



Childcare Inspection Report on

Littlefolk Playgroup

**Bethel Chapel
Main Road
Church Village
Pontypridd
CF38 1RL**



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Description of the service

Littlefolk playgroup was registered in December 2009. It provides sessional care for a maximum of 26 children. The registered person and person in charge is Allyson Harding. The service is located in a chapel in Pontypridd. It is open between the hours of 9:15am and 1:15pm, Monday to Friday. Care is provided mainly through the English language and incidental Welsh is used.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children enjoy a range of interesting activities. They are very happy, settled and confident. Children have strong bonds of affection with the staff. The environment in which care is given is bright, safe and stimulating. The leader is committed to ongoing improvement and involves parents and children in discussions about ways to improve the service she offers. Good relationships have been formed with parents.

2. Improvements

Some decoration has taken place in the toilet area and a mirror has been fitted for the children.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made some recommendations and these are detailed at the back of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children appear settled and happy and enjoy their time at the service. They find the range of activities and play experiences interesting and stimulating. They express themselves confidently and have a strong voice.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are listened to and are able to make choices. They are encouraged to speak and express themselves.

During our visit, we saw children play happily in the play room and outdoors and they had a choice of activities. Some children chose to play in the role play area which was set up as a hairdressers. Other children enjoyed playing on tablets, dressing up or completing focussed activities. Children were fully engrossed in playing the game with the staff. Children enjoyed moving freely from one activity to another. They chose where to sit at snack time.

Children at this service have a voice.

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

Children feel safe and relaxed and know that their feelings and concerns are taken into account.

Children were relaxed and at ease with the staff and confidently approached them for help, cuddles and to show off their achievements. Children responded well to praise. We heard the staff praising the children saying, 'Well done' and 'clever boy,' and children smiled in response. New children who were in the process of settling in were given plenty of support. Parents stated that their children had settled well and enjoyed coming to the playgroup and they were very happy with the experiences their children had.

Children are well settled, happy and relaxed and have formed strong bonds of affection with the staff.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are learning how to manage their behaviour, are confident to co-operate and they take turns and share.

The atmosphere in the playgroup was welcoming and we found that children were settled within their surroundings. We saw a child experience their second visit who

was seen to be very relaxed and happy in the staff and other children's company. The child was content in approaching staff for reassurance. Children sat at the table completing an art and craft activity, taking in turns and encouraging one another. We saw children expressing their needs and wishes to the staff and other children at times.

Children interact positively at the service and comply well with rules of socially acceptable behaviour.

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

Children are interested and excited in their play and learning.

Children were fully engaged across the age range during the inspection visit. We observed children enjoying adult-led activities and free play, such as outdoor play with slides, climbing frames. We also saw children using swings, slides, play with cars, dolls and jigsaws, water play and a number-recognition activity. We observed children laughing and having fun exploring in a range of natural materials for example water play, sand and mud. The children showed great delight in the role play area which was set up as a hairdresser. There was also a lot of laughter and smiles throughout the playgroup. Children were enthused and wanted to tell us about their experiences when at the service. Children were self-motivated and fully absorbed in their chosen free play both indoors and outdoors.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning.

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

Children have a variety of experiences that promote their all-round development.

We saw that children developed their skills as they took part in a range of activities such as imaginative play within role play areas, toy cars, building blocks and playing with musical instruments. After snack, they enjoyed time outside playing. They could access the toilet independently or with support from the staff where needed. We saw that most children were confident to choose their play and try new things. We saw that children enjoyed singing songs and they joined in eagerly with familiar responses, repeated phrases and actions. Children were developing their self-help skills; they were encouraged to wash and dry their hands without adult support and wipe their nose by using the tissue station. The children's development records evidenced that they were making excellent progress and developing new skills in line with set targets. Children's speech and language skills were well developed and children clearly told us about the activities they had done that morning. Children ate well using their hands or cutlery as was appropriate to their age and type of food they were eating.

Children have a good range of opportunities to promote their independence.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are very motivated, consistent and thorough in supporting children's development and in keeping them safe and healthy. Staff have a good understanding of the children's individual needs and work together effectively. They manage behaviour very well and provide a range of activities to enable children to play, learn and develop.

Our findings

2.1 How well do staffs keep children safe and healthy?

Staff follow a range of clear policies and procedures to keep children safe and healthy.

