



Childcare Inspection Report on

Penygarn Under Fives and After School Club

**Penygarn ICC
Penygarn community School
Penygarn Road
Pontypool
NP4 8JR**



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Description of the service

Penygarn Under Fives and After School Club provides day care for up to 24 children aged between two and five years. The service is based in a dedicated classroom within Penygarn Integrated Children's Centre, which is situated in the grounds of Penygarn Community Primary School. The playgroup works in partnership with Flying Start to provide morning and afternoon sessions, as well as wrap around care for children attending the school nursery. The Registered Person (RP), Isobel Yacomen, has overall responsibility for the service and works closely with a small management team; there is a Person in Charge (PiC) who manages the setting on a day to day basis. English is the main language of the group with good use of incidental Welsh to promote children's learning.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

The playgroup effectively promotes children's well-being and development. Children are able to take part in a very good range of interesting and engaging activities, both indoors and outside. Children can easily access a very good range of resources and make decisions about their play. There are very good systems in place to ensure these activities and resources are continually reviewed and developed to meet the changing needs of the children. Children are able to form warm and secure relationships with the staff who know them well and provide skilful support. Parents feel their children are making good progress and are happy with the care they receive. Staff are motivated, keen to develop their professional skills and are valued by the RP. There is an ethos of continuous evaluation and improvement to ensure the service develops and experiences for children are positive.

2. Improvements

- Welsh is firmly embedded within the sessions;
- story sessions take place with small groups of children to better meet their needs;
- staff have continued to attend training to develop their professional knowledge and practice and
- effective systems have been introduced to evaluate the different play areas and resources to ensure they meet the children's changing interests and needs.

3. Requirements and recommendations

The service is compliant with the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 (regulations) and so we have not made any requirements as a result of this inspection.

We made two good practice recommendations in order to help develop the service. These are discussed in the body of the report and summarised towards the end.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children's well-being is effectively promoted and they are active, happy and involved in their play. They are able to build warm and nurturing relationships with staff and their views and feelings are valued which helps them feel secure and confident. They are excited to take part in the activities provided and can make lots of choices about what they do. They are successfully learning to manage their behaviour and become independent learners.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children can make choices and decisions about their play. Sessions are suitably structured so children can determine their own play and choose their own resources for the majority of the time. The door to the outside play area is open for almost the whole of the session and we saw children moving easily between the indoors and the outside. Staff worked closely with the children to extend their opportunities to make their own decisions. For example we heard staff asking the children which colour apron they would like, which way round they would like to hang their paper ready to paint and which song they would like to sing during circle time. During snack time children could choose where they sat and select from a range of fruits, with water or milk to drink.

Children are empowered to make their own choices and decisions about their play and resources and these are valued by staff.

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

Children are happy and excited to take part in the activities and are well supported by staff which helps them feel secure and settled. Most came into the group confidently and all were greeted individually by staff. Those who were finding it hard to separate from their parents/carers were given extra support and cuddles by staff. One child felt more secure to keep their coat and bag on and staff respected their wishes. Staff told us children are supported to settle into the group at their own pace and parents we spoke with felt their child had settled well and were gaining in confidence. Children are able to build up close relationships with their key worker and staff observe closely to make sure each child is matched to the right staff member for them. Children are shown lots of attention and receive smiles and words of encouragement from staff, and staff openly celebrate their achievements. For example, two children had spent some time together building a tower. The member of staff praised them for working "so *well together*" and celebrated with them by taking a photograph. Children are proud to

show staff their 'work' and enjoyed receiving positive comments such as *"Look at all that work you did! It's very colourful!"*

There are coat hooks for each child with their photograph and their work is displayed so they can see it easily. This helps them feel a sense of belonging and that they are valued. Parents we spoke with said they feel their child enjoys attending the playgroup and has begun to make friends.

