



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Croesyceiliog Playgroup**

**The Annexe  
Woodland Road Social Centre  
Croesyceiliog  
Cwmbran  
NP44 2DZ**



**Date of Publication**

**Monday, 25 June 2018**

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## **Description of the service**

Croesyceiliog Playgroup is registered to provide care for a maximum of 19 children. The service offers breakfast club, playgroup sessions and a 'wraparound' service with the local primary school and nursery. The playgroup uses a demountable building situated in Woodlands Park in Croesyceiliog; the premises are leased. Operational hours are Monday to Friday 8.30am to 2.40pm term time only.

The service is owned by a sole trader, Adele Maclean, who is the Registered Person and the Person in Charge and hereafter referred to in the report as the provider. This is an English language setting with some use of Welsh through songs and greetings.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children are happy and enjoy the play experiences offered. Staff know the children well and ensure they benefit from their time at playgroup. The environment is safe and secure and resources are suitable to meet the children's needs. The provider works hard to drive and sustain improvement and manage staff effectively.

### **2. Improvements**

Since the last inspection in May 2015 the playgroup has continued to make improvements; we were told that the both internal base rooms had been redecorated and reorganised. Staff appraisals and supervision procedures continue to be improved. We heard sufficient incidental Welsh being used through the sessions.

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

There were no areas of non compliance identified at this inspection. We made some recommendations in relation to leadership and management and record keeping, this can be found towards the end of this report.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children are secure, relaxed and happy. They enjoy coming to the playgroup. They know the routines well and have good relationships with the staff and are learning to communicate their needs and feelings. Children have a voice and make choices, they have access to a suitable range of experiences which develop their skills through play and they are learning to become independent.

## **Our findings**

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

Children are encouraged to speak and communicate their needs. We saw them being encouraged to express themselves during their play and learning by making choices and decisions from a good variety of interesting activities. Children's requests were listened to. For example, during story time one of the children did not want to sit and listen to the story but finish off playing in the role play area. Their wishes were respected and the child was allowed to continue to play but staff checked with the child half way through in case the child had changed their mind. They were welcomed to join the group to continue with the story. All attempts at communication were valued by staff.

Children have a voice and express themselves clearly and they make choices confidently.

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

Children feel secure and happy; they are relaxed and have formed bonds of affection with each other and with staff. The children were confident and settled; we saw that they separated from their parents happily at the start of each session. The children chose who they wanted to play with and moved comfortably from being involved in a group activity to playing quietly on their own. Children who wanted to play in the main base room were able to do so, whilst others were able to use the smaller adjoining room to look at books or play with small world toys. When children felt they wanted to do something else they moved to another part of the room and played with the construction toys, mark making or sit and complete puzzles. Children also enjoyed a structured painting activity which was displayed around their base room.

Children have formed friendships; they are comfortable, settled and relaxed. Children are able to follow their own interest and choose how they want to spend their time.

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

Children are beginning to understand their feelings but younger children require support at times to manage their own behaviour. Children interacted well with each other most of the time. We saw a group of children returning from their time playing outside and were eager to talk with others about which apparatus they most enjoyed playing on at the park nearby. During the sessions we noted that children's play was

animated and fun and they welcomed others to their games. On occasion however, some children had to be reminded to be kind and considerate to each other or not to raise their voices whilst eating their snack. Snack time was generally a social event with children sitting around the table and all chatted happily to each other and staff. They were heard saying “please and thank you” and they followed direction given by staff.

Children sustain interests in tasks, they are polite and use good manners, but children require guidance and support to ensure they are always sensitive to the emotions of others.

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

Children are interested and eager to play and learn. They had opportunities to have uninterrupted, child initiated play as well as playing alongside a staff member. Children enjoyed the different activities offered to them. For example, after a free play session staff led a structured activity and took the group out for a walk around the park adjoining the playgroup. With support, children participated well, put on their coats and high visibility jackets. They reminded each other “we need to hold hands, will you hold mine?”. Going for walks was a frequent activity that children were comfortable with and they looked happy. We observed them choosing to do activities and remaining on task for sustained periods of time. They helped each other with building bridges using bricks. We noted that all the children had a sense of belonging as they fetched their coats and bags at home time from their individual pegs and they were able to anticipate home time because they knew the daily routines well.

