



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

Childcare Inspection Report on Marshfield Monkeys Playgroup

Castleton Village Hall
Marshfield Road
Marshfield
CF3 2UW



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Description of the service

The service is registered with Care and Social services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to provide full day care to 26 children. It is located in Castleton Village Hall on the outskirts of Cardiff and is open from 7:45 to 17:00 Monday to Friday. The owner of the playgroup is also the registered person and there is a person in charge who has responsibility for the day to day running of the service. This is an English language service which uses incidental Welsh throughout the sessions.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children have access to a good range of interesting learning experiences which they find stimulating. They receive care from a motivated staff team who work effectively to meet children's assessed needs. Children are well settled and make positive relationships with their carers and other children. The service is well managed by an experienced leader and her deputy. The registered person provides good support to the team and ensures that systems and processes are monitored. The environment is inviting and benefits from an attractive outdoor play area.

2. Improvements

Activity planning and feedback to parents about their children's progress is structured and children have access to water throughout the sessions.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no non-compliance issues identified at this inspection. Recommendations which relate to procedural issues are recorded at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children have opportunities to develop good skills and improved knowledge as a result of the activities and experiences provided at the playgroup. Overall, children have access to suitable resources which promote their all round development. This includes social, emotional, physical, language and creative experiences.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are encouraged to make their own decisions about how they spend their time. We saw that their play was mostly self directed and that they asked for supported when needed. We saw that children were confident to express their needs and that all attempts at communication were valued by staff. We saw children playing alone and also within small groups expressing themselves through using the wide range of creative activities available to them. Children's views are incorporated into the planning of activities which are organised to stimulate and develop their interests.

Children experience increased self confidence by learning how to express their views freely.

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

Children have positive and beneficial relationships with their key workers. We saw that children's needs were monitored closely and that emotional comfort was provided when needed. Staff sit with children during lunchtime and encouraged children to talk about their interests. We heard a child talking to a member of staff about her prospective holiday, sharing family information with a trusted adult. We noticed that each child was allocated a personal coat hook with their name and they self registered when they arrived at the playgroup. Photographs of each child were displayed alongside the date of their birthday which supports children to feel a sense of belonging to the group.

Children's emotional wellbeing is promoted by the consistency of care and support they receive.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are mostly well settled as a result of the settling in process which is guided by the needs of the child. Children are in the early stages of managing interactions and developing coping strategies to manage situations they find difficult. We saw that most children were happy to cooperate and take turns when playing with others. Staff told us that games to encourage turn taking were organised for some children when needed. We saw that children were content to share the animals with others when engaged with playing with the

farm. Some children who expressed frustrations were given the opportunity to run around and 'let off steam' in the large hall within the building.

Children benefit from the support provided to help them understand and cope with their feelings.

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

Children have opportunities to experience a wide range of interesting activities and experiences. Children told us about the visits from a local vet who had talked to them about how to care for their pets. Children described their delight with these visits and we saw photographs of them bandaging a dog which accompanied the vet. Staff told us that one child who felt frightened to be with dogs was helped to feel less nervous and had subsequently taken part in brushing the dog. Children have opportunities to develop interests and we saw that they were able to sustain concentration as they were curious to explore their environment. Children were keen to show us the tank with tadpoles and they were looking forward to seeing the development of the frog life cycle. Children engaged in imaginative play freely and we saw them moving freely to the outdoor area to play in the mud kitchen and with water pipes creatively positioned around a large tree trunk.

Children's overall development is enhanced by the quality of experiences provided.

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

Children have good opportunities to develop confidence and independence skills. They are encouraged to learn a range of self help skills to prepare them for starting school. We saw that children were supported to dress themselves and to put on their shoes, asking for support when needed. Children who attend breakfast club were expected to choose their own food, pour their drinks and butter their toast. Staff told us that children were keen to learn these new skills. We saw that older children helped younger children with opening boxes and passing food to them. We noticed that all children were taken to use the toilet facilities by the staff. We recommended that older children were given the opportunity for more independence in this area.

Children feel increased self esteem as a result of the opportunities provided to them to maximise independence.

2. Care and Development

Summary

There are effective systems and procedures in place to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to provide a service which has a positive impact of the outcomes of children in their care. All systems are regularly monitored to ensure that the health and safety of children is prioritised and that safeguarding underpins all practices.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

All staff have undertaken safeguarding training and this is regularly updated. Staff are confident to evaluate any risks and they understand the procedure to refer concerns to the appropriate agency. We recommended that all concerns should be recorded and followed up with outcomes identified. All the staff team have completed Prevent training which relates to the duty to protect children from the dangers of radicalisation. Child protection is a standard agenda item for team meetings. We saw that the service has an 'accidents at home' form which records any injuries a child has before they attend the service. We discussed the monitoring of children who are expected to attend the service but who suddenly stop attending with no explanation. We recommended that a record is kept of these children and that the information is passed on to a health or social services agency as appropriate. The registered person informed us that the Public Health Wales audit tool is used to monitor all infection risks within the service. All staff have undertaken food hygiene training and the service is registered with the Environmental Health Department and has a level five rating. We recommended that perishable items in children's lunch boxes are refrigerated. We also recommended that children wash their hands using running water rather than a communal bowl of water to avoid any infection and risks of contamination. All staff are trained to deal with specific medical conditions and are trained in first aid. We saw that accidents were regularly audited and information from these records is used to inform risk assessments. We recommended that accidents are recorded in a bound book rather than a loose leaf format to avoid loss of documents.

