



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

# Childcare Inspection Report on

## Guilsfield Preschool Playgroup

Guilsfield C P School  
Guilsfield  
Welshpool  
SY21 9ND



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## **Description of the service**

Guilsfield Preschool Playgroup has been registered to care for 20 children. The registered individual is Huw Jones and the person in charge is Deborah Richardson. Children from 3 – 4 years old can attend this service. The service is held in the community room which is on the Guilsfield CVP School site. There are suitable facilities on site and an appropriate area for outdoor activities.

The main language is English, and the service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh Language as it provides many bilingual opportunities for the children.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children that attend the service are happy and content and enjoy the time spent with the staff and their peers and the activities provided. The staff respond to the children's requirements and the relationship between them is a relaxed and happy. The staff are well qualified and very experienced and they know the children well. They are well motivated and strive to make a difference in children's lives. This service provides a positive start to children's education.

### **2. Improvements**

We discussed the issue of protecting children's dignity while using the toilet raised in a previous inspection and found that because of the layout of facilities and ensuring children's safety that the service is working to the best of its ability.

### **3. Requirements and recommendations**

We have made one recommendation regarding Care and Development, one recommendation regarding the Environment and two recommendations for Leadership and Management. The person in charge should increase number of fire drills and record safety check of equipment and further organise some aspects of her paper work.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

The children are happy, confident and content and enjoy their time at the service. They feel comfortable in their surroundings and this promotes their self-confidence and their social development. They enjoy a happy and caring relationship with the staff and attention is given to individual needs. The children benefit from attending the service and they receive warm and respectful care.

## **Our findings**

### **1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?**

The children receive maximum attention and are given many opportunities to express what they would like to do and they are listened to.

The children benefit from a wide variety of activities to choose from and an extensive selection of resources to complete these activities. The children were seen engaging with a variety of activities as soon as they arrived, such as, storytelling with finger puppets, building, playing with a zoo the children had created the previous day, playing at the loose parts table, to name a few. Children were able to choose an activity and change over when they wanted. Later on, children were put in groups and were able to choose from informal activities and some structured tasks. Providing the children with this choice gives them an opportunity to express preferences through choice. Children are asked their opinions of different activities, and recording their responses is an area that could be developed. We heard children asking for a particular song before the session ended and they were listened to.

Children benefit from the stimulating atmosphere and the plentiful opportunities to express themselves, every child's voice is respected and they are listened to.

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

The children are content and happy with the staff and chat freely with them. Many of the children were confident and happy to chat with the inspectors.

We saw the lovely relationship that exists between the children and the staff, which enables the children to show respect towards others and their peers. We heard the children thanking the staff without any prompts, as they in turn were thanked by staff for helping or being kind. One of the children was a little fretful on arrival, but soon settled when given attention by a member of staff and encouraged to engage in an activity of choice. The children feel they are appreciated by staff who know them well and are able to engage them in conversation about their families, their home life, their hobbies and achievements and their day in school. This close relationship means that children are comfortable with staff and are happy to be teased about things. This further develops the relationship between them. Children with additional needs are well cared for and fully integrated in all of the activities.

The children feel comfortable and content in the care of the staff and they are treated with respect and dignity.

### **1.3 How well do children interact?**

Children interact well and are learning to control their behaviour, co-operate, take turns and help others. They are learning how to build relationships with others.

Children benefit from the consistent and regular encouragement about acceptable behaviour. Children receive positive persuasion, constant praise and the use of gentle voices to encourage them to demonstrate positive behaviour. This stimulates the children to behave in a way that is acceptable to others as to gain praise from the staff. The children reflect the behaviour that is modelled constantly by the staff. We saw children who were totally immersed in their activities and noise heard was that of happy children interacting with each other. At tidying up time, most of the children were happy to help, and singing a song was encouragement for all to join in.

The children are led by a good example on how to build a happy relationship with others and also to respect others. This is effective motivation in their social development.

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

The children thoroughly enjoy the opportunities to play and learn, and they were fully engaged with the activities provided for them.

We saw that children enjoyed playing, were industrious and inquisitive when learning and responding to questions from staff. As the children gathered together to sing in English and Welsh, and greet each other, we heard children responding enthusiastically when discussing what they had done the previous day. Their knowledge about mixing colours was proof of how well they are learning and developing. They were challenged by staff and were interested in discussions on colours, days of the week and the weather. Children were kept busy which maintained their interest in the activities. We saw children experimenting with mixing colour while painting with a window cleaning tool, which they then talked about with a staff member. We saw children using their imagination to play in the home area which then became a baker's shop as their imaginary game was encouraged by staff. The children were totally immersed in a variety of activities which held their interest and ensured they enjoyed themselves.

Children receive a good balance of structured activities and free play, which gives them the opportunity to make simple decisions and to learn and develop through play.

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

The children receive inspiring and varied opportunities to develop, learn and become independent.

