



Inspection Report

Polka Dots Childcare Afterschool

**Our Lady Of Lourdes Church Hall
Gabalfa Avenue
Gabalfa
Cardiff
CF14 2QQ**



Date Inspection Completed

04/02/2022

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About Polka Dots Childcare Afterschool

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Out of School Care
Registered Provider	Polka Dots Childcare Afterschool Ltd
Registered places	20
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	First Inspection Post registration
Is this a Flying Start 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.

Summary

Children are very happy, settled and really enjoy their time, having good fun with their friends in the afterschool club. They have lots of choice and opportunities to develop different skills and become independent. Children have grown close relationships with the staff who know them very well and understand their individual likes and dislikes.

Children are very confident to speak and share their ideas with staff who encourage and show interest in their views. Staff give good consideration to the safety matters. They understand their responsibilities to report concerns and have good knowledge of the safeguarding procedure. Children freely choose what they want to play with. Staff ensure there is a suitable selection of age appropriate, activities and resources available to keep children engaged in physical and imaginative play.

There is a good range of policies and procedures to support the running of the service which have been recently reviewed and updated. The staff work very well as a team and are managed by a dedicated, highly motivated manager. There is a very good level of staff looking after the children at all times. They work closely with parents in making decisions about their child's well-being and keep them very well informed and updated on a daily basis.

Well-being

Children feel very safe, happy and valued at the afterschool club. They confidently choose resources and make decisions about what they want to play with. They are encouraged to express their opinions and frequently approach staff to ask for anything they want. For example, some children were excited to ask staff help them set up stepping stones across the floor when playing their game of dinosaurs with lots of laughter heard when they pretended to fall into the 'lava'. The children have opportunities to decide what resources they want including new toys they would like purchased. For example, the new play dartboard and pool table bought recently for the afterschool club were chosen by the children. The children's own work and ideas are proudly displayed throughout the afterschool club including the 'upside down bins' poster designed by the children for recycling week.

Children have fun with the activities on offer at the afterschool club as there is an emphasis on following their natural curiosity and interests. For example, children laugh loudly as they look through magnifying glasses and notice how it makes their eyes look very big. They have lots of fun asking their friends if they like 'their new glasses'. They are happy to spend time chatting with each as they sort and make a 'Frozen' puzzle, offering each other pieces they may need. Children feel safe and secure as they are familiar with routine of the club. For example, they came into the club calmly after school, selected toys and activities to play with and settled immediately as they chatted to their friends and staff about their day.

Children develop positive, healthy relationships with their friends and staff and are happy to seek support when needed. For example, two children enjoyed the focused attention and advice given by a member of staff as they played their new tune on a keyboard. They were visibly delighted and proud to help a friend who asked them to teach them how to play it too. Children behave very well, are extremely polite and enjoy receiving praise from staff for good manners and being kind and helpful. The atmosphere in the club is completely calm and relaxed.

Children's self-help skills are developing very well. They often wash their own hands, tidy up after play, return their plates when they finish snack and collect their belongings at home time. They do this independently with support from the staff when needed. Children are gaining confidence in using simple Welsh words and phrases while answering simple commands.

Care and Development

Staff follow clear procedures to ensure they meet the health and safety needs of children. They are very confident in recording accidents, incidents and the administration of prescribed medication if required. Staff recognise the importance of updating their First Aid training and a suitable number of qualified first aid staff are on duty at all times. The nominated child protection person has developed a safeguarding policy for the afterschool club. She ensures the policy is kept up to date and is understood by the staff. Staff are confident in recognising signs and symptoms of abuse. For example; the two staff interviewed were able to discuss the safeguarding procedures and were clear about their duty to report any concerns with management or appropriate authorities. Most staff have up to date safeguarding training with a small number due to complete refresher training in the coming months.

The children are provided with a good range of freshly prepared, healthy snacks and drinks. Staff know the children's individual food preferences and are able to meet the needs of specific dietary requirements. During the inspection, the children enjoyed freshly prepared ham and cheese pittas with a selection of chopped up coloured peppers and water to drink. Children told us they enjoy the food at the club and they can have a say in what is offered. For example; the new healthy pitta pizza and beans on toast on the menu was chosen by the children.

