



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Saplings Children`s Nursery**

**Saplings Children's Nursery  
Wrexham Technology Park  
Wrexham  
LL13 7YP**



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## **Description of the service**

Saplings Children's Nursery (Saplings Wrexham Ltd) is registered to care for a maximum of 71 children. The company's responsible individual and person in charge is Nickie Morris-Jones. The nursery is situated close to the centre of Wrexham and open week days from 7.00am until 6.00pm but not on bank holidays. Three units are staffed by qualified practitioners. A cook and administrator are also employed. There is an enclosed grassed area for outdoor play. The service is English speaking with basic Welsh used by the practitioners in the pre school unit.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

This was a focussed inspection to examine the impact of staffing levels at the beginning of the day. We looked at well-being, care and development and leadership and management. Children have a voice at the service and make choices confidently. They are cared for by experienced and very capable practitioners who provide ample productive activities for them. Leaders mostly ensure good deployment of practitioners but need to ensure consistency in adhering to the recommended ratios of adults to children.

### **2. Improvements**

Since the last inspection parents have more opportunities to make suggestions as feedback forms are provided outside each room.

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

Two recommendations were made to record the attendance of the supernumerary manager and to ensure recommended ratios of adults to children are adhered to at the start and end of each day.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children's well-being is ensured as they have a strong voice and feel safe and happy with the practitioners. They are confident learners and are developing skills to enable them to become independent.

## **Our findings**

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

Children participate with confidence and express their opinions and choices.

Children expressed themselves well especially in the pre school room and were happy to relate painting activities they had done previously. Non verbal clues were responded to in the baby room as practitioners cuddled and reassured those who were unsettled. Children were supported to make choices in all rooms as they had a variety of toys to play with.

Children are confident because they have choices and are listened to and respected.

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

Children feel safe and valued because they are familiar with the practitioners and have confidence in them.

Children coped well with separation from their parents and had bonds of affection with their key workers for example some children looked to the practitioners for direction and help to cope with sharing. Children were also heard chatting often with practitioners about family and their activities.

Children have settled well and are happy and valued.

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

Children are learning social skills and interact well.

Children interacted and co-operated well with their peers and adults. They were learning to share and take turns especially in the toddler room, for example when playing with small world toys. They were self aware and expressed what they needed such as babies reaching out for toys they wanted and practitioners responding to them straight away,

Children interact successfully and co-operate well with their peers and adults.

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

Children explore the environment freely and safely according to their stage of development.

Children were engaged in their play as we saw them enjoy serving play food around a table in the pre school room. They were able to explore their environment freely in all three main rooms and the pre school children also enjoyed being outdoors. Older children were eager to show what they had been doing such as hand printing and their paintings on the wall.

Toddlers showed us their favourite toys and happily played in the areas prepared for them. We saw children enjoying building towers with a practitioner.

Children enjoy learning through free play and activities led by the practitioners.

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

Children are developing a variety of skills and therefore growing in confidence to become independent.

Children had a variety of learning opportunities including freely chosen and self directed play that enabled them to gain a range of skills. One child played for a considerable time with a toy fairground and was observed concentrating on how the objects moved around and experimenting with how the pieces fitted together. Older children went to the toilet independently and washed their hands with the help of practitioners if required.

Children have a good variety of experiences, which enables them to learn various skills, and begin to become independent.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

Practitioners keep children safe and healthy by adhering to the policies and procedures of the service. They are competent, suitably qualified and experienced. They manage children's behaviour using positive strategies. Practitioners plan and provide a range of play and learning experiences supporting children's development.

### **Our findings**

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

Kind practitioners have knowledge required to keep children safe and healthy.

Practitioners ensured that they implemented the policies and procedures for the service. For example access to the building was by parents and visitors pressing a buzzer for each room and practitioners asked for a code from them by intercom before opening the outer door so keeping children safe. We observed the nappy changing procedure was adhered to in the toddler room reducing the risk of cross infection and babies were fed in safe high chairs with robust harnesses. At the beginning of the day when there were fewer staff available the care and safety of the children was not compromised and the children were constantly supervised.

Practitioners effectively keep children safe and healthy.