Children receive a variety of opportunities to develop and become independent. We saw children register independently as they arrived at the setting. They also washed their hands

and used toilet facilities independently. During snack time, we saw children developing their independence further, after washing their hands they fetched books to read while the snack was prepared, and after receiving their plates from staff they spread butter on their crackers independently, before clearing their plates at the end. A helper was chosen to distribute cups for their drinks. Children's independence could be further developed by pouring their own drinks. Children are learning well at this setting as they are given encouragement to develop linguistic and numeracy skills constantly.

Children are given positive support to learn and become independent and to follow personal interests.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

The staff in the club have succeeded in building a warm relationship with the children and have created a caring environment. The staff are familiar with and show a good understanding of key policies and procedures and they know when and where to seek help.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

A broad range of procedures are in practice to ensure the safety and health of the children.

Staff follow procedures to ensure children are kept safe. In conversation we found that members of staff were familiar with the Child Protection policy and knew which steps to take if any concerns arose. The outside door is kept locked and an alarm has been set on the door to the setting which notifies staff every time it is opened. Any visitors to the setting are required to sign in and a daily register of children and staff is kept and was seen to be up to date. We saw that detailed risk assessments are in place which were put into practice and any changes and actions taken were recorded. We saw evidence that fire drills are held termly in conjunction with the school. This was discussed with the person in charge and responsible individual, and we recommended that the service hold independent fire drills at regular intervals to ensure that children who join mid-term are also familiar with the procedure. Children's safety is further promoted by staff who keep a detailed accident and incident book and are qualified to give first aid if necessary. Staff also promote children's health, as tables were cleaned and disinfected before snack time and children encouraged to wash their hands. Maintaining children's dignity while using the toilet was discussed as the door was left open to ensure children's safety, and it was agreed that because the toilet facility is at the far end of the corridor away from the children playing that this would not cause a problem or embarrassment for a child.

This is a well organised service and staff take extensive steps to ensure that they successfully keep children safe and healthy.

#### **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

The staff promote positive behaviour at all times. The children are treated with respect and are continuously given a clear example of acceptable behaviour.

The staff have built a warm relationship with the children which creates a friendly environment in the setting. Staff gave all their attention to the children at all times and treated them with dignity and respect, constantly asking children 'Would you like to...?' As staff engaged children in conversation they modelled positive behaviour which was reflected in the children's respectful behaviour. The staff worked in accordance with their Behaviour Policy constantly. When children became over enthusiastic in their play a concentration game was played to calm everyone. Staff reminded children of their safety and any risks that arose, using positive persuasion and reasoning with children. These tactics were also used when explaining to children how some might find some situations

uncomfortable and thereby raising awareness of individuals' likes and dislikes. Children were encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions and when it is appropriate to apologise. This created awareness of the children's responsibilities. We found that staff and children interacted well and staff were able to develop their relationship with the children as they chatted with them about their families and hobbies.

The staff have succeeded in setting behaviour boundaries while allowing the children the freedom to be relaxed and happy and also lead by example.

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

The staff have provided a motivating environment where children can play, learn and develop. The person in charge is aware of every individual's development and this is fed into the activity plan. The staff are aware of individual needs and respond appropriately.

We saw staff encouraging linguistic development by giving children constant attention and guiding conversations. Staff modelled good use of language in both English and Welsh so that children can follow suit. The staff were aware of the need to vary activities regularly in order to keep children interested. This was evidenced in the activity plan with structured and informal activities taking place at the same time. The painting activity encouraged children's curiosity as they experimented with the colours. Staff encouraged children to accomplish tasks independently and urged some to watch each other so that they can learn from each other. We saw evidence of curricular planning and that records of children's development feeds into this plan. At present the staff are trialling different methods of recording development in order to create an effective system for the service. We saw staff providing efficient care for additional needs without smothering children.

The staff provide a stimulating environment and activities for the children to promote their development and wellbeing and successfully respond to individual needs.



### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

The service operates from suitable premises. Staff work diligently to set out and clear resources at the beginning and end of most sessions as the room is used by the community at other times. The environment is colourful and welcoming and has ample space for free play. The toilets are nearby and also a kitchen. Children do not have access to this area. There is a suitable area for outdoor activities.

#### **Our findings**

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

There are procedures in place to ensure that children receive care in a safe and clean environment.

There was plentiful space for children to play freely in the room. Staff are aware of risks when resources and toys are left lying around, and children were encouraged to tidy up after themselves and put toys and resources away after they had finished with them. Actions in the risk assessment are adhered to. The outside area was secure but was out of use at present due to weather damage and vandalism, which will be repaired over the Easter break. Staff check the environment daily when setting out the room and ensure that it is clean and safe for the children.

Leaders consider and assess any risks that arise continuously. They have succeeded in creating a motivating environment which is safe but also gives opportunities to experiment and develop.

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

Leaders provide an environment that is suitable for children. There are plentiful resources and space which meet individual needs. The playroom is set out and planned to promote children's independence and development.

The playroom is large, airy, colourful and welcoming with a display of the children's work on one of the walls which gives children a feeling of belonging. Staff set out resources and equipment before the session in varying experience areas, such as, the home area, art and craft area, building area, reading corner, loose parts table, lettering table and role play area. There was ample space in all of these areas for children to play and learn. The outside area has also been set up into different experience areas, such as, performance stage, balance beams, mud kitchen, bike track, water wall, sand pit, music corner and Wendy house, which is also used for storage and inside reflects the theme for the term. Toilet facilities are nearby, and also a kitchen for preparing snacks.

