



Childcare Inspection Report on

Little Ladybirds Alway Flying Start Playgroup

**Alway Centre
Aberthaw Road
Alway
Newport
NP19 9NS**

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



Date Inspection Completed

08/03/2019

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Description of the service

Little Ladybirds Always Flying Start Playgroup is one of several flying start services run by Newport City Council (NCC) offering sessional care. The playgroup is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales to care for 24 two and three-year-old children in the Alway area of Newport. NCC employ a Responsible Individual (RI) to oversee the playgroup and a person in charge to operate the playgroup on a daily basis. The main language of the playgroup is English.

Summary

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy and engage purposefully in play and learning opportunities that interest them. They actively make choices and decisions about their care and play and have established good relationships with their friends and staff. Suitable systems are in place to promote children's health and safety but knowledge of some policies and procedures and some safety practices could be strengthened. Play areas are inviting both inside and outside with good quality, accessible resources. Strong leadership and management, a happy and motivated staff team and suitable self-evaluation systems readily support the smooth running of the playgroup. However, consistency with completing staff files could be improved. Good quality partnerships with parents and other agencies fosters positive outcomes for children.

2. Improvements

Almost all recommendations from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Infection prevention and control guidance and audit tools have been used well to promote best practice and enhance children's health needs. Registers are completed accurately to show who is present on the premises at any one time.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no areas of non-compliance identified at this inspection. We highlighted three recommendations regarding fire drills and logs, safeguarding knowledge and staff files. These are referred to in the main body of the report and outlined in full in section five at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children know that their individual needs, preferences and feelings are respected and valued, enabling them to flourish and meet their full potential. They readily make decisions about their play and confidently make choices at snack time. Children interact well with their friends and have established close bonds with staff. They have lots of fun in their play and eagerly participate in a wide range of interesting activities that support their learning.

Our findings

Children have a strong voice and communicate their needs and wishes confidently. We heard the children cheer when the doors were opened for outdoor play. They readily moved between the indoor and outdoor areas accessing activities or toys that interested them. Children are fully aware of the options open to them and are comfortable in selecting when they want to have their snack. They choose food they wish to eat from the various plates and respond to staff's questions "*Milk or water (child)? What would you like, milk or water?*"

Children feel safe and secure because settling-in arrangements are tailored to their individual needs allowing them to settle at their own pace. A parent brought in their child's favourite superhero toys, which staff skilfully incorporated into play and daily routines. For example, the superhero toys joined the child for snack and were seen jumping off bricks during block play outdoors. Most children know the daily routines and cope well with the transitions during the session. We noted that any child who did become upset were quickly soothed with a cwtch and softly spoken words of reassurance.

Children with additional needs are happy and take an active part in playgroup life because of the close bonds and good quality targeted support they receive from staff. For example, using the wigwam to limit the distractions when sharing stories. We watched the children play co-operatively alongside their friends and when asked, many helped to tidy away the toys. All the children were busy and engaged throughout the session and really happy in their play. We heard lots of laughter and the children cheered and jumped with excitement when asked if they wanted to do 'Tap tap sticks' at circle time with their parents.

Children participate in a wide variety of interesting activities and play experiences that support them to gain new skills and ignite their imagination. We watched a child happily build with the large building blocks and with quality support from staff, use the straw and pictures of three pigs and a wolf to act out the story, 'The three little pigs'. Children's independence is actively encouraged at snack time because they serve themselves. We observed the children help to pour their own milk or water and use tongs to pick up their cheesy biscuits and spoons to select the fruit wanted.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Suitable processes and procedures are in place to promote children's health and safety although consistency in their implementation and knowledge of safeguarding could be strengthened. Staff manage interactions positively with strong focus on celebrating children's achievements to promote their self-esteem and confidence. Staff provide a nurturing and caring atmosphere to support and encourage children's learning and respond effectively to promote children's individual needs.

