



Childcare Inspection Report on

Little Peeps Playgroup

**Oakdale Community Centre
Penrhwi Avenue
Oakdale, Blackwood
Caerphilly
NP12 0JB**



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Description of the service

Little Peeps Playgroup is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to provide sessional care for 24 children between two and four years old. The service is open 9am to 11.00am and 12:00pm to 2:00pm, Monday to Friday during school term time. It operates from Oakdale Community Centre in Oakdale. Christine Mann is the Registered Person (RP) and the Person in Charge (PiC) who has overall responsibility for the day to day running of the service. Care is delivered through the English language with very good use of incidental Welsh.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are able to enjoy and learn from a wide range of interesting activities and experiences. They are settled and at ease in their surroundings and engage well with other children and their carers. Staff have a good understanding of the children's needs and provide nurturing, supportive care. The group is well managed on a day to day basis by the RP. The indoor environment provides excellent play and learning opportunity for children. However, the RP is not meeting all the legal responsibilities in relation to ensuring risks are managed appropriately in the outdoor area.

2. Improvements

Recommendations from the previous inspection were completed as a priority at the time. Other improvements have been actioned following this inspection including;

- Recording staff and children's actual times of arrival and departure and
- development profiles have been reviewed and a new set of assessment documents are ready to be completed for all children.

3. Requirements and recommendations

The service is not meeting all the legal responsibilities in relation to ensuring risks are managed appropriately in the outdoor play area. We have not issued a non compliance for this matter as the RP has closed the outdoor area until all repair work has been completed by Caerphilly Borough Council who is responsible for the maintenance of the building.

We made a number of recommendations which are outlined in the body and end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Outcomes for children are very good. They are safe, their needs are met and they have very good play opportunities to promote their all round development. Their independence is encouraged and they are forming positive relationships with their peers and practitioners.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are supported to make their own decisions about how they spend their time at the club. They are able to choose from a wide variety of stimulating opportunities. Children's self-expression is encouraged and we heard staff carefully listening to children and showing interest in their conversations. Staff gave children time to respond to questions and gave positive responses to them which acknowledged and valued their attempts at communication. All children joined in with circle time activities. Examples of this were observed throughout a puppet session where the 'granddad' puppet was used as an excellent interactive resource to encourage children to speak, join in and take turns. The children were very happy to speak in front of their peers, sing and tell stories to their friends and the staff. Children are encouraged to express their opinions and we saw that they contributed to decisions regarding songs and stories. Staff responded in turn with words of encouragement and praise. We saw that most children were able to make appropriate choices because they were familiar with the routines and trusted the staff to help them when needed.

Children's confidence is enhanced with the opportunities to express themselves freely.

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

Children are content and have positive emotional attachments with their carers. Children who are new to the service are provided with the individual close contact needed to feel safe. Staff managed new children who were adjusting to the routine of the playgroup environment, with skill and a great deal of kindness and empathy. An example of this was observed where a new child was initially not ready to join in the activities and snack time routine. An individual member of staff stayed close by the child allowing them freedom to explore at their own pace. She encouraged the child gently by using fun and games to help them join in. In time the child joined in and was seen to settle. A second settling in child occasionally cried for their parent. The staff gently lifted the child up and reassured them that their parent would be back soon. The child settled again and went back to play. Children have positive relationships with staff who support them and they were confident that their emotional needs would be met.

Children's emotional well-being is promoted by the individual attention and warm responses they receive.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are in the early stages of understanding their own feelings and those of the people around them. We saw that some children liked to play alone and that most children cooperated and played with others. We saw that children were able to wait and take turns during snack time. Most children are developing coping strategies to deal with the times when they have to wait or do something they do not want to do.

We saw examples of spontaneous affection shown by some children to their friends and to staff.

Children receive good support to develop emotional resilience.

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

Children are engaged in their play and learning but can also relax and enjoy quiet times. They have the freedom to explore their environment indoors. They are able to concentrate for an appropriate amount of time for their stage of development. They have extended periods of child initiated, uninterrupted play as well as frequent opportunities for adults to play alongside them. We saw that the children had access to a large variety of activities and resources which were appropriate for their age and stage of development. Throughout the session there was a good balance of both self and adult directed play available for children to choose from. We saw that children could join an adult led activity with the freedom to leave for an alternative activity at any time. This led to a very busy but relaxed atmosphere with children engrossed in play and learning of their choosing.

Children enjoy their play and learning at this service that recognises the importance of children's play experiences for their overall development.

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

Children make progress as their development is monitored and activities are planned to help them gain new skills. Child records evidenced that they are developing new skills in line with set targets. During free play, we observed that children's independence and development were promoted. Children have access to a good range of experiences which enable them to gain self help skills. The routines and procedures within the sessions are designed to support children to be as independent as possible. We spoke to the RP about developing the snack time routine in order to give children further opportunities to develop independence including pouring their own drinks and selecting their snack. