



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

Childcare Inspection Report on

Pobl Bach South Wales CIC

**Flying Start Sirhowy Hub
Former Sirhowy Infants School Site
Rear of Rhoslan
Sirhowy
NP22 4PE**

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



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Description of the service

Pobl Bach South Wales CIC was registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in September 2017 to provide full day care for 25 children aged two to five years old. The company operates from Sirhowy Flying Start 'Hub' in Tredegar and works in partnership with Blaenau Gwent Flying Start. The service offers places to children funded privately or through Flying Start. They offer a morning or afternoon session (9:15am-11:45am or 1:00pm-3:30pm) as well as a breakfast and lunch club during term time and a holiday club (9:00am-3:00pm). There are two company directors, Catherine Jenkins and Emma Sheehy, who are the Responsible Individuals (RIs) as well as the Persons in Charge (PiCs) on a daily basis. This is a bilingual setting with English and Welsh used interchangeably.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are well settled and enjoy their time at this service which offers a good variety of activities to support children's learning and development. Staff have a good understanding of the individual needs of children they care for and safeguarding is prioritised. The environment is clean and well-maintained as well as being well-resourced both inside and outdoors. Some of the management systems need attention to ensure that they meet the requirements and provide the information needed. The RIs are proactive and provided reassurance that all recommendations will be acted upon. Parents told us that they are very happy with the service and that their children are developing as a result of attending.

2. Improvements

This is the first inspection of the service.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We identified an issue of non-compliance in line with the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 (Regulation 31 - Provision of Information). This is because they failed to notify CIW of a significant event in relation to staffing. As this did not have any impact on children, we have not issued a non compliance notice on this occasion.

Best practice recommendations are outlined within the report and summarised at the end.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children enjoy and learn from a good range of stimulating activities and experiences, with an emphasis on free choice. They are settled and at ease in their surroundings and engage well with peers and staff. Children show clear satisfaction about how they spend their time at the service. They are able to form positive relationships and are made to feel welcome. Children receive consistent and supportive care.

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 they were confident to move around the room trying different things, asking for support when needed. Children's self-expression is encouraged and conversations are extended through staff showing interest and giving positive responses. The Welsh language is used extensively throughout sessions and a number of children are able to use some Welsh with confidence. We heard several examples of children being asked what they wanted to do, such as a member of staff asking "Would you like to come to do some planting?" and asking a child if they would like to chose the next song to sing.

Children's opinions are listened to and valued.

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

Children are familiar with the routine of the service which gives them a sense of security and belonging. Their achievements are celebrated and we saw lots of smiles and heard laughter and positive words. We heard children calling staff members by their name and one child who was a little unsettled went straight to staff for comfort and reassurance, which soothed them. It was clear that children have formed good attachments with those who care for them. We noted that children's work was displayed around the room, which shows them that they are valued and gives them a sense of ownership and belonging.

Children feel safe and are happy at this service which values and promotes them as individuals.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Most children interact and co-operate well with peers and staff, and they are learning to express what they need. We saw examples of children forming positive friendships and there was an emphasis on sharing. When two children received praise for taking

turns during a game, the children proudly showed each other which sticker they chose as a reward and went off to play something else together. During snack time children waited patiently for their food while they talked about what they were going to have and what they had done so far that day. While children were playing alone, they seemed happy and were soon joined by other children. Children were inquisitive and confident to approach us. For example, one child asked what we were doing there and then asked if we would like to play with them, saying “Come on then, come into my house” and then ‘cooked’ various ‘food’ for us while describing each item! Another child told us “These are all my friends”, pointing to the other children.

Stimulating child led activities encourage cooperation and the development of self expression.

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

Children have opportunities to develop new skills with the range of play and learning experiences provided. We found that most children are curious and engaged learners who value the opportunity to explore the environment, either individually or in groups led by staff. The emphasis was predominately on free play but there were also structured, adult led activities which children participated in and enjoyed. Free flowing play into the garden allowed children to be playing outside in the mud kitchen or on the bikes for example, or inside doing arts and crafts with their key worker. The play opportunities ranged from water and sand play, play dough, exploring for mini beasts or puzzles, all of which children were seen to enjoy. They were keen to be involved in the stories and songs and clapped and joined in the actions.

Children’s overall development is enhanced by the quality of play experiences offered.