Our findings

Relevant health and safety policies and procedures are in place and are routinely shared with staff. Staff have clear understanding of action to take should a child not be collected, become sick, have an accident or require medication. Accident forms are completed accurately and shared with parents on collection. We noted that each child has their own poly pocket for accident forms and many children have a termly accident audit log. This enables the PiC to monitor the number of accidents most child are having and help identify if any additional safety measures are required. A robust safeguarding policy is in place and leaders ensure staff routinely update their safeguarding training. A few staff we spoke to have adequate knowledge of child protection issues and all have secure awareness of the process to follow with any child welfare concerns. However, understanding of their roles regarding Prevent is weak. This is a government strategy to identify those, who may be vulnerable and drawn into extremism.

Children benefit from a varied and nutritious menu. Parents contribute a range of snacks each week but robust guidelines are followed regarding what food will be accepted. Effective measures are in place to identify any child with allergies because a photograph and explicit details of each child's dietary requirements are prominently displayed. Staff follow robust hygiene practices when nappy changing or preparing food and those on snack duty wear disposable aprons and gloves. Children's independence in managing their personal care is encouraged and strong healthy lifestyle messages are positively promoted. We saw children wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack time. They learn about good oral health by brushing their teeth at each session and benefit from outdoor physical play all year round.

Staff are positive role models and foster children's confidence and self-esteem well through frequent praise and encouragement. For example, "*Good concentration*" and "*You've done really well*" when a child was threading and when another child helped to tidy away the blocks they were invited to choose a sticker. Staff are consistent and fair when reinforcing boundaries. We watched staff sensitively support two children with sharing puzzle pieces enabling them to work together amicably.

Staff undertake a welcome assessment to evaluate children's starting points and use this information to help plan a broad range of stimulating play and learning experiences that the children enjoy. These include a wide selection of sensory and imaginative play experiences based on different themes both inside and outside, such as coloured gloop, shaving foam and orange and black playdough. A topic on bears and reading a favourite story 'Going on bear hunt' captured the children's imagination. They set up camp with a tent, sleeping bags, teddy bears and a pretend fire outside and re-enacted the story with grass, mud and sticks for the forest. Staff routinely observe and update their key children's learning journals and compact assessments on a weekly basis to track their progress. As a result, staff interact and engage purposefully in the children's play and tailor their support effectively. Staff frequently introduce Welsh throughout each session, including at snack time, when praising the children and singing familiar songs.

3. Environment

Summary

Management ensure that necessary safety policies and procedures are communicated to staff and most are implemented effectively. Rigorous security measures are followed to help keep the children safe and management and staff work hard to create an inviting and stimulating environment. High quality resources and equipment enrich children's learning both inside and outside.

Our findings

Robust measures are in place to ensure the premises are secure. An intercom and buzzer system on the external door to the building is monitored well by staff and the receptionist. A keypad entry system on the internal playgroup door means any visitors or parents have to wait to be given entry by staff. We saw that staff supervise the arrival and collection of children robustly with staff stationed on the door and at various points in the playroom or communal area. A comprehensive premises management file is in place with necessary safety records and risk assessments and details of safety inspections and maintenance checks completed by NCC. Staff also undertake written daily safety checks of the outdoor play area and ensure that their key areas in the playroom are set up and safe for children to access. The PiC confirmed that practise of the fire and emergency escape plan was completed at least termly and captured children from both sessions. However, a review of the fire log confirmed that this is not consistently applied and detail within the log is limited.

Staff work well to provide a welcoming and rich environment that is centred on promoting children's independence, learning and individual needs. Good quality, child-sized furniture, a wide range of resources in low-level open storage units and dynamic and comfortable play spaces readily encourage children's independence and play experiences.

Photographs of the children and displays of their work around the playroom help them feel a strong sense of belonging. Staff share the kitchen with another flying start service that operates from the same premises and observations show this to be clean and well maintained.

