities such as ball games and trying ‘bucket stilts’ if they chose. Children played alone, in pairs and in groups. Staff joined in a number of these activities which the children appeared to like as we heard them chatting away and asking staff for help. At snack time children’s independence was encouraged by children choosing whether to have a hot or cold option and collecting the food from the kitchen and tidying away their dishes afterwards.

Children have opportunities to develop independence skills.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

We found that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in providing appropriate care. They carry out their duties well to ensure children feel happy, settled and are cared for. There is an established staff group who have experience in working with children and they have opportunities for professional development in line with current standards.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

There are robust health and safety procedures in place. Most staff have paediatric first aid and food hygiene training. There are allergen/dietary requirement records, fire drill records, infection control procedures and safeguarding measures in place. We saw that fire drills were completed in excess of National Minimum Standards and recorded appropriately. We noted that the club has a food hygiene rating of 5 and that children were prompted to wash their hands before eating. There is a child protection policy in place; we recommended that information regarding the Prevent Duty be added to the safeguarding policy. This relates to the need for all child care providers to protect children from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism as part of their safeguarding duty. The RI has undertaken training in this area and informed us that they plan to introduce this training to the staff team. We noted that medication is recorded well in line with their policy and that no medication is given without written consent from parents in advance.

Staff ensure that children's health and safety is supported. This promotes children's welfare.

#### **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

There is a positive behaviour management policy in place and we saw that staff were consistent in their approach and mindful of the age and stage of development of individual children. Staff are calm and consistent in their approach to children and this encourages appropriate behaviour. We saw that they set realistic boundaries and ensured children were occupied. Staff acted as good role models by promoting positive behaviour, giving compliments for successes and efforts made. We noticed that children valued the approval of their carers and staff spoke politely and respectfully to children. Staff told us that they really enjoyed working at the club and that they felt well supported and able to support the children who attend.

Staff use positive behaviour management techniques and are consistent in their responses to children.

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

Staff support children well, giving them space and time to decide on the activities they want to follow as the focus is on self directed play and learning. Planning is flexible and led by the children. Children are able to make their own choices and we saw them move freely between the resources. On a number of occasions staff participated in activities with the children and encouraged their understanding of spelling and words through questioning and games. Individual development records are not maintained as children attend for only a couple of hours a day during term time or during school holidays, but staff we spoke to knew about children’s needs. We heard children speak to staff about their interests and about their school life and staff were aware of children’s preferences and hobbies. A parent we spoke to described the provision as a “unique service, where each child is treated as an individual”. The PiC told us that staff provide a drop off and collection service from other after school activities, which offers a very flexible service to families. We did not hear any Welsh during our visits and as such, we recommended that efforts are made to increase the use of incidental Welsh.

Staff support children’s individual needs in a positive way and offer a good selection of activities to promote their all-round development.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

The club operates from a large church in the centre of Penarth which is well used by a number of groups within the community. The building has suitable facilities to provide the service they offer although the outside space is small and there is no direct access to the outside play space or to the girls toilets, so children must always be accompanied by staff. However, children are cared for in a secure, clean, spacious indoor environment. There is a good variety of resources indoors to keep children engaged and robust risk assessments are in place to ensure the safety of children. The building is maintained to a good standard by the landlord and we were told that there is good communication with them to ensure any maintenance issues are dealt with promptly.

#### **Our findings**

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

Children are cared for in a safe, clean and secure environment. Records examined indicated that fire drills had been carried out in excess of NMS. This is because an issue arose during a previous fire drill, which meant that the PiC reviewed their practice and increased the frequency of drills, resulting in a robust procedure. We saw that records were of a good standard and they are monitored and evaluated to ensure the safe evacuation of children from the building. The service has a portable bell which they attach to the outside of the room they are using at the time. The entrance is kept locked at all times and entry is monitored by staff who ensure that the visitor's book is completed as needed. We saw excellent risk assessments, both for the building itself and for planned trips and the school pick ups, in order to identify and as far as possible eliminate any risks to children. This is reassuring as the club covers several schools in their vehicle, taxis and on foot. A number of escorts are employed to ensure children are kept safe during school runs and all children are required to wear a high visibility jacket. Daily health and safety checklists are in place as well as more detailed risk assessments for individual activities and external journeys. We could see that risk assessments were monitored and emerging risks identified and addressed. Public Liability insurance was in place and gas and electrical checks are completed by the landlord as required. The rooms are cleaned at the end of every session and the church itself also employs a cleaner. We saw that a cleaning duty rota is in place for staff to follow and this includes taking toys out of cupboards and cleaning them on an ongoing rotational basis.

Leaders and staff ensure appropriate procedures are in place to keep children safe, and management and assessment of risk is prioritised.

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

Staff set up the environment so that children feel at ease and comfortable to explore and engage in the activities and resources available. There is sufficient space and facilities to meet the needs of the children indoors. The club have made efforts to improve the outside space, but it is small for the number of children attending the club so groups of up to 16 children can go out at a time. We recommended that the outdoor

space be further developed with additional resources and ensuring that the yard area is not visible to the public. We also recommended that outside activities are organised consistently outside prior to children's arrival. A register is taken of children leaving the play area to go outside to ensure their safety. The main indoor area is spacious and we were told that staff adapt activities to ensure children have opportunities for physical play. The premises are well maintained and decorated and there is a quieter area in the alcoves within the hall so that children have the opportunity to rest and relax after their school day and undertake quieter activities such as reading if they choose.