Staff are familiar with the service's policy on safeguarding and know what to do if they have any concerns about a child. Staff ensured that there was a great emphasis on healthy eating and outdoor activities. Children were offered water and healthy snacks through the day. The food preparation area was clean and the service had been awarded a level 5 rating by the Food Standards Agency. Staff were aware of children's allergies and there was a record of these clearly displayed in the rooms and on notice boards. We saw good hygiene practices, for example, we saw staff telling children about personal hygiene and safety; we saw children washing hands before meals and after using the toilet without being prompted and we saw that staff used gloves when serving food or changing nappies. Staff ensured that there were risk assessments for activities and outings to keep children as safe as possible.

Children's safety and health is a priority in this service.

2.2 How well do staffs manage interactions?

Staff follow the nursery's behaviour management policy and are consistent in their approach. They are good role models; very calm and respectful to the children and each other.

Staff implemented a comprehensive positive behaviour policy which encouraged them to think about the reasons behind children's behaviour and their stage of development. We saw many examples of staff implementing this effectively throughout the service. We saw absolute consistency in the management of behaviour. Staff made good eye contact with the children and used calm voices to encourage and reinforce good behaviour. We heard lots of 'well done!' as they praised children's efforts and celebrated their achievements.

Staff are highly effective at managing children's interactions. They skilfully promote children's excellent behaviour, confidence, independence and positive relationships.

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

Staff are aware of children's individual needs and plan for the next stages in their play and learning.

Staff ensured that before children started at the service, the parents/carers completed a registration form for their children. The forms contained information including their child's routines, likes and dislikes which helped the staff to settle the children. Staff knew children well through daily observations and sharing information with other staff and parents. Staff monitored younger children's facial expressions and body language to determine their needs. For example we saw staff responding when children were tired and when they needed a nappy change or the toilet. Staff confirmed that settling in procedures were very much child-led.

We looked at records of children's engagement and progress and staff had clearly identified their achievements and the next steps. Staff told us that activities were reviewed weekly to evaluate their effectiveness and then planned for the next month based on each child's individual needs. Keyworkers ensured that those needs were met. We saw that planning included celebrations of different traditions and cultures of the world. Staff had ensured that there was a good balance between child-selected and staff-led activities, both indoors and outdoors. Self-directed play was enhanced by staff asking open ended questions to extend the children's understanding and experiences. Staff gave children time to pursue their interests but never left them playing in isolation and we saw very positive reinforcement from staff.

Staff are dedicated and enthusiastic in promoting children's play, learning and development. They comprehensively meet children's needs and provide them with a range of learning opportunities.

3. Environment

Summary

Children are cared for in a safe, stimulating and imaginative play environment. They have access to a range of resources and an environment that is suited to their needs both indoors and outdoors. The environment on the whole is well maintained and continually developed to encourage exploration and learning, however work is needed in the toilet area.

Our findings

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

Leaders ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment and that unnecessary risks to children are identified and reduced or removed.

The service was secure from unauthorised access and there was a record of all visitors. Most areas of the playgroup, equipment and toys were clean and on the whole we saw very good hygiene practices, however there is a need to address the mould in the toilet area. We looked at risk assessments and saw that they were up to date and covered all areas of the nursery and activities inside and outside. We saw that there were annual tests for heating and electrical equipment and that regular fire drills had taken place.

Leaders have ensured that the nursery environment is as safe as possible.

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

The indoor and outdoor play areas are welcoming, well-decorated and provide a rich environment for learning. There is sufficient space and facilities to meet the needs of different age groups and individual children.

Leaders had made the outdoor play area a high priority and it was used as an integral part of the learning environment. Leaders and staff had thoughtfully designed the outdoor area to allow children to explore a range of play opportunities such as a large grassed area; shelters; suitable flooring, a shed and a separate garden area, which were both used for focused activities and children's free play. A hard surfaced area was used for playing with wheeled toys. The indoor area was laid out to suit the ages of the children in different areas. For example, older children had direct access to the toilets. The environment was being continuously developed to suit children's interests. Leaders had ensured that the environment was bright and welcoming and that children's work and photographs were on display throughout which created a good sense of security and belonging.

Leaders effectively ensure the suitability of the environment

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

Children have access to a wide range of clean, good quality furniture, equipment, toys and materials which meet their needs.

A good range of toys and resources was available for the children such as construction toys and blocks as well as an investigation area. Low level seating and tables were available for children to engage with table top activities or to eat. The outside area had a plentiful array of toys and equipment for the children to use up some of their energy. The toys and equipment were clean and good quality. The outside area was well resourced and equipped.

