



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

Childcare Inspection Report on

Ton Tots Playgroup and Afterschool Club

**Ton Pentre Infants School
School Street
Pentre
CF41 7LS**



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Description of the service

Ton Tots Playgroup and Afterschool club is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to care for up to 16 children under the age of 12 years. The Registered Person (RP) and Person in Charge (PiC) is Jordan Clarke who has overall and day to day responsibility for the running of the service. The playgroup provision operates a morning and afternoon session, Monday to Friday term time only, and there is an Afterschool club which runs during the school term and a holiday club which runs some school holidays. This is an English speaking service with some incidental Welsh used throughout the day.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Outcomes for children are good with a variety of play and learning opportunities to promote their development. They are forming positive relationships with their peers and adults and gaining independence in readiness for more formal education. Practitioners provide responsive support and engage well with the children. There are some areas of care practice which require strengthening including a greater understanding of safeguarding processes and procedures and recording of children's progress to plan for the next stage in their development. The service operates from a building located in school grounds. The playroom is bright and provides children with a safe space for play. Leadership of the service is generally effective, although improvements are required in relation to documentation and management of practitioners.

2. Improvements

This is the first inspection post registration.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We have made recommendations and these are highlighted in the body of the report and summarised at the end.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children benefit from good interactions with practitioners and their peers and are forging strong relationships with each other. They are settled and comfortable in their surroundings and they benefit from a good range of age appropriate play and learning experiences in preparation for more formal education. Children who attend on an after school basis are well supported by practitioners and enjoy the activities available to them.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are confident to express their views and are able to direct their play and have input on the activities offered. We saw numerous examples when children were asked their opinion about what songs they would like to sing and what stories they would like to have read to them. They were able to make their own play decisions and children who didn't want to play outside were able to play indoors. At snack time they were able to select what they wanted from the snacks provided and requests for second helpings were addressed promptly by practitioners. We spoke to three children attending the afterschool club and they all said that practitioners listened to what they had to say.

Children have a voice and are confident to speak out and make their views known. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem.

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

Children are familiar with the routines of the service and are comfortable and relaxed in their environment. During the inspection the children were at ease around practitioners and enjoyed their participation in activities. Children new to the service were relaxed and approached practitioners for help when they needed it. We noted that children's artwork was displayed in the playroom which gives children a sense of ownership and belonging and over the course of both visits we observed happy children enjoying their time at the service. We saw that children were welcomed into the setting and encouraged to join in group activities throughout the day.

Children are safe, relaxed and forming good relationships with their carers.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact well and are forming positive relationships with their peers and the adults who care for them. We observed children happily participating in group activities such as circle time and water and sand play and taking turns to use resources. We saw them share resources such as pens and craft materials. During circle time the children sat together happily and at snack times there was an informal and relaxed atmosphere with children sitting nicely together at the tables to eat their food.

Children are developing an understanding of sharing and the importance of co-operation. This is an important step in preparation for more formal education.

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

Children very much enjoy the range of play opportunities provided and gain pleasure from playing alone and with other children. We observed numerous examples of children engaged in group activities together and enjoying these experiences which ranged from sand and water play, craft activities to imaginary play. During group activities such as story telling the children were eager to join in and answer questions posed by practitioners and some children were confident enough to stand up and count to 20. Other children were keen to show their understanding of Welsh words and eagerly shouted out when asked what colours and shapes were in Welsh. Children were equally as comfortable playing alone with small toys and undertaking physical activities outside in the yard. We spoke to a number of children who attend the after school club and they all told us that they had enough things to play with and enough things to maintain their interest. Older children said that they particularly liked drawing and using craft materials and this was evident as they spent a considerable length of time using different craft materials to make Easter pictures to take home at the end of the session.

Children show interest and enjoyment in the age appropriate play and learning experiences offered.

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

Children are learning important self help skills and are motivated to undertake tasks without assistance from practitioners. We observed children putting on aprons before messy play, eating independently at snack time and some pouring their drinks with help from practitioners when required. Children went to the toilet to wash their hands before snack time with prompts from adults and older children went independently to the toilet without the need for adult support or prompting. Children welcomed the opportunity to help tidy resources away and we witnessed this on a number of occasions, including children assisting practitioners to put away the outdoor play equipment before going back indoors.

Children are developing essential self help skills in preparation for full time education and they are encouraged to attempt tasks independently.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Practitioners are responsive to children's need and manage and support children effectively. In general they are aware of their role in keeping children safe but would benefit from further support to ensure that they are fully aware of all aspects of safeguarding procedures within the service. Practitioners have an understanding of children's developmental needs but observations and assessment of children could be strengthened to more consistently identify children's needs and plan for the next step in their development.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Practitioners are generally effective in ensuring children's safety and health needs are met. There is a medication policy and procedure and although the RP told us medication is rarely administered the medication forms we viewed were appropriately maintained. There are procedures in place for keeping children safe on outings and practitioners have undertaken paediatric first aid training so they are aware of how to respond should an emergency situation arise. The service is currently part of the Designed to Smile programme which educates children on good oral hygiene and is also part of the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School scheme and working towards a gold award. We saw sample menus which indicated that children are offered nutritional snack options. This was evident during our visits as a variety of fresh fruit such as bananas and apples were offered alongside toast and the option of milk and water. We witnessed regular cleaning of tables and saw that children washed their hands before snack time. The RP was not aware of the Environmental Health Infection Control Audit Tool for Day Care and we spoke to her about completing this document to ensure that the service follows best practice.