Children are motivated to choose an activity they enjoy and with support can concentrate for an appropriate amount of time.

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

Children have opportunities to learn and become independent. Older children played well alongside younger ones and they welcomed adults into their play. Most of the time, the children made appropriate choices and were seen to use a good range of skills. We noted that staff were at hand and quickly intervened so that disputes did not escalate. Overall, children played well, only having to be reminded occasionally to be kind or helpful. We observed lunch time on day one and noted that the children had been sitting in front of their lunch boxes but had to wait for staff to unpack their foods. This meant that some children’s behaviour became challenging and the noise levels in the room became loud and disruptive. We discussed this with management and we noted a marked improvement by our second visit. On day two of our inspection, we saw that staff allowed children to unpack their own food and start eating, rather than wait for every one to be ready together. This had a calming and happy atmosphere.

Children develop and learn; they are encouraged to accomplish things for themselves.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

Staff have the children's welfare and happiness at the centre of what that they do. Relationships are warm and mutually respectful, creating a calm and inviting environment in which children can play and learn. However, consideration should be given to prioritising staff training. Children's formal assessment needs to be further developed and made parent friendly and accessible to them.

### **Our findings**

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

There are adequate systems in place to ensure that staff have the tools to record any issues which affect the health and safety of children. Although staff have completed safeguarding training, in discussions with us they were not always confident about child protection procedures. There is a designated safeguarding officer but we noted that staff's knowledge was unclear about processes, who should make a record of the initial concern and their responsibilities in relation to child protection matters.

We discussed this matter with management and made it clear that it is the responsibility of all staff to know how to make and record referrals and staff should not be reliant on management only. The provider agreed to give this matter a high priority and revisit their policy and training for child protection. Most staff have undertaken the 'Prevent Duty' training which entails keeping children safe from the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. The provider has developed sound infection control procedures. Staff follow the playgroup's policies and procedures around health and safety, food hygiene, infection control and risk assessments to ensure that children are kept safe and healthy. Staff also undertake daily visual checks in the playrooms, toilets and outdoor area. Ratios were maintained throughout the session ensuring that children were kept safe and were well supervised. We had sight of the current public liability insurance certificate for the playgroup. The Provider told us about an ongoing programme to update priority training such first aid, safeguarding and food and hygiene. The setting's food standards rating received a grade 5.

Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure the safety of children and prioritise improvements identified.

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

Staff are consistent in their approach and set realistic boundaries. They spoke clearly to children and made expectations of behaviour clear. We saw some children needing support with behaviour management. Staff bent down to their level and clearly explained to them why certain behaviour was not accepted and re-directed their attention to activities of interest to them. We heard children also being reminded of the importance of sharing and waiting their turn. For example, two boys wanted to play with the same truck; staff intervened and agreed a solution where everyone was happy. During story time, staff responded to children's mood, they realised they were not engaged in the story and in order to keep them occupied, they changed the story to one they knew children liked and which they all enjoyed.

Staff are responsive to children's needs; they encourage sharing and implement positive strategies to manage unwanted behaviour well.

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

Staff promote children's development by planning for an adequate variety of play and learning activities. Play experiences provided were interesting. Staff offered children choice between adult led activities and free play. They offered different experiences including painting, puzzles and role play. Play dough was used to create imaginative food and staff asked children what their favourite foods were at home. Busier times of the day were interspersed with periods where children could relax; a member of staff joined them as they sat and read books amongst the soft furnishings in the reading corner. Children's observation and assessments were beginning to take shape. However, we noted that their next steps in learning were not consistently recorded alongside their observations. We discussed that recoding children's next steps, would help parents to have a clearer understanding of how they can best support the child at home. We were told that the group received regular support from the Local Authority's educational support teacher. We saw evidence of planning for future play and learning. Staff took pride in knowing the children well and having an understanding of children's individual needs.

Children's individual needs are beginning to be met with additional focus needed on the assessment and recording of children's progress to ensure that the benefits of all children are recorded and regularly shared with their parents.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

Leaders give safety a priority, complete risk assessments and implement effective cleaning routines and good hygiene practices. But access to certain areas need closer attention. Resources are easily accessible, are of good quality and promote children's curiosity.