Children feel secure and valued and are happy and settled at the service.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are learning to share, socialise, and manage their own behaviour successfully with gentle guidance and support from staff. They are learning about the need to follow rules. For example, one child left the table after snack before they had finished eating. They listened to the member of staff gently explain why they needed to sit down to finish their food and followed their suggestion happily. Children respond well to staff modelling the appropriate behaviour. For example, they followed the staff's lead to wash their hands at appropriate times and were happy to help with tidying up their activities before their snack.

Children are able to manage their behaviour and respond positively to the staff.

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

Children are active and very involved in their play. They enjoy exploring their environment and we saw they were very excited to go and play after their circle time. We saw them spending time on activities that interest them and they were confident to explore and experiment with the resources. For example, some children were enjoying mark making and listening to stories; another group were busy in the home corner, putting washing in the machine and singing their cleaning song. We saw they loved the outside area and were enjoying building walls, filling their cars with petrol and digging in the sand. A small group of children were having lots of fun in the mud kitchen making 'vegetable soup', pouring blue water and mixing straw and mud with their utensils. We saw small groups of children enjoying adult-led story times and they benefited from high levels of good quality interactions from the staff. Parents told us their children are happy to come and *"don't want to go home!"* Transition times when washing hands ready for snack time did create a point during the session where children were waiting on the mat, which was less enjoyable for them. The RP told us that this is currently being reviewed and a rolling snack may be introduced to alleviate this problem.

Children are well supported by staff and so are really happy, engaged and interested in the activities provided.

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

Children experience a range of meaningful play opportunities to promote their learning. They are well supported by staff who engage in and develop their play through skilful interactions. For example, one child was very keen to draw. Staff helped them add another dimension to their play by giving them a clip board to lean on which they were very excited about; in the home corner we heard staff asking children questions such as *"I wonder how many clothes we can put in the washing machine?"* to extend their thinking and give purpose to their play.

Children are benefiting from the different strategies in place to promote their self help and decision making skills. They were able to manage their own food at snack and lunch time, with staff sitting with them to assist them to pour their own drinks and peel their own fruit. They were beginning to access the washrooms independently and staff were on hand to support them with their hand washing skills, joining in with them sometimes to embed the correct routine. Children were happy to help themselves to tissues and staff encouraged them to place them in the bin using the foot pedal explaining carefully why this is used and so extending their learning. Children are able to make their own decisions about what want to play with and can help themselves easily to the resources. Parents we spoke with felt their child was developing well, particularly in terms of their social skills and speech.

Children are able to take part in activities which promote their learning, acquisition of skills and independence.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Overall, staff promote children's learning and development effectively. They provide warm, sensitive and nurturing care and are responsive to children's needs and feelings. They have a consistent, calm and flexible approach to support children to manage their behaviour using a number of effective strategies. There are very good systems in place to ensure activities for the younger children are provided in line with their individual needs. These systems are being extended to ensure the setting effectively promotes the development of the older children. Staff implement the setting's policies successfully to ensure children are kept safe and their health and welfare is promoted.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff promote children's welfare and health effectively. Staff we spoke with have a clear understanding of their role in protecting children because they have attended relevant training and regularly discuss safeguarding as part of their regular meetings. They are all familiar with Prevent duty, which is Government legislation designed to protect children from radicalisation.

Staff ensure children benefit from healthy snacks. During our visit, it was 'Fruity Friday' and children were enjoying bananas, apples and oranges with milk or water to drink. The menu displayed for parents shows a variety of healthy snacks are provided throughout the week. Suitable systems are in place to ensure staff are aware of children with allergies. Allergens in the food are recorded and parents are made aware they are able to view these if they wish to.

Staff follow appropriate hygiene procedures and have all attended suitable training to ensure children's health. They support children to wash their hands at appropriate times and work hard to embed good hand washing techniques with them.

Children benefit from lots of outside play. There are good systems in place to ensure children can enjoy the outdoors in inclement weather and stay safe when it is hot. All staff are first aid trained and can therefore follow appropriate procedures in response to an accident. Staff implement effective measures to ensure they all know how many children are present and to maintain good oversight of all children. Detailed records show staff ensure fire drills are practised regularly with the children so they would know what to do in an emergency.