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

Children are motivated to freely choose and direct their own play. We saw that they were familiar with the routine so they knew what to expect and anticipated returning to activities which give them pleasure. They showed initiative to finish tasks as they valued the sense of completion and satisfaction which followed. We found that most children make good progress and are confident to try out new experiences and gain a sense of pride from their achievements. They are also in the process of developing new self-help skills. For example, children showed satisfaction with choosing and serving their own snack and helping to pour their own drinks. Children also used the toilet and washed their hands independently, asking for support if needed.

Children’s self esteem is promoted with the availability of these opportunities for self development.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in providing appropriate care and they carry out their duties well to ensure children feel happy and settled. There is a well established staff group who have opportunities to ensure their professional knowledge is in line with current standards. Effective systems ensure that safeguarding and the health and safety of the children is considered.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

There are systems in place which promote the health and safety of children. Staff are trained to follow safeguarding procedures and discussions with staff demonstrated that they have the knowledge and skills to make referrals to the appropriate agency when needed, and that they are aware of their responsibilities under the Prevent Duty regarding radicalisation. Clear records of concerns are kept and regularly reviewed to establish any patterns. Incident, accident and existing injury records are maintained, although we recommended that these records are routinely summarised and evaluated to establish any trends which might occur. The sample of accident and incident records viewed were typical for the age and stage of development of the children. All staff have attended paediatric first aid training. The service is registered with the Information Commissioners Office as part of their information security duties. We noted that the service supports healthy eating initiatives such as the Healthy Sustainable Preschool Initiative and a Healthy Snack Award. We observed nutritious snacks, fresh drinking water and milk being provided at snack time, but we recommended that fresh drinking water is also made available throughout the session for children to help themselves. This was rectified during the inspection and leaders told us that this was an oversight that day as this was ordinarily done. We saw that regular opportunities for children to wash hands were embedded into the daily routines and children engage well with these practices. Good oral hygiene was also practised as part of the Designed to Smile programme and staff made this a fun experience in order to engage the children.

Children are kept healthy and safe as a result of the effective procedures implemented.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff follow the service's behaviour management policy which outlines the importance of positive and effective behaviour management strategies to promote children's welfare. They consistently and respectfully interacted with the children in a calm and gentle manner and were models of good behaviour. We heard staff using soft tones and friendly language which helped to build successful, trusting relationships with

children. For example, a child was stomping around playing dinosaurs with a member of staff and the child bumped into another child. The staff member said “Let’s look with our eyes and be careful as we’re friendly dinosaurs aren’t we?” When both children responded well, they were praised and the play continued. We saw staff distracting children who showed any unwanted behaviour and engaging them in alternative activities of their choice, which stopped any escalation. Staff also promoted positive behaviour by giving praise and encouragement to children and responding with fairness. Our SOFI observation demonstrated staff actively listening to children and showing respect for their opinions.

Children’s emotional development is enhanced by the positive interactions they experience with practitioners.

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

Staff are nurturing and supportive of children and work closely with parents to understand children’s individual needs. We were told that key workers are responsible for ensuring that information is kept up to date and closely monitoring children’s development and progress. We saw examples of observations being regularly carried out, including detailed observations upon entry, when a child leaves the service and when they transition to school. We were told that an Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator is in place to co-ordinate support for any children needing extra support, which includes compiling an individual play plan, subsequent reviews and liaison with Blaenau Gwent Additional Needs Sub-Group. A parent told us that a specific plan was put into place to support their child in an area they was struggling with and she described the progress her child has made since they first started. Another parent told us that the key worker system works well and that they have regular updates on their child’s development. Children are supported to learn about the differences and similarities of individuals from different cultures. Resources including multi cultural dolls and books were available, promoting children’s knowledge of diversity. We were told that they enjoy celebrating festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year along with the Christian festivals. Staff ensured that children had opportunities for physical activity, both indoor and outdoor. We saw children enjoying dancing and playing inside and running around outside, playing with the equipment and with wheeled toys. We saw staff using the equipment alongside the children to encourage their play and learning. Children thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to put on appropriate wet weather gear and jump in the muddy puddles outside!

Children’s developmental needs are well met by staff who are skilled and well trained.

3. Environment

Summary

The environment is safe, welcoming and well maintained. The service operates from a Flying Start centre and is fitted with good quality furnishings and resources. Leaders and staff make good use of the well designed space available, ensuring that health and safety considerations are considered.