Staff keep children safe and well by following the rigorous procedures in place.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff work in line with the service's behaviour management policy. We saw that they were consistent in their approach and were mindful of the age and stage of development of individual children. We saw that the staff team managed unwanted behaviour by using calm tones and distracting children, kneeling down to their level as appropriate. We recommended that staff did not carry children

as this is a safety issue and does not promote children's independence. Staff acted as good role models by promoting positive behaviour, giving compliments for successes and attempts. We noticed that children valued the approval of their carers and that staff were fair in their approach, promoting honesty and open discussion.

Staff enhance the emotional development of children by promoting positive and open interactions

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

The staff team provide nurturing, responsive care which meets children's needs. We saw records which showed that the required ratios of staff to children were always adhered to. We recommended that registers included the times that children arrived and left the playgroup. We saw that key workers displayed their activity planning, that developmental targets were identified and that progress of children was monitored and recorded. Parents provided the service with information about their children to inform the baseline assessment and observations were carried out to plan next steps in children's learning. We saw that children were not expected to conform to gender or cultural stereotypes and that good attention was given to promote diverse celebrations and belief systems. We heard the Welsh language used intermittently throughout the sessions, especially during circle time. We noticed that Welsh and English were used to label resources. The French language is also promoted within the playgroup as one member of staff is French and many children have enjoyed using basic French. Children with additional learning needs are included in all aspects of play and learning and good use is made of specialist health and education services to support children as needed.

Staff assess children's needs effectively and maximise opportunities for their development.

3. Environment

Summary

The service operates from a community centre and has use of a large play room, a spacious hall, kitchen and a compact but well designed outdoor play area. The facilities are well looked after and inviting. Leaders ensure that safety is prioritised and that good use is made of the space available.

Our findings

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

Staff ensure that the playgroup is secure and that no unauthorised access is allowed. We saw that all visitors to the service were recorded. Doors and gates were locked and children were carefully supervised when they were playing outside. We saw that all unnecessary risks were eliminated and that risk assessments were in place for activities which included visits to community facilities. The person in charge told us that children enjoyed visiting a local farm and that permission was gained from parents beforehand. All children wore high visibility jackets and one staff member was responsible for every two children. The member of staff carried a first aid kit, mobile phone and anti bacterial liquid to ensure that all hazards were covered. Within the playgroup we saw that there was a fire evacuation procedure displayed and that fire drills were held monthly with any hazards encountered recorded and addressed immediately.

Managers ensure that safety is prioritised at all times to keep children safe and secure.

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

The premises provide a rich environment for play and learning. The playroom is well organised into zoned areas of learning and are accessible and well resourced. The outdoor play area is creatively designed and provides engaging activities, replicating and extending the activities offered inside. A mature beech tree at the centre of the outdoor area provided welcome shade and the trunk was fitted with water pipes which spiralled. Children were very engaged in this activity which was imaginative and fun. We saw that good use was made of the hall within the community centre which provided additional space for children's use. Tables and chairs were arranged for children to eat lunch and for active play when the weather was too wet. The trustees of the hall are responsible for its upkeep and are supportive of the playgroup. The registered person told us that the hall had been recently painted and that partitions had been erected to separate spaces.

Leaders ensure that the quality of the environment is maintained to provide a service from which children can benefit.

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

All furniture, equipment, toys and materials are suitable for children and meet their developmental needs. Child sized chairs and tables ensure that children are comfortable and relaxed when eating and engaged in play activities. All resources are of a suitable design and condition and conform to safety standards. We saw sufficient resources available for the size of the group. The person in charge told us that resources were cleaned regularly and replaced if they were broken. The registered person told us that there were plans to extend the activities available to children as two members of staff had recently attended a Sport Wales course to promote pre-school tennis. High quality equipment was donated to facilitate the activity which is intended for the summer term. We saw that good use was made of sustainable and recyclable materials with junk modelling. The theme of 'where we live' was illustrated by children making paper and cardboard models of their homes which were prominently displayed.