All staff are appropriately trained and implement the required policies and procedures effectively to ensure that children's health and welfare is promoted.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff use good strategies to promote children's social development. They give meaningful praise to children for their efforts and congratulate them when they follow the rules. For example, we saw a member of staff awarding a child a sticker and explaining this was because they had helped to tidy up. During circle time, staff explained to the children what they could do in the different play areas and specific expectations such as if they needed to use aprons or hard hats. Staff used sand timers to help children understand how much time they had left to play before it was time to tidy up. If children weren't keen to follow the rules we saw staff were empathetic and flexible. For example, one child really didn't want to put their apron on to play in the water. The member of staff talked calmly to the child and worked with them to find an alternative solution, resulting in the child happily taking their cardigan off instead.

Staff give children responsibilities to help promote their self esteem and they model required behaviours. For example, staff sat with the children during snack and ate with them, so helping them learn the appropriate social skills. They encouraged them to put their waste food in the food bin at snack time, whilst also doing this themselves. Children were keen to help tidy up their plates and bowls and proud they could do this for themselves. Staff discuss any issues they may have with supporting children at weekly staff meetings so they can ensure they are all following the same processes

Staff work closely together to promote children's social development using consistent and effective strategies.

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

Staff are motivated, well qualified and experienced, and work together closely to effectively support children. Staff showed they were having fun with the children. For example, staff in the home corner sang songs with them and joined in to help put the washing in the machine; staff in the mud kitchen were clearly enjoying helping the children make the 'vegetable soup'. Staff were very responsive to the children's play. For example, one child was building a wall outside, using a trowel to 'cement' the bricks. The member of staff took action by providing them with sand and water, so enriching and extending extend their play. Close observations are made of the different play areas in order to develop them and promote children's play. For example, staff had noted children were taking resources from another area to use with the play dough. Similar resources were therefore added to the play dough area so it better met with the children's needs and interests.

Staff organise themselves to work with small groups of children or individuals to support their play and language development. Some children were particularly enjoying trying to cut paper hanging from some string. Staff helped them develop their skills, and used lots of language to describe what they were doing. Staff encourage

children to use their creativity and imagination and think about what they are doing. For example, staff had noticed children particularly enjoying the 'swamp' area outside; they added magnifying glasses and fishing nets so children could have fun investigating and looking for bugs.

For the Flying Start children, the key worker system ensures that assessments of children's activities help identify their next steps and enable staff to plan suitable future activities. The RP is aware this is not extended to the wrap around children and steps are being taken to address this.

Story time is differentiated and small groups of children are invited to enjoy books at various points during the session. This means children's different levels of ability can be successfully met and they can fully engage with the story. Staff use puppets and sing actions songs with the children to support their enjoyment of the stories. Staff have firmly embedded the use of incidental Welsh within the sessions to help children become familiar with the Welsh language.

Staff ensure children's personal needs are responded to promptly. We did recommend that, as far as is practically possible, children's intimate care is carried out by the child's key worker to help strengthen their bond with them and increase their feeling of security. The RP agreed to look into ways this could be implemented.

The playgroup works closely with other professionals such as speech therapists, health visitors and social services to ensure that children receive the support they need. Those children who have additional learning needs are able to receive effective one to one support in the service. Parents we spoke with felt their children were well supported and making good progress.

Staff promote children's play, learning and development successfully and ensure they receive high levels of support.

3. Environment

Summary

Good systems are in place to ensure the environment is secure and safe. The play room is stimulating, welcoming and bright. The layout and range of resources, equipment and facilities allows children to make choices, follow their interests and develop their independence. Outside is well resourced, interesting and spacious, and allows children to play freely, learn new skills and experiment. The RP and staff work together to ensure that the environment and the resources are continually improving and are adapted to children's changing interests and developmental needs.