The afterschool club has developed a specific COVID -19 policy, risk assessments and good procedures to protect children during the current pandemic. Good hygiene routines are in place to promote children's health, including encouraging children to wash their hands at appropriate times. Staff take regular lateral flow tests and visitors to the afterschool club complete a COVID- 19 doorstep risk assessment.

Staff work together to ensure they have a consistent approach to managing behaviour in line with the afterschool club's behaviour management policy. For example, staff praise children enthusiastically when they play co-operatively. Staff act as good role models as they are very kind and respectful towards each other and the children. Staff have a suitable understanding of individual children's needs, abilities and backgrounds. This helps them to plan age appropriate activities to keep the children interested.

Environment

People running the service ensure the environment is clean, safe and secure and provides sufficient space for children to play and learn. A range of beneficial risk assessments are in place and staff use daily checklists to support the safe, smooth and effective running of the afterschool club. We saw staff immediately identify emerging risks, for example, removing a broken wobbly log in the outdoor area before children entered in order to prevent any potential accidents. Routine maintenance checks for the building and appliances are undertaken such as safety tests on portable electrical appliances and fire prevention equipment. Regular fire evacuation drills are also undertaken. Staff ensure only authorised entry to the setting and keep a log of any visitors.

The afterschool club is based in a community church hall. Due to the age and fabric of the building, an ongoing programme of repairs are in place. For example, the manager explained the toilets and outdoor area are a focus for development over the coming months. The neighbouring property is currently having building work completed and there are access gates to the premises from the outdoor play area. The manager discussed the safety measures in place and checks they have agreed to undertake to ensure the ongoing safety of the children.

The indoor setting provides sufficient space to meet the needs of the children. They have their own space to relax, play and take part in a range of activities, which promote independence. For example, we saw children concentrating on puzzles and playing games of chess for lengthy periods. There are a suitable number of children's toilets, which are located in the entrance hall of the afterschool club. The outdoor area allows children to explore and develop their physical skills. For example, older children enjoyed playing football and younger children enjoyed using the wooden frame and logs to balance and climb. The manager discussed plans to develop this area further including the additional screening from the neighbouring property, upgrading the boundary dividers and additional outdoor resources.

Children have access to a range of suitable, well maintained and age appropriate resources, which are organised well and stored at a suitable level for easy access. For example, the older children enjoyed having independent access to a full sized keyboard, which they could use to play a variety of tunes. There is a small number of welsh and multi-cultural resources available. Covid procedures are in place, understood and implemented by staff. Staff undertake regular cleaning of toys, resources and surfaces routinely throughout the course of the after school session.

Leadership and Management

People running the after school club have a good understanding of current best practice and show a commitment to continually improve the quality of the service provided to children and parents. They have developed a good range of policies and procedures and set a clear vision for the service, making sure all staff understand and follow them. For example: they have a statement of purpose which outlines the details of the care service they offer to parents and children. When areas for improvement are brought to the manager's attention, she welcomes this advice and acts on it without delay. There is an up to date COVID 19 policy in place and procedures have been updated based on current best practice guidance.

People running the afterschool club understand the importance of having a team of well trained, confident staff and check all their mandatory training is up to date. For example, training records looked at demonstrated most staff have completed up to date mandatory training. We spoke to two members of staff who showed they had a thorough understanding of the core policies and procedures in place for the afterschool club. Staff said they feel very well supported by a management team who are available for advice, guidance or support throughout the working day. Recruitment files examined demonstrate leaders are clear about their responsibility to ensure staff are recruited safely and have the necessary qualifications and experience required to care for the children. Staff are offered some support and guidance by the management team during informal supervision and appraisals sessions.

People running the service have completed a quality of care review and the required CIW online Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) to help plan for improvement. They work in partnership with parents in order to plan for each child's individual needs and promote good outcomes for children. There is a suitable complaints policy available for parents. There are a number of good communication systems at the afterschool club including regular daily verbal feedback, phone calls, emails and displays outside the club. Parents we spoke to were very complimentary about the service they received. One commented 'Staff are very friendly and approachable and the children are extremely happy and look forward to going there.'

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

- R1. Continue with the programme of repair and redecoration to the building and outdoor areas.
- R2. Increase the availability of Welsh and multi-cultural resources.
- R3. Develop the supervision and appraisal system for staff in line with Social Care Wales best practice guidelines.

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	N/A

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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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