Leaders ensure that all children can access a wide range of good quality resources and equipment.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The leadership at the service is highly effective and provides clear direction. Leaders thoroughly plan and review the service provided and they fully involve parents and staff. Staff are extremely well supported, well trained and they receive regular supervision and appraisals to improve their skills and knowledge. There are good partnerships with parents and professionals which enhance the well-being of children.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leaders have a clear vision for the service and set clear and relevant policies and procedures that are focused on children's needs. The person in charge creates a very positive ethos where children, parents and staff feel valued.

We found that the service was very well run. The person in charge was very clear about the aims of the service and was a very visible presence at the service. We saw her engaging with children, parents, staff and health professionals throughout the day. She was very open and approachable and she reinforced good practice by celebrating successes and achievements with staff as well as being an excellent role model. Staff welcomed the person in charge's support and advice and children were relaxed and at ease in her presence. We saw that the leaders regularly reviewed the service information, policies and procedures. The statement of purpose accurately reflected the service and the policies we looked at showed a clear understanding of best practice for children with additional needs. Staff told us that new policies and guidance were discussed in regular meetings and during staff supervisions so that everyone understood what was expected. The systems to monitor the development of children were very effective.

Leaders are highly motivated and extremely effective.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Leaders ensure that there is ongoing review and development of the service including the views of children, parents, staff and other professionals.

Leaders showed us an up to date quality of care report which addressed feedback from children, staff and parents and included plans for the future. Children's views had been collected in various ways. Leaders had ensured that staff record developmental milestones and outcomes to monitor the development of children, to plan next steps and review the success of nursery programmes each week. We saw that staff worked very well together as a team, they shared good practice and were very open to ideas for improvement.

There is continuous self-evaluation and thorough planning for improvement.

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

Leaders ensure that staff are well supported; that they are clear about their roles and responsibilities and that resources are sufficient and suitable.

We saw that leaders used staff and resources effectively and that they worked alongside staff and other professionals to meet the children's needs. We spoke to staff and they confirmed that they had received a good induction and that the person in charge gave them regular feedback on their performance, which helped them to work more productively. We saw that the leaders deployed staff effectively to meet the children's needs as well as to promote their job satisfaction. For example, staff took turns for cleaning, food preparation and snack. Staff worked well together and said that they learned from each other. Leaders followed safe recruitment processes. Staff records contained all the required information including DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and identification checks and references. The person in charge ensured that staff received regular supervision and an annual appraisal of their practice and training needs. Training records showed that the leaders had provided all the required training for staff as well as specialised training to meet the needs of individual children.

Leaders manage staff and other resources extremely successfully.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Leaders work with parents to identify children's needs and to keep them informed about their children's progress and well-being. They involve parents in making decisions about their children's care.

We saw that the leaders had collected detailed information from parents about children's needs, preferences and routines before they attended the service and were available to talk to parents each day. Parents were informed about the service, activities and events in a variety of ways including a website and newsletter. We saw clear systems to review children's progress regularly and parents were kept fully informed and invited to contribute and add more information. Regular reports of children's progress were sent home. There were good links with other professionals such as the speech and language service, health visitors and representatives of schemes to improve children's well-being.

The leaders of this service have established very good partnerships with parents and other agencies.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommended that the leaders;

- The statement of purpose includes the service address;
- fire drills to be completed in a timely manner when new children have accessed the service;
- contact Environmental Health for advice around the mould in the toilet area;
- tighter cleaning regime to be in place for the toilet area and
- take into account the Welsh Government Infection control audit tool and

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector visited the service on 27 September 2018 and 28 September 2018. The first visit was unannounced. During the visits we;

- spoke to children, staff, and the person in charge;
- observed children and staff in all areas of the playgroup and outdoors;
- looked at a sample of documentation and policies including staff files, registers, children's development records, the statement of purpose, policies and procedures and the service's quality of care review report and
- we read information about the service held by CIW (Care Inspectorate Wales) including the Self Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) and previous inspection reports.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Sessional Day Care
Registered Person	Allyson Harding
Person in charge	Allyson Harding
Registered maximum number of places	26
Age range of children	2-4 years
Opening hours	9:15am – 1:15pm Monday to Friday, term time
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	21 May 2014
Dates of this inspection visits	27 and 28 September 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 is a service that is working towards providing the active Welsh offer.
Additional Information:	