Our findings

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

Suitable procedures are in place to ensure the safety of the environment. The playgroup is located in a classroom within Penygarn Integrated Children's Centre. As such, Torfaen County Borough Council maintains the building. The RP ensures appropriate systems are in place to provide assurance that all necessary maintenance and safety checks are in place. There are good systems to ensure the main building and classroom are secure and staff can control who enters both the building and the room. Visitors are requested to sign in when first entering the building and with the group and they are made aware of their responsibilities in terms of safeguarding and confidentiality. The outdoor play area is fenced and secure. Thorough daily and weekly checks of the premises are carried out and records kept so that any actions required to ensure children's safety take place promptly. We noted that all play areas were clean and free from observable hazards and there are good systems in place to ensure the room is cleaned regularly and as required. An audit of infection control has been carried out and no issues were raised. There is a separate kitchen within the main building; the playgroup has been awarded a level 5 food safety rating which shows appropriate procedures are in place to maintain a suitable environment and protect children's health.

The RP and staff take appropriate steps to ensure the environment is safe.

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

The RP supports staff to ensure the environment is a stimulating and interesting environment for children. The indoor room is light and spacious with plenty of room for children to move around freely. Different areas are set up to create interesting spaces for the children which allow them to enjoy different types of play, such as role play,

messy play and mark making. Resources are clearly visible and children can reach them easily, which helps them develop their self help skills and encourages them to make their own decisions. A cosy book corner with cushions, soft toys and puppets allows children space to relax and enjoy stories and there is plenty of room for children to comfortably take part in larger group circle times or play with the construction resources. Children have their own named coat hooks and their 'work' is thoughtfully displayed, which gives them a sense of belonging. The washrooms are located so children can access them by themselves. The nappy change area is suitably equipped and allows children privacy.

The large outside area is easily accessible for children from the playroom so they can move between the inside and outdoors as they wish. Outdoors is well resourced and organised with well defined play areas as well as a large covered area so children can play regardless of the weather. The PiC uses observations of the children and quality assurance schemes to monitor the effectiveness and suitability of the play areas and help plan for improvement.

The RP and staff ensure that the environment is of a very good standard and continually improving so children's changing needs are met.

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

There is a very good range of age appropriate, high quality resources, furniture and equipment which are set up both indoors and outside. The play resources help promote children's learning and development and meet their needs and interests. For example, the low level easel allows children to paint easily and the resources in the mud kitchen encourage children to experiment with different materials. Good systems are in place to monitor how children play and use the resources and areas are adapted to ensure their play is linked to their interests. For example, staff added 'petrol pumps' to the area with cars and we could see how this has helped ensure their play was meaningful. The RP told us that additional resources are sourced in line with children's interests or developmental needs. For example, new aprons are being provided which they have noted children find easier to put on and are happier to wear.

The RP works closely with staff to ensure the resources and equipment of are of a high standard and meet children's changing needs and interests.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The RP, management team and staff are committed to providing a very good service for the children. There are effective systems in place to ensure the continued development of the setting. Staff are well supported and keen to develop their professional practice and the RP welcomes new approaches in child care practice and recommendations from CIW and other professionals to help improve outcomes for children.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The service is well run, compliant with the relevant regulations and effectively promotes children's safety, development and well-being. The RP works together with a small management team and supports staff well to ensure the service runs successfully. The RP makes sure the setting keeps up to date with developments in child care practice and changes in regulations and uses a reflective approach to ensure improvements are effective and relevant. For example, new environment rating scales are being used to support practice and identify areas for improvement. There is an ethos of continual professional development in order to bring about improvements and ensure good outcomes for children and the RP uses the strengths of the staff to help drive change. For example, one member of staff has recently attended training in behaviour management. The RP is keen to support them to implement changes to practice and to develop and improve relevant policies.

Policies are detailed and detailed and shared with parents so they have a clear picture of how the service runs. We discussed some additional information which could be included in the complaint procedure to provide further clarity to parents which was added following the inspection. Good systems are in place to ensure staff understand the policies and we saw they implement them well.