Our findings

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

Staff ensure that the building is secure and that no unauthorised access is allowed. We saw that all visitors to the service are recorded. Doors and gates were locked and children were carefully supervised when they were playing outside. Although registers of attendance were consistently kept, we recommended that times of arrival and departure also be included. This was actioned following the inspection. A risk assessment checklist is carried out daily and checklists of staff duties were on display, identifying individual responsibilities for maintaining the cleanliness and safety of the environment. We were told that a cleaner is also employed for the building as a whole. We saw that fire safety procedures were in place and fire drills had been carried out at approximately three monthly intervals. However, we recommended that the names of all those taking part in the drills are recorded and that practice is reviewed to include a complete run through of what they would do in the event of a fire. We saw that a gas safety check had been completed. We noted that the Public Health Wales audit tool was used to monitor infection prevention and control and leaders were aware that their audit is due for review in October 2018.

Children are kept safe within the environment which is secure and well maintained.

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

A rich, welcoming environment is provided for children's care and learning. We found that activities were well organised and presented in line with the Foundation Phase seven areas of learning, ensuring opportunities to extend children's skills and experiences. Both the base room and outdoor facilities were seen to be inviting and stimulating. The outdoor space was used during each session, accessed from large sliding doors in the main play room. Children were free to come in and out as they wished for a large part of the session and were encouraged to come in ready for a snack. We noted that signs and notices on display were bilingual or Welsh only, which encourages recognition and use of the Welsh language. Purpose built children's toilets were easily accessible to encourage independence. We noted plenty of space

for confidential conversations between staff or with parents if needed as there are other rooms in the building not utilised by the service.

The quality of the environment provides good learning opportunities and experiences for children.

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

Leaders ensure that all furniture, equipment, toys and materials are suitable for the needs of children. Child sized chairs and tables ensured that children were comfortable and at ease when playing. We saw a varied supply of accessible, age appropriate resources available to support the Foundation Phase learning aims. Children were familiar with and confident to use the resources which were stored at low level and clearly labelled to help children identify the contents. We noted that resources were clean and well maintained. Children and staff used low level tables and chairs at meal times which encouraged social interaction. We saw a wide range of toys, games and dressing up materials which were well used by the children. There was also a good range of activities including puzzles, sensory toys, a home corner, construction toys and creative resources which the children were seen to enjoy using. The outside area also provided lovely play and learning opportunities, including a mud kitchen, chalk boards, play houses and equipment to encourage physical activities.

Children's learning experiences are enhanced by the wide range of resources and equipment available to them.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

We found that the service has developed a number of policies and procedures to help them manage their business and monitor quality. However, we found that there have been some challenges for all staff whilst the service establishes itself, which has impacted on the quality of some elements within this theme. We have identified these as areas for improvement. The two RIs have a solid working relationship and they are keen to develop the service offered to children. Staff told us that they feel supported and partnership with parents is very strong.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leaders have ideas for the development of the service and their vision is shared in a clear statement of purpose which gives an accurate picture of the service provided. We noticed that the document was missing a telephone number, which was rectified immediately. We saw that information was available in various formats, such as an information pack for parents, face to face conversations, notice boards, daily diary sheets, newsletters and open evenings. We examined a sample of children's contracts and found that the majority were fully completed, although we recommended that care is taken to ensure that no information is missed. We found that most policies and procedures contain appropriate information but on occasion they refer to a previous service run by the provider. These should be amended to avoid confusion. We saw that the staff group work well as a team and staff we spoke to told us that they feel supported in their roles and that their opinions are always considered. They confirmed what leaders told us regarding an unsettled period recently whereby some staffing changes were made and they told us clearly that they feel it was managed professionally and fairly, with assistance from a Human Resources company. Although we feel that this had some impact on staff and some aspects of leadership and management, the issues are recognised by the RIs and we do not feel that this had an impact on children. We have therefore not issued a non compliance notice on this occasion. We saw that staff training is kept up-to-date and renewals are scheduled as needed. We saw that the service was working towards the Active Offer with regard to providing a Welsh language service as required.