Outdoor play is given high priority and is widely used by the children all year round. There are clearly defined areas to give the children different play and learning experiences. For example, a track for trikes and dedicated relaxing area with large wicker scoop seats and cushions. Children are able to bring their imaginative play to life outside and do things on a bigger scale. We saw a builder's yard with large diggers, cranes, stones and wooden bricks and a large play house with an astro turf garden and picket fence. Leaders continue to invest in the playgroup and enrich children's experiences. They have created a new sensory room inside and plans are ongoing to establish an allotment with facilities to participate in forest school activities.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Leaders have a clear vision and communicate this well to the PiC and staff team. They work hard to provide a high quality service for local families and establish good partnerships with parents, other agencies and the local community. Most records and documentation are detailed and contain necessary information to help promote safe practices and leaders were proactive in addressing any issues identified during inspection. Strong focus is given to monitoring and evaluating the quality of the service and promoting staff development.

Our findings

The leaders and staff team work well together to provide a good quality service for both children and their parents. The RI and PiC invest time and energy to ensure the playgroups aims are implemented effectively by the dedicated staff team. Routine communication with the RI, helps keep them abreast of all matters regarding the playgroup. There are clear policies and procedures in place which place strong emphasis on inclusion and promoting family and the community. As a result, parents take an active part in playgroup life, participating in weekly circle time and gardening sessions. Parents also have regular opportunities to view their children's learning journals and to discuss their children's ongoing progress and next steps. We looked at a number of records and documents, including daily registers, the statement of purpose and five children's files. Overall, these were detailed and well maintained and necessary written parental permissions were in place to ensure children are cared for according to their parents' wishes. Inspection of three staff files found that most information to confirm staff's suitability was in place. The RI was proactive in chasing the information and agreed to notify CIW once complete.

Self-evaluation processes are robust. NCC flying start use several different monitoring systems to help ensure a quality service is provided for local families. The 2018 quality of care review is detailed and reflects feedback from both staff and parents. It clearly identifies the strengths of the service and highlights matters they wish to prioritise for improvement, including staff-child interactions. Regular training opportunities enhance staff's continuing professional development and the PiC undertakes regular observations of staff to help monitor their interactions and performance closely. Fortnightly visits from the RI and termly Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) observations completed by Flying Start Speech and Language Therapist are also used to monitor interactions. In October 2017 the playgroup received a 'Highly commended' following their Quality for All assessment. Staff are motivated and keen to improve outcomes for children ensuring that their individual needs are met. We observed the team evaluate the sessions at the end of the day. They discussed the children and their interests, how the session went, the learning taking place and how activities can be adapted to meet children's needs.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Ensure staff files consistently contain all the necessary information to confirm their suitability prior to starting employment, including two references and employment history.
- Improve staff knowledge of child protection issues and procedures and understanding of their role regarding prevent.
- Ensure consistent practise of the fire and emergency escape plan so that all children have regular opportunities to learn safe action to take. In addition, ensure information recorded in the fire log is consistent, including times of each practise and a summary of how it went and any improvements identified.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was an unannounced inspection undertaken as part of the normal schedule of inspections. It was undertaken by one inspector, covering the morning and afternoon playgroup sessions, totalling 6 hours. Feedback was given to the RI and PiC at the end of the inspection. Evidence for the report was gathered by:

- Review of the last inspection report and notifications and correspondence received from the provider since the last inspection
- Observation of the children's play and their interactions with staff and their friends
- Visual inspection of the playrooms and outdoor play area
- Discussion with the RI, PiC, most staff, a parent and a few children
- Feedback from five CIW staff questionnaires
- Scrutiny of operational records including, statement of purpose, 2018/2019 quality of care review, staff files, health and safety records and activity planning.

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7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Sessional Day Care
Responsible Individual	Sian Williams
Person in charge	Laura Reynolds
Registered maximum number of places	24
Age range of children	Two and three-year-olds
Opening hours	09.15 to 11.45 and 12.30 to 3.00
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	31 March 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	8 March 2019
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. The provider operates in an area where Welsh is not the dominant language. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words' follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Additional Information:	

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