Leaders make the best use of the available facilities to provide interesting and suitable activities to promote children's development. The outside space could be developed.

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

Leaders ensure that children have access to a good range of play and learning resources. The PiC told us that they recently purchased new resources after receiving a grant. Items were chosen by asking the children what they would like. The club is a pack away service and leaders ensure that equipment and resources are well organised in the storage available to them. Children are able to choose suitable materials for their activities which are stimulating and allow children to be imaginative, creative and follow their interests. We noticed that children used some recyclable materials such as cardboard to promote environmental awareness.

Leaders ensure that resources and equipment are well maintained and provide positive learning experiences to children.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

Leadership is based upon a sound vision about the direction of the service which is shared with all staff. We saw evidence of significant improvements since the last inspection and the RI and PiC are motivated, competent and open to new developments as a means of promoting positive outcomes to children and their families. There are effective monitoring systems in place which promote a culture of safety and planning for improvement, and partnership with parents and children is strong.

### **Our findings**

#### **4.1 How effective is leadership?**

Managers ensure that effective leadership promotes positive outcomes for children. There is a comprehensive statement of purpose which sets out the ethos of the club so that parents can make an informed choice about its suitability for their child. Records and documents are well maintained and reviewed as and when required. We saw that the attendance register was up to date and contracts included relevant information. Information about children joining the club from after school activities or being taken to other clubs is carefully checked to ensure that all children are accounted for. A flexible service is offered in order to accommodate working parents and children with extra curricular interests. We saw a staff training matrix which showed that training needs are well-managed and that renewals are scheduled as needed. We observed that the team worked together effectively and that staff understood their roles and responsibilities. We recommended minor amendments to the complaints policy and the accident/incident forms.

The service is run in an effective manner with documents and records revised and reviewed as and when required.

#### **4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?**

Secure systems are in place to monitor the quality of the setting. CSSIW received the Self Assessment Service Statement (SASS) Parts one and two as part of their annual review of the setting. This showed that questionnaires are used well to seek children's and parent's views. Staff also told us that their thoughts and ideas are regularly sought about key aspects to secure improvements and a consistent approach. We noted that the PiC has made significant improvements to the service since her appointment approximately two years ago and she remains focused on taking the service further forward.

There are effective systems in place to support service developments.

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

Roles are well defined and staff are clear about their responsibilities. We saw rotas which allocated specific duties to individuals. We observed that the team worked well together, cooperating and assisting each other to ensure that the session ran smoothly and that children's needs were prioritised. The PiC ensures staff receive regular one to one meetings as well as annual appraisals. Targets are agreed and progress is monitored and supported as needed with the aim of developing the skill base of staff. We noted that supervision and appraisal records have not been kept for the PiC, although the RI and PiC are in regular contact. We recommended that supervision for the PiC is formalised and recorded to ensure that there is a written record of opportunities to reflect on practice and to discuss any developmental needs and future strategies for improvement. The deployment of staff during the sessions is well managed to meet the specific needs of children. The system for recruiting staff is well managed and fully complies with the requirements, ensuring that children are kept safe. Managers ensure that children benefit from sufficient staffing levels and that equipment is of good quality.

Overall, management of staff and resources is good. All supervision should be formally recorded.

### **4.4 How effective are partnerships?**

The service has developed systems to promote clear communication and to establish trust. We spoke to three parents and they all had very positive things to say about the club in general and the staff. Comments included a description of how the club meets "modern life needs in a very caring environment" and "every child is treated as an individual". There is a strong sense of parents feeling that the club supports their children's well being adeptly and that additional learning needs are accommodated. The service has achieved the Vale of Glamorgan 'Quality Standards for Childcare Settings' Award in association with the Children and Young People's Partnership. We saw evidence of children's records being updated on an annual basis to ensure that information remains current.

Leaders ensure that they maintain worthwhile partnerships to maximise the benefits of the service to children.

## **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**

The following good practice recommendations were discussed:

- Ensure supervision for PiC is formalised and recorded;
- promote the use of incidental Welsh;
- ensure drinking water is consistently available for children;
- consider developing the outside area and ensure privacy outside;
- ensure outside activities are prepared in advance of children's arrival and
- minor amendments required to complaints policy and accident/incident template.

## 6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections.

- One inspector completed two visits to the service, the first of which was unannounced. In total we spent almost seven hours within the service to observe children and the care they receive. Observations were carried out indoors and outdoors to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care provided by staff;
- we reviewed information held by CSSIW, including the SASS parts one and two;
- we undertook a visual inspection of the premises;
- we spoke to a few children throughout the visits, three parents/carers and some of the staff who were present and
- we looked at a range of records including a sample of staff files, children's records and a sample of other records maintained at the setting. These included the statement of purpose, a selection of policies and procedures, accidents and incidents records and attendance registers.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website [www.cssiw.org.uk](http://www.cssiw.org.uk)

## 7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Out of School Care
Responsible Individual	Sian Lewis
Person in charge	Laura Sullivan
Registered maximum number of places	50
Age range of children	3-11 years
Opening hours	15:30–18:30 hours Monday to Friday term time 8:00–18:30 hours Monday to Friday school holidays
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	21/08/2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	07/09/2017 and 12/09/2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early year's 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:	