There is a safeguarding policy/procedure and a whistleblowing policy and the RP/PiC is the designated safeguarding officer for the service. Practitioners have undertaken safeguarding training but when we discussed their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding some were not fully assured of their role in terms of recording information, the whistleblowing policy and the different ways in which they can report concerns. We also noted that there were no pre-existing injury forms and we discussed these matters with the RP.

Overall, practitioners support children health and safety needs effectively. However, safeguarding procedures need to be revisited to ensure that practitioners are fully confident in their responsibility regarding the child protection process.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Practitioners manage children's behaviour effectively. We viewed the behaviour management policy and saw that the strategies outlined were appropriate for the age and stage of development of children who attend the service. Practitioners encouraged good manners by speaking to children politely and with respect and we heard praise used effectively to promote children's self esteem. During circle time children's achievements and efforts were recognised and they received applause for answering questions. We witnessed no unwanted behaviour as children played nicely together and shared resources appropriately.

Practitioners are effective in supporting children by acting as good role models and providing consistent care.

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

Overall practitioners support children's play and learning needs well, although recording of assessments and observations of children could be more consistent and detailed. We saw that there was appropriate short and medium planning for a variety of activities in line with the Foundation Phase and a good balance of adult led and self directed play to ensure that children had a selection of age appropriate and stimulating activities to promote their development. The adult led activities such as circle time were well planned out and open questions were used well to engage the children and extend their learning and understanding of colours, shapes and the Welsh language. Although the service does not provide the 'Active Offer' in relation to the Welsh language we heard simple terms and phrases used during our visit to familiarise children with basic Welsh words.

We witnessed practitioners use their time effectively to support children, sitting alongside the children during table top activities and during outside sand play they encouraged children to use different objects to make the sand activity varied and interesting. They ensured that children have regular outdoor play experiences to promote their physical development and many children enjoyed the ride on equipment which promoted their balance and co-ordination. We looked at a number of developmental records and found that observations and assessments of children had been completed but in some instances there were periods of time between observations and although next steps were identified there was no consistency. We discussed this matter with the RP and she agreed to review the system for recording children's progress with practitioners.

Practitioners support children's play and learning needs well providing them with a good selection of play opportunities to extend their all round development. A review of how observations are conducted and recorded would be beneficial to ensure that children's individual needs are clearly identified and supported.

3. Environment

Summary

The environment is bright with good natural light and is well maintained. The building which is located on school grounds provides sufficient space for play and learning and children benefit from a small outdoor area for physical play. Resources and equipment are well maintained, of a good quality and suitable for the current age range of children who attend the service.

Our findings

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

The leaders ensure that the environment is safe for children as appropriate policies and procedures have been implemented. We saw that there were written risk assessments, fire drills had been conducted at regular intervals and smoke alarm tests had been carried out. A wall mounted fire blanket was evident in the kitchen and safety appliance checks were up to date. Accident records had been completed and the nature of these accidents was typical of the age of children who attend the service and did not raise any concerns around the safety of the premises. However, records should be regularly audited to ensure that any patterns of accidents are identified and issues resolved. We saw that daily checks are conducted by the team to ensure that the environment is safe for children.

The environment is safe for the care of children and safety checks are conducted on a regular basis. An audit of accident records should be considered.

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

Leaders ensure that the environment is suitable for the children who attend the service. There is one playroom which offers sufficient space for play activities with zoned area for activities such as construction, messy play and role play. The two toilets were tidy and there was a wall mounted nappy changing station. There was limited space in the small kitchen preparation area but we found it to be clean and fridge temperature checks are regularly conducted to ensure the safe storage of food products. There were bright, colourful walls displays which made the play room inviting. Externally the service has use of a small section of the school yard which has been designated for their use and in good weather the schools sensory garden is also utilised. Toys and resources are stored at low level so children are able to access them easily which promotes their independence.

Leaders ensure that the environment is maintained to a good standard.

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

Leaders provide good quality resources and equipment for children who attend the service. A good selection of books including some Welsh books was evident and there were cultural resources such as small world figures. Any damaged equipment is

removed and we saw records which indicated this. There was a varied selection of resources and play materials including wooden blocks, stickle bricks, DVDs which were age appropriate, sand and water trays, dressing up costumes as wells as puzzles and craft materials all of which were well maintained. Outdoor equipment is stored in a school shed and is suitable for the age range of children who attend the service. Children we spoke to stated that they felt there were enough resources for them.