The playgroup is led by an RP who creates a positive atmosphere which focuses on developing the service to ensure good outcomes for children.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The RP and staff are motivated to develop the service and there is a culture of continuous improvement. There are good systems in place for evaluation and improving quality. For example, following training, staff consider how their learning may help develop the group and any changes made are evaluated; recent improvements have been made to story time sessions so children's individual needs can be better met. The service undertakes annual self-evaluations which include strategies for development. For example in 2016-2017 plans were implemented to develop children's competence in speaking Welsh. Part of this was to up skill staff so

they could deliver Welsh confidently. We heard staff using Welsh very effectively throughout the session and this year's review noted children could now respond to the incidental Welsh used. Parents' views are welcomed and questionnaires used. The RP told us they were disappointed with the most recent number of responses and are considering ways to more successfully canvass parents' views. Children's views are effectively obtained through close, planned observations of their play and changes made to meet their needs. The RP is keen to ascertain staff views and there are number of systems in place for them to offer their suggestions and ideas. The RP works closely with Flying Start Advisors to implement changes where practicable.

The RP effectively evaluates the service and draws on advice from other professionals, the views of parents and staff, and observations of children, to evaluate the service and plan for improvement.

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

Overall, management of staff and resources is good and the playgroup runs smoothly and efficiently. There are effective systems in place to support staff and identify strengths and areas for improvement both on an individual level and at a group level. Staff told us they feel well supported and find the feedback following observations of their practice "*particularly useful*". They are keen to develop their professional knowledge to help develop their practice and bring about improvements in the service. The RP supports staff effectively to attend both in house and external training and develop their skills, for example, by sharing roles and responsibilities such as taking circle time. Recruitment procedures are robust to ensure that staff are suitable to care for children and there are good systems in place to make sure all staff are up to date with their mandatory training. A comprehensive induction system is in place which enables staff to feel confident in their roles. Registers show the times of attendance of staff and children are recorded appropriately. The RP is aware of the required ratios of staff to children. However, they had overlooked the need for the PiC to be supernumerary, in line with the NMS. This had been addressed by our second visit. Although the total number of staff were then correct we saw that one member of staff left the room for 15 minutes to wash up after snack in line with their role that day. This meant that for that period there were insufficient staff working directly with the children. The RP agreed to review this to ensure the correct ratios are maintained at all times.

There are effective procedures in place to support staff and promote their professional development in order to ensure good outcomes for children. However, the deployment of staff for certain parts of the session needs to be reconsidered.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The service has developed good links with other professionals and school, and strive to ensure parents feel involved with their child's progress. There are suitable systems in place so children's needs and preferences are identified before they start and appropriate plans to support them put in place. There are a number of systems to ensure continued good communication with parents. These include the open door policy, a notice board and informal conversations held when parents collect and drop off their child. Regular 'Stay and Play' sessions have been introduced so parents can discuss their child's progress in more detail and new documents are being developed to help parents understand easily how their child is developing. Parents told us they are happy with the level of information they receive about their child and felt they could speak with the staff easily if they had any issues. The group works closely with the school nursery and implements very good systems so children benefit from a smooth transition into maintained education.

The service works effectively with other professionals and regularly implements improvements to develop how they work with parents in order to promote children's well-being.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Extend the key worker system to include the management of intimate care and
- ensure the appropriate number of staff are deployed to work directly with children.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector undertook two visits to the service.

- We observed the children undertaking their activities and the care provided by the staff;
- we spoke with parents in order to ascertain their views;
- we looked at an extensive range of records and documents including staff files, accident records, policies and procedures, children's records and planning;
- we looked at the premises, risk assessments and other documentation relating to safety measures and took account of the security measures in place;
- we spoke with the RP and staff present during the inspection to obtain their views and clarify information about the running of the playgroup and future plans and
- our findings were fed back to the RP and all recommendations were discussed.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:
www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Isobel Yacomen
Person in charge	Rebecca Haddock
Registered maximum number of places	24
Age range of children	2 to 4 years
Opening hours	9.15am to 11.45pm 12.15am to 2.30pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	23 February 2016
Dates of this inspection visit	28 September and 1 October 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
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 the service. This is because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area. However, we recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's "More Than Just words" strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.
Additional Information: None	