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

Practitioners use distraction and other positive methods to good effect to promote acceptable and respectful interactions.

Practitioners managed interactions calmly and had time to listen to the children and give them attention. They were approachable and sensitive to the needs and experiences of individual children. For example a practitioner noticed that one child wasn't as happy as usual and gave her extra attention. Another practitioner was able to intervene promptly and encourage two children to take turns with toys and re directed them to play in other areas.

Practitioners promote positive interactions by effectively using techniques children understand.

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

Caring and capable practitioners promote children's learning and development.

Practitioners had prepared a suitable learning and play environment for the children at the start of the day. Practitioners were caring, nurturing and responsive to the children's needs, valuing children's home backgrounds. Children were provided with breakfast if needed and any dietary requirements were respected according to parents' wishes. Parents were given time to provide relevant information to practitioners at the beginning of the day in order to meet every child's needs.

Practitioners promote children's learning successfully through providing a suitable play environment and they meet children's needs.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

This inspection focussed on the well-being of children, their care and development and leadership and management. CIW did not consider it necessary to look at the environment because the concern was about staffing ratios. However, this theme will be considered at future inspections.



## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

The leadership is experienced, knowledgeable and strives to provide a quality service. Practitioners are managed well and leaders ensure they have sufficient support and resources. However, leaders need to keep a record of who is in charge and ensure correct ratios of practitioners to children are consistently applied.

### **Our findings**

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

Leaders have a clear vision of the service, which is shared with parents.

Leaders have a sense of purpose that promotes good outcomes for children. The Statement of Purpose and parents' information had the information required for parents to make an informed choice about whether that service meets the needs of their child. Effective policies were in place and implemented by practitioners such as security and the ethos of learning through play. Practitioners knew who had managerial responsibility before the person in charge arrived but this information was not obvious. It is recommended that a record of attendance is kept for the manager or the deputy who is in charge.

Leadership has a clear sense of purpose which results in good outcomes for children but evidence should be kept of who is in charge.

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

As this was a focussed inspection we did not inspect the whole of this theme and focussed on leadership and the management of practitioners. However, this will be considered at future inspections.

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

Leaders have systems in place for managing practitioners and resources.

Leaders had ensured that experienced and capable practitioners were employed to care for the children. All practitioners had clearly defined roles and responsibilities and worked well as a team. A cook was employed who prepared food and cleared the breakfast things away in each room, allowing practitioners to give their time to the care of the children. We examined a sample of registers and found that generally the ratios of practitioners to children were within the recommended limits. However, there were times at the beginning and end of some days when the ratios were not adhered to. For example one practitioner cared for up to six children who were two years old for a period of one hour and fifty minutes at the end of one day. The recommended ratio is one practitioner for every four children two years old. We therefore recommended that consideration is given to consistently meeting these ratios.

Leaders have systems for managing practitioners but ratios of practitioners to children should be consistent.

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

As this was a focussed inspection we did not inspect the whole of this theme and focussed on leadership and the management of practitioners. However, this theme will be considered at future inspections.

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

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

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

- For leaders to ensure that a record is kept of the manager or deputy's attendance and
- To adhere to the recommended ratios of practitioners to children consistently at the beginning and end of each day.

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

This was a focussed, unannounced inspection undertaken as a result of a concern brought to us about staffing ratios. One inspector visited the service on 10 May 2018 from 7.55 to 11.00.

We:

- Inspected a sample of registers;
- observed practices by practitioners;
- spoke to the children and four practitioners and
  
- reported our findings to the registered person.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## 7. About the service

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| Type of care provided  | Childrens Day Care<br>Full Day Care  |
| Responsible Individual   | Nicola Morris-Jones  |
| Registered maximum number of places  | 71   |
| Age range of children  | 3 months – 12 years  |
| Opening hours  | 7.00am – 18.00pm on weekdays except bank holidays  |
| Operating Language of the service  | English  |
| Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection                            | 4 October 2017   |
| Dates of this inspection visit(s)  | 10 May 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?                     | No<br>This service does not provide an 'Active offer' of the Welsh language. This is because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area and the provider does not currently intend to offer or promote a Welsh language service. |
| Additional Information:  |  |