Leaders have succeeded in creating a welcoming environment where children can have fun, and motivates them as they develop and enriches their experiences.

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

Leaders make the best use of the room for the benefit of the children and provide quality resources and equipment which are appropriate.

The furniture is appropriate for children and of good quality. A wide range of resources are provided which are clean and in suitable condition, which are checked by staff daily. However, we found that there were no records of these checks and we recommended that staff keep a record in future. Resources, toys and books were easily accessible for the children to facilitate their independence. There was also a range of Welsh books available for the children and non-gender specific toys. Leaders had given much attention to sustainable resources and we saw wooden toys, resources made of cardboard, cotton reels, clothes pegs and drinking straws which had been recycled.

Leaders have successfully gathered a wide range of resources and equipment to encourage children's development, all of which were of good quality.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

The Registered Individual and Persons in Charge are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the Child minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010. They ensure that all staff attend essential and relevant courses to improve and develop the provision.

### **Our findings**

#### **4.1 How effective is leadership?**

The person in charge gives strong leadership to staff and ensures that policies and procedures are detailed and organised and contain appropriate information and staff's understanding is monitored.

We saw that the policies and procedures file was complete and up to date and there were records that they are updated regularly and staff are familiar with the content and incorporate appropriate procedures in their daily practices. Children's files were seen and found to be comprehensive. A statement of purpose is provided for parents; however we found that some information had been omitted such as details of the provision, routines during sessions, language used and arrangements for dealing with any emergency. These were discussed and we were assured that amendments would be made as soon as possible and CIW informed of changes. Leaders work closely with staff to edit plans and share visions for the service.

Leaders offer effective and supportive leadership, and look for ways to improve and develop continuously.

#### **4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?**

Procedures have been put into practice to monitor the quality of the service, and beneficial changes are made to the service and the children's care.

The service is monitored regularly and we saw the detailed responses to the SASS. There were structures in place for self-evaluation and targets were set for improvement. Success will be measured and reported upon in the next quality of care report. Staff are evaluated and monitored regularly, and an action plan is put in place and success measured in the following evaluation session. Also parents are given an opportunity to express their opinions in questionnaires, which are very positive on the whole. Children give verbal opinions about their care.

Leaders are aware of the importance of self-evaluation in order to develop and improve and effective procedures are practised. This is beneficial for children who attend the service.

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

Leaders are very experienced and manage staff and resources effectively. Responsibilities are delegated when appropriate. The staff are well supported and co-operate well as a team.

We saw staff collaborate well as a team and support each other. We saw staff take over from colleagues when the need arose, for example while one member of staff was preparing a snack, another member of staff continued with activities for the children. This led to continuous care and attention for children at all times. Members of staff knew what activities were planned and their individual roles. The staff are well supported and are given opportunities to express opinions in self-evaluation monitoring. This enables leaders to give staff ownership of decisions taken. The staff are given steady and positive leadership which allows shared management of the activities and equipment. We looked at staff files and found that some information had been omitted such as job descriptions, full employment history for one member of staff and details of job inductions. We recommended that files be updated and organised as soon as possible.

The staff work effectively and diligently as a team to ensure good quality care for the children. Responsibilities are shared successfully and are positively managed.

### **4.4 How effective are partnerships?**

There is a good relationship between the service and the parents, with regular and open communication pathways for the benefit of children's wellbeing.

We had an opportunity to speak to some of the parents who praised the service and were very positive about the development of their children and staff's commitment. They found staff to be approachable if they had anything to discuss, and commended them for giving time to do this daily. The service shares information with parents on a closed Facebook page and we were told that this was an effective way of communicating. The service works well with the primary school and facilitates the next step in children's education.

The close relationship with parents enable the staff and leaders to make the best regarding the care of all the children. Parents are provided with regular updates regarding the children's welfare.

## **5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection**

### **5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections**

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

- 1) Ensure that all children have access to regular fire drills by holding independent practices;
- 2) record daily safety checks of toys and equipment;
- 3) update and revise statement of purpose and
- 4) update and organise staff files.

## **6. How we undertook this inspection**

This was an unannounced visit. The inspection took place on Thursday 15 March 2018. We spent around five and a half hours at the service. A feedback session was included in this time. We observed activities indoors. Also:

- we looked at information already held at CSSIW – report from previous inspection, statement of purpose and responses to the SASS;
- we looked at a wide range of documents including policies and records, children's files;
- we observed activities during the inspection and
- we spoke at length with the responsible individual, the person in charge and staff.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website [www.cssiw.org.uk](http://www.cssiw.org.uk)

## 7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Sessional Day Care
Responsible Individual	Huw Jones
Person in charge	Deborah Richardson
Registered maximum number of places	20
Age range of children	3 – 4 years old
Opening hours	9:00 – 11:30 Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	27 January 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	15 March 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	Yes
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This service is working towards providing the Welsh Language active offer.
Additional Information:	