Areas that require improvement are recognised and there is a determination to continue to develop working practices so that children receive good quality care within an evolving service.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The service has systems in place for self evaluation, plans for future improvements and they are open to suggestions on how these systems can be developed further. They confirmed that they are aware of the need to complete a quality of care review at the end of their first year of registration, to include the views of children, parents and staff. We had sight of an Operational Plan for the service and recommended that it should be dated and include an action plan. This was actioned immediately following the inspection. We were told that the service has not received any complaints since registering, although they have a system in place for it should the need arise. We were also told that the service completes the 'Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale' (ECERS) and 'Infant Childhood Environment Rating Scale' (ITTERS) to promote quality improvement devised with support from the Education Achievement Service. Records indicated and staff confirmed that they have opportunity to contribute to planning and ideas for service development.

Leaders are aware of their responsibility to evaluate and plan for improvement to ensure that children experience a developing service.

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

The service benefits from highly qualified and suitably experienced members of staff. Staff files and information retained at the nursery shows that suitability checks are undertaken prior to each person starting employment. However, we identified that job descriptions were not on staff files. The RIs explained that staff had all received their job descriptions, but copies had not been retained on file. This was rectified following the inspection and a copy was sent to CIW. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks were all in place as required. Staff told us that a variety of training is available to them and they are encouraged to continue with their professional development. Staff also told us that there is an open door approach and constant communication with leaders. Staff told us that they regularly discuss any issues they have with their managers and that they are confident to ask for advice. However, formal supervision has not been done this year as yet due to some human resources issues they faced, as outlined above. We recommended that supervision is formalised and held regularly going forward. We noted that staff meetings have been held, but records were sporadic so we discussed the need for these to be more consistent. A wraparound service is offered for children attending a local school. Currently one member of staff is responsible for school transportation: leaders agreed that they need to consider a back-up plan if the staff member is unavailable. Similarly, there is no deputy person in charge currently. Although there are two RIs who are also both PiCs, we recommended that they consider appointing a deputy as required by National Minimum Standards. We observed that the team worked well together, assisting each

other to ensure that the sessions ran smoothly and that children's needs were prioritised.

Effective management of practitioners and resources ensure that children receive a good quality, responsive service. Some improvements are required.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The service has developed systems to promote clear communication and to establish trust. Parents told us that they are kept updated and encouraged to be active partners in their child's development and learning. One parent commented that she will be very disappointed when her child leaves the service to start school. We were told that leaders organise regular 'Parent and Children Together' (PACT) events and parents evenings. Key workers use information provided by parents and professionals to plan initial sessions, engage with the child and to ease the settling in process. There was evidence of the service having good links with education, providing good support for children with additional learning needs and contact with Flying Start colleagues is consistent.

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. This is the first inspection since registration.

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

The following practice recommendations were discussed:

- Ensure that CIW are notified of any significant events going forward;
- ensure accidents and incidents are regularly evaluated to establish any patterns that might occur;
- review the fire drill procedures to ensure children experience a full practice and include names of children participating in fire drills in their records;
- ensure staff supervision sessions and staff meetings are held consistently and recorded;
- consider employing a deputy person in charge;
- consider utilising an additional member of staff to carry out school runs;
- ensure children's contracts consistently include all required information and
- all documentation should accurately reflect the setting's name and not contain information relating to a previous service operated by the provider.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full, post registration inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of Inspections. We also considered an anonymous concern raised with us prior to the inspection, and were satisfied with our findings.

- One inspector completed one unannounced visit to the service. In total we spent seven hours at the service to observe children and the care they receive. Feedback was provided to both RIs by telephone. Observations were carried out indoors and outdoors and our SOFI 2 tool was used to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care provided by staff;
- we reviewed information held by CIW;
- we undertook a visual inspection of the premises;
- we spoke to a children, staff and six parents throughout the day and
- we looked at a range of records including staff files, children's records and a sample of other records maintained at the setting. These included the Statement of Purpose, some policies and procedures, attendance registers and the visitors' log book.

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
Responsible Individual	Catherine Jenkins Emma Sheehy
Person in charge	Emma Sheehy Catherine Jenkins
Registered maximum number of places	25
Age range of children	2-5 years
Opening hours	8.15-9.15am – Breakfast club 9.15-11.45am – Morning session 12.00-1.00pm – Lunch club 1.00-3.30pm Afternoon session Holiday club also available according to demand
Operating Language of the service	Both
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	This is the first inspection since registration
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	16 March 2018 and feedback via telephone on 23 March 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Service offers a combination of Flying Start and private places
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 is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and operates as a bilingual 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: None	