#### **Our findings**

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

Leaders ensure children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. We found risk assessments had been completed and updated regularly ensuring identified risks to children's safety were managed and where possible eliminated. The playgroup does not have a designated outdoor play area for their sole use. However, the provider and staff told us that they use the enclosed children public play park next door or go for walks around the larger park within which the playgroup is sited. We viewed and found that all trips and outings had been risk assessed. We found the entrance to the playgroup to be locked upon our arrival, thus keeping children secure. However, the access to the kitchen was not restricted, the door was left open. Therefore, children could access the kitchen unsupervised. We discussed this with the provider who agreed to improve the process. Overall, staff supervised the children appropriately and allowed children to complete appropriate tasks independently. We saw older children being encouraged to go to the toilet on their own, whilst staff supervised from a suitable distance. Cleaning rotas had been implemented and a log kept of what toys had been cleaned and when.

The provider ensures staff are aware of how to manage risk and provide a safe and secure environment.

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

Staff provide sufficient space for children that is adequately maintained and overall meets the children's needs. Staff used the space available effectively; they created an interesting and stimulating environment for the children. We saw that the main base room was organised to provide specific activities such as construction play, mathematical play, literacy. Quiet areas were well labelled with good use of rugs and soft cushions or hard floors appropriate to the activity set out on the floor or at child height tables and chairs. They encouraged children to use all of the space available, they moved freely from one activity to another without impacting on each other. Construction play was always available and a music area to appeal to different interests. Children's work was displayed on the walls, which created a warm and welcoming environment and reflected the current themes. Staff told us that since the playgroup was last inspected parents had taken upon themselves to actively help the provider paint and decorate the facilities. Staff told us that it was a marked improvement and all the children benefitted.

Staff ensure the whole environment provides a suitable range of play opportunities. The environment is stimulating and creates a sense of belonging.



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

The provider ensures children have access to furniture, equipment, toys and materials that are appropriate and suitable to their needs. They provided a wide range of good quality resources that children could choose from. Equipment was easily accessible and built on children's imaginative play. For example, we saw children playing with the blocks and bricks, choosing from a variety of different activities such as dressing up items. This is a pack-away playgroup therefore when not used, resources were stored in clearly labelled boxes which the children could easily access on their own. Items not regularly used were stored in cupboards to maintain their quality.

The provider and staff ensure children have easy access to a good range of resources to promote their curiosity and learning.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

Overall, we found that the provider has adequate procedures in place to ensure the smooth running of the service. However, some important procedures to help better protect the children need regular discussion to ensure staff knowledge is robust and they are encouraged to be confident in raising concerns. Some record keeping methods need improvement. The provider is working hard to create a purposeful environment in which staff are motivated.

### **Our findings**

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

In the main the provider ensures that staff have a clear understanding of their roles and that the playgroup operates according to the requirements of the regulations and National Minimum Standards. There is a clear statement of purpose which outlines an accurate picture to parents about what they could expect from the service. This is updated as needed to reflect any changes. All staff have regular opportunities for training and development. Adequate policies have been drawn up which are implemented by the provider. In the main we were told that these are regularly monitored. However, as we noted in the care and development section of the report staff have an overreliance on the provider to formally deal with any concerns that might be identified. Staff were not confident about how they would raise concerns. Staff told us that the provider, who is the named safeguarding officer, would know what to do and deal with issues. We discussed this with the provider who agreed that the inspection had highlighted where further improvements need to be made. The provider assured us that priority in revisiting the safeguarding policy and updating staff knowledge on reporting issues safely and accurately, will be done immediately. Policies, procedures and the statement of purpose are available for parents on the playgroup's parent board which suitably designed and accessible. A suitable operational plan was in place which stated the aims and objectives of the service. An adequate range of policies and procedures supported the operation of the service and in the main staff demonstrated a sound understanding of them. We looked at daily records such as registers and noted that although children's actual arrivals and departures were recorded as starting session times they did not note the times of late comers or when parents collected their children earlier than the expected times. This can impact on the safe evacuation of the setting because staff would not know the accurate numbers of the children at all times. We also saw accident records and on the whole these had been signed by parents on the day of the injury. However, we saw that parental signatures were not included when children had been dropped off to another service as part of the wrap around care the playgroup provided. The provider told us that parents would be asked to sign the accident record when they dropped their child off the next day but this was not consistent. We discussed these issues with the provider and they assured us that this would be a priority for improvement. We were told that electrical safety checks were recently conducted of the site but the certification had not yet been issued. The provider agreed to forward this to CIW, we received a copy of the safety certification before this report was published. We viewed

all staff files and these included annual appraisal records. Staff one to one supervision records were taking shape and adequately meeting the requirements.

