



Inspection Report

Howells Prep School

**Howells School
Cardiff Road
Llandaff
Cardiff
CF5 2YD**



Date Inspection Completed

28/06/2023

About Howells Prep School

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Out of School Care
Registered Provider	The Girls' Day School Trust
Registered places	70
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	17 July 2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	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.

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<u>Well-being</u>	Excellent
<u>Care and Development</u>	Excellent
<u>Environment</u>	Good
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Good

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

Summary

Children settle extremely well and have lots of fun. Their opinions and interests are highly valued. Children receive exciting opportunities and make many choices about how to spend their time at the setting.

Staff have an excellent understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They are professional, passionate about their role, and provide safe and nurturing care. Staff plan for a wide and appealing variety of activities based on children's interests.

The environment is clean, welcoming, and well organised to support children's play experiences. A good range of indoor resources promotes their all-round development.

People who run the setting are highly motivated and dedicated to delivering high quality childcare. They provide consistent encouragement and support to staff. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and robust. Parents are very complimentary of the setting and speak very highly of the staff and the care their children receive.

Children have many opportunities to make choices and decisions. They are listened to, which makes them feel safe and valued. They choose from a wide variety of exciting play experiences and are involved in activity planning. For example, children brainstormed activities they would like to take part in during the pending summer holiday club, requesting picnic lunches, bouncy castle, and nature walks.

Children are settled and very happy at the setting. They clearly enjoy being in the company of other children and form warm and affectionate relationships with staff. Children know the staff and daily routines very well, which helps them feel secure and confident in their surroundings. For example, on arriving at the club they know to wash their hands before settling down for their snack. Children receive lots of encouragement and praise from staff which enhances their well-being and self-esteem.

Children interact positively with their friends and staff. They talk freely and express their needs, asking to use the bathroom when needed and requesting more food at snack time. Children play happily alongside each other or together and share toys and resources well. For example, we saw older children cheering their friends on as they took turns to practice their netball 'shooting' skills and younger children chat contentedly as they shared a variety of art and craft materials.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play. They benefit from an excellent variety of age appropriate play and learning resources. Children are motivated to follow their own interests and sustain their play for periods suitable to their age and stage of development. We saw children persevere as they experimented with batteries and circuit equipment to operate a mini fan. Children also benefit from a range of adult led activities, such as cookery, yoga, and dance.

Children learn self-help skills and are encouraged to carry out tasks independently, which promotes their confidence. They have many opportunities to become independent. They use the bathroom and wash their hands independently and help tidy away when they have finished with an activity. Children enjoy sociable snack and mealtimes and chat easily to their friends and staff.

Care and Development**Excellent**

Staff have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. They are confident to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and know how to raise safeguarding concerns. Staff speak knowledgeably about safeguarding procedures and are aware of their individual responsibility to report concerns to children's social services if required. All staff have current training in safeguarding. Staff follow thorough hygiene procedures. For example, they clean tables before and after eating and encourage regular handwashing. A varied and nutritionally balanced healthy snack menu is in place and drinking water is always available. Staff implement robust systems to ensure children's dietary requirements are met. Staff record all incident and accidents and share this information with parents; however, records do not state the time that accidents occur.

Staff interact in a kind and caring manner with children. They are very responsive and nurturing, which means children approach them with ease. The behaviour management policy promotes positive strategies which help children to regulate their own behaviour and promote their self-esteem. We saw staff implement these strategies skilfully, using calming tones, and lots of praise to reinforce positive behaviour. Staff act as excellent role models, are respectful to each other and the children, and manage all interactions appropriately.

Staff plan an extensive range of activities and play experiences that appeal to children's interests. They gather children's ideas and suggestions of activities they would like to see offered at the setting. We saw that staff had taken on board children's ideas, with planning reflecting these activities. Staff ensure there are also many opportunities for free play where children can choose to follow their own interests. Staff promote daily active and outdoor play activities with all children.