Leaders ensure that the quality of resources and equipment supports the development of children's skills and knowledge.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Managers have a sound vision and a sense of purpose which sustains improvements and good outcomes for children. There are well developed systems in place to monitor and evaluate all procedures. Managers provide effective support to staff who are well motivated.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

There is a clear statement of purpose in place which provides an accurate picture of the service. This document meets the requirements of standard one of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare and is regularly updated as needed and sent to CSSIW. The registered person visits the service daily and provides guidance and support to the staff group, ensuring that regulations are met. The registered person told us that she has a clear vision for the service which she has shared with staff and parents. We saw that the staff group work well as a team and that they were challenged by the registered person to work to implement a safe, inviting and stimulating service. All staff are engaged in promoting a culture of safety and we saw that there were daily safety checks in place with risk assessments displayed. The person in charge told us that risk assessments were revised regularly. We saw a staff training matrix which showed that all staff were up to date with the required training and that renewals were scheduled as needed. We saw that the service was working towards the Active Offer with regard to providing a Welsh language service as required. A number of staff had completed basic Welsh language training.

Effective leadership ensures that staff are well managed and trained to meet the needs of children.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The registered person produced the required quality of care report in autumn 2016 and sent it to CSSIW. This was a comprehensive document which was informed by questionnaires from parents using a popular software package. Children's views were gained from feedback forms which were sent home with parents. Responses were positive in all areas and any suggestions were incorporated into the development plan. Children's suggestions were considered and included their involvement with animals at the service. A decision was reached whereby the vet will be invited again accompanied by her dog. In addition the service arranged to keep tadpoles and visit the local farm to see ducks and other animals. Staff are encouraged to voice their opinions about improvements needed and make recommendations which are discussed in team meetings. Policies are discussed and reviewed in these meetings and amended

as needed. There is a complaints policy in place and no complaints have been made to the service.

There are effective systems in place to support service developments.

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

Staff told us that they felt well supported by managers at the playgroup. They were clear about their responsibilities and work cooperatively together as a team. The person in charge is supernumerary to ensure that she is able to oversee the running of the group as she is not included in the staff to child ratios. Records showed that one to one staff supervision meetings were carried out infrequently and we recommended that these meetings were arranged each half term. Supervision provides staff with time to reflect upon their roles and to receive individual feedback from the manager. As a number of staff are employed on a part time basis, they are able to cover any unplanned absences which maintains continuity and consistency for the children. We looked at staff recruitment records and found that the system was robust and that all checks were carried out to assess staff suitability to work with children before they were given a contract.

Staff are managed effectively with good systems in place. Greater emphasis needs to be given to individual staff supervision.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The play group maintains good partnerships with parents. Information is transferred to the service by parents as needed. We saw that up to date information on children's allergies were displayed prominently for staff. Appropriate training was arranged to deal with specific conditions including Epi pen administration, managing diabetes and epilepsy. All information gained from observations and planning of next steps was shared with parents. Parent consultation meetings are arranged and key workers are available to discuss any issues about children's wellbeing. Parents told us that they were very pleased with the quality of care and the facilities and activities offered to their children. Parents especially valued the 'good communication' and the 'warm and friendly environment'. We saw that photographs of children engaged in activities were taken and shared with parents. The registered person told us that Welcome Packs and some policies were sent out electronically to parents. We noted that the service maintains good links with the community and has welcomed individuals into the group as part of the theme 'people who help us'. This included visits from a doctor, a vet and fireman. Good links are also maintained with local schools and visits are arranged to prepare children for attendance.

Positive partnerships 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

- To ensure that children do not use a shared bowl of water to wash their hands to avoid passing on infections;
- for staff to avoid carrying children to promote safety and children's independence;
- to support older children to use the toilet facilities independently;
- to ensure that perishable food is stored at a safe temperature at all times;
- to provide formal one to one supervision meetings for staff more regularly and to record these meetings;
- to record any concerns appropriately, ensure that the issues are monitored and outcomes are recorded;
- to record accidents in a bound book rather than in a loose leaf format to avoid loss of documents and to aid monitoring;
- to ensure that registers of attendance include the times that children arrive and depart the service and
- to ensure that records are kept of children who stop attending the service without any explanation from parents and this information is passed on to the appropriate health or social services agency.

6. How we undertook this inspection

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

- One inspector undertook an unannounced visit to the service for four hours on the first day and six hours on the second day;
- we observed the children and the care they received throughout the sessions using our Short Observational Framework for Inspection (SOFI) tool. This enables inspectors to observe and record life from a child's perspective and captures children's engagement and the care provided;
- we made a visual check of the premises inside and outdoors;
- we spoke to a number of children, three parents, four members of staff, the person in charge and the registered person;
- we read a range of information held by CSSIW including the SASS or self assessment document and
- we looked at a wide range of records at the service. These included the statement of purpose, risk assessments, health and safety documents and the safeguarding policy. We also looked at three staff files and three children's files.

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

About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Natasha Sullivan-Dungey
Person in charge	Helen Payne
Registered maximum number of places	26
Age range of children	2-5 years
Opening hours	7:45- 17:00 Mondays to Fridays
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	10/10/2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	10/05/2017 and 12/05/2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service.
Additional Information:	