In the main, the provider ensures that the service is run in an efficient manner.

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

The service gathers the views of parents and children, a report on their findings were available. Staff know the service well, and regularly gathered the views of those using the service to continue to move forward and make improvement. We had sight of the Quality of Care Review and noted it was sound. Future improvements, such as meeting with the newly formed committee of the premises, meant that the provider was able to work along with them to bring about further changes to the service. The provider told us that the future of the site was looking strong as the community centre had secured generous funding from the National Lottery fund. The provider told us that her and her staff were encouraged with the new plans being drawn up to improve the facilities. Questionnaires had been sent out in preparation for producing a quality of care review reflecting on this academic year.

The provider has implemented effective systems for gathering views of its service user to form part of an on going process of self-evaluation. This will benefit the service present and future.

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

Management have ensured that they have a good number of suitably qualified staff caring for children at all times. There is a system in place for staff to receive appraisals in which they identify training needs. Both the provider, who is also in charge of the day to day of the playgroup, and the deputy are qualified to level 5 in child care and management and most other staff have at least a level 3 qualifications. This demonstrates the commitment to improving and providing a good service for the future. We spoke to staff and they confirmed that they felt very valued and supported within their role. Staff told us they remain employed at the service for a sustained period of time because they are satisfied and feel support is valuable from their management.

The staff team are motivated and demonstrate that they are committed to improving and delivering an ongoing improved service to children and their families.

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

The provider and staff work closely with parents to discuss the individual needs and preferences of children. Positive working relationships have been established with parents to develop trust and engagement. Parents told us that they welcome the channels of communication which they have with the staff and feel that they are kept suitably informed about how their children spend their time at the playgroup. A notice board which contains information about food and activities and any other relevant information is displayed daily for all parents to view when they collect their children. Parents told us that they are very happy with the service offered and have preferred the playgroup to other services they could access. There are sound relationships with the local school and nurseries and the staff walk children to and from school and

nursery as part of the wrap around care it offers. We walked with the staff and children and noted that the children were suitably supervised during this routine.

Improvements in partnerships ensure that children benefit from a wide range of experience and expertise which can result in positive outcomes for children.

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

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

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

In order to further improve the service for the children attending we advised that:

- Ensure that staff are not over reliant on management to deal with safeguarding issues and that all staff have a greater understanding and clarity of how to raise and record concerns regarding child protection. Staff should have an overview of the whole process of referrals to do with safeguarding;
- extend children's individual observations assessments include their next steps in learning. Make these records parent friendly and encourage parents to access their own child's records so that they can fully support their child at home;
- improve daily registers to include children's actual times of arrivals and departure, including accuracy of late arrival and early departures;
- ensure that all accident and injury records are signed by parents in a timely manner; and
- ensure access to all areas of the premises are sufficiently monitored so children cannot gain access to unsupervised rooms such as the kitchen.

## How we undertook this inspection

We used the following methods to gather evidence for this report:

- We considered at what we already knew about the service, including notifications and changes since the service was last inspected in May 2015;
- the Self Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) completed by the provision in July 2017;
- the inspection was carried out by one inspector and took place over two visit;
- we observed activities and interactions between the staff and children;
- we sampled documentation and records, which included the statement of purpose, policies and procedures, records of accidents, incidents and complaints;
- we viewed operational plans, records of attendance and records of medication administered and
- we viewed all parts of the premises, looked at maintenance records, risk assessments and other documentation relating to safety measures and took account of the security measures in place.

Our findings were fed back to both the provider and deputy present on the day at the end of the inspection and all recommendations discussed in full.

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

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

## 6. About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Adele Maclean
Person in charge	Adele Maclean
Registered maximum number of places	19
Age range of children	2 and half years to 5 years old
Opening hours	Monday to Friday between 8.30am to 2.40pm. Term time only
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	8 May 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	10 and 11 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?	This is a service that does not provide an "Active Offer" of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people/children who use, or intend to use their service. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's "More Than just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care."
Additional Information: None	