The environment is very secure and provides ample space for children to play. People who run the setting implement effective procedures to ensure children are cared for in a safe environment. Risk assessments are undertaken for all areas of the setting and activities and staff carry out daily safety checks to eliminate potential hazards to children's safety. People who run the setting ensure routine maintenance checks for the building and appliances are undertaken. Registers record the times that children and staff are at the setting and staff maintain a log for any visitors. Regular fire drill practices ensure that staff and children are aware of how to evacuate the premises safely.

People who run the setting have worked hard to provide an inviting, child friendly and stimulating indoor environment. The afterschool club operates from the large dining hall and children have use of the school tennis and netball courts for supervised outdoor play. The club manager told us they have plans to develop an outdoor area directly off the dining hall which will enable children to free flow more easily between indoor and outdoor play. Children attending holiday club have access to the key stage one and nursery gardens, which include areas for planting and growing and forest school. Display boards which include the children's artwork celebrates their achievements and gives them a sense of pride and belonging in the club. Toys, resources, and activities are set out so children can access them with ease.

Toys and resources are clean and of good quality. There is a wide range of interesting resources for all ages of children. For example, ample stock of art and craft materials, toy vehicles and garage, range of books including some multicultural, small construction, puzzles, board games and tablets. There are a suitable number of children's toilets which are clean and hygienic.

Leadership and Management

Good

People who run the setting work hard to provide a valuable service to children and their families. There is a clear statement of purpose providing parents with accurate information about the setting and what it offers. Detailed and regularly reviewed policies and procedures aid the smooth running of the setting. The responsible individual keeps in close contact and provides valuable support to the person in charge and the staff team.

People who run the setting are responsive and plan well for improvement. They have taken action to meet most recommendations made at the last inspection in July 2017. There is a beneficial system in place for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the setting. Feedback is regularly sought from parents, staff and children and used to identify areas for improvement and development. For example, parents requested more opportunities for physical play, so activities such as football, yoga and dance have been incorporated into planning.

People who run the setting ensure staff have a current disclosure and barring service certificate (DBS). Most staff working in the setting also work in and are employed by Howells School. Therefore, information regarding staff suitability and safe recruitment is held centrally within the school digital records. The Responsible Individual has access to this system, but there is no written record to confirm all checks are complete and satisfactory. Staff told us they feel well supported by the management team and meet once a term with their line manager to review their progress and discuss any issues. We viewed records which evidence these supervision meetings; however, no formal annual appraisal is recorded.

People who run the setting ensure there are enough qualified and experienced staff to make sure children are always well cared for. Enough care staff have attained the required play work qualification, but the manager is yet to undertake this training. The Responsible Individual told us they were unaware the manager is required to hold this qualification and assured us this would be addressed promptly. All staff have up to date mandatory training such as First aid.

People who run the setting develop positive partnerships with parents. Staff keep parents well informed about their child's time at the setting providing verbal feedback at collection. Parents are very satisfied with the service the setting provide. They told us their children really enjoy coming and learn a lot at the club. Partnerships with outside agencies are established to enhance children's experiences at the club. For example, visitors are invited to the summer holiday club to carry out activities with the children such as circus skills, contemporary dance, balloon modelling and learning about reptiles.

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
27 (a)	The Registered Person has not ensured that at all times, there are enough suitably qualified staff to look after children.	Achieved

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
29 (3) (a)	The Registered Person has not ensured that all staff receive appropriate and regular supervision.	Achieved

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 13 (Day Care) - Suitable Person	Ensure the person in charge undertakes relevant play work qualification.

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)
Implement plans to develop outdoor area directly off the dining hall to enable children to flow between indoor and outdoor play.
The responsible individual should ensure there is a written record to confirm all staff checks are complete and satisfactory.
Ensure annual appraisals are undertaken separately to supervisions and maintain a written record.

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.

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