Leaders provide children with a good selection of equipment and resources to meet their play and learning needs.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

This is the first inspection post registration and we found that some aspects of the service are well run, but to ensure consistency improvements are required in other areas. For example; the management of the staff team needs to be reviewed to ensure that more formal supervision and team meetings are conducted. We found that the RP was very receptive to our feedback and eager to improve and develop her service.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

In general the leadership is effective. There is a Statement of Purpose which outlines the service and the facilities offered so that parents can make an informed choice about its suitability for their child. The contracts viewed contained all necessary information including parent consent for emergency medical treatment. The public liability insurance was up to date and the Operational Plan outlined the organisational structure. There was a well organised policy file with a good selection of written policies in place covering areas such as complaints, inclusion and lost and uncollected child. Times of children's arrival and departure are recorded. Practitioners times were recorded for the start and end of the day but we recommended to the RP that practitioners should always record when they leave the building for their lunch break to ensure that there is a clear record of personnel on the premises for safety reasons and to evidence that the adult : child ratio is maintained.

Overall, the leadership is effective. Some changes to procedures should be considered.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The RP is aware of her responsibility to evaluate her service and plan for future development. As a newly registered service there is no current SASS (Self Assessment of Service Statement) and no Review of Quality of Care report. We spoke to the RP about her obligations in these areas and she told us that she is currently in the process of looking at ways of gathering parents and children's views as part of the review process and questionnaires will be forwarded to parents prior to a report being produced.

The leader recognises her responsibility to review and evaluate her service and the importance of consulting with parents and children as part of this process.

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

The management of the service needs to be reviewed and strengthened in some areas. We found that practitioners were suitably qualified and Disclosure and Service Barring (DBS) checks for the team were up to date. Key training has been completed in relation to areas such as child protection, food safety and as mentioned earlier in the report, paediatric first aid. We spoke to the RP around supervision of practitioners

and she told us that informal discussions are held, but no formal records have been maintained. Similarly the team has informal discussions around issues relating to the service but no formal records have been kept. We spoke to practitioners and they confirmed that discussions do take place. We spoke to the RP about ensuring that formal supervision and team meetings are recorded so that individual practitioners can discuss issues relating to their practice and development and the team can explore matters relating to the service as a whole. She agreed to ensure that supervision sessions and team meetings are recorded and regularised. Staff files showed that DBS checks, identification checks, health declarations and references had been taken up as part of the pre-employment process but information on employees' employment history was not kept in the file. We therefore recommended to the RP that this information should be maintained in the staff file alongside all other pre-employment checks.

In general the management of the service is effective but improvements should be made with regard to supervision of practitioners, the implementation of formal team meetings and staff files.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Partnerships are developing with parents and children who use the service. Parents can have access to policies and procedures but there is no formal system in place to ensure that all parents have seen key policies. The RP told us that this is an area that she intends to strengthen and is considering an information pack for parents. In relation to day to day issues parents are informed of their child's routines via telephone conversations, text messages and face to face which was confirmed by parents we spoke to during the inspection. Due to the restrictions on space there is no dedicated office for private conversations but the service can sometimes utilise a conservatory when not in use by the school. We spoke to 10 parents over the course of our two day visit. All were very complimentary about the service, practitioners and the care their children receive. One parent stated the service was *'brilliant.'* Others commented that the practitioners were approachable, gave feedback about their child's development including their work books being sent home, whilst another stated that the service was *'amazing, nothing negative to say.'*

The leader and practitioners are forming appropriate relationships and partnerships with parents.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Complete the Environment Health Infection Control Audit Tool;
- audit accident records on a regular basis;
- introduce pre-existing injuries forms to ensure that concerns about children's welfare are documented ;
- further development of observations and assessments of children to identify their specific needs and plan for their next steps;
- ensure that practitioners record all times when they leave the building;
- ensure that information on practitioners' employment history is recorded in the staff files along with all other pre-employment checks;
- introduce formal records for individual supervision and
- formally record team meetings so that key policies and procedures such as safeguarding can be discussed with practitioners to ensure that they are fully aware of processes and procedures.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a post registration inspection conducted by one inspector over the course of two days which took approximately six hours. We also considered concerns received by CIW. As part of the inspection process we:

- Spoke to the RP/PiC, practitioners, children and 10 parents;
- observed care practice and interactions between practitioners and children and completed an observation using the Short Observation Framework for Inspection (SOFI) Tool which captures evidence of children's engagement and the care being provided;
- completed a visual inspection of the premise;
- review a number of key documents and records including the policy file, development records and safety records and
- considered information held by CIW.

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

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Jordan Clarke
Person in charge	Jordan Clarke
Registered maximum number of places	16
Age range of children	2 – 7 years
Opening hours	9.00 – 17.00 Playgroup session - AM Playgroup session - PM After School Club - 3.00pm until 5.00pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	First inspection post registration
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	20/03/2018 and 22/03/2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years 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 'More Than Just Words follow up strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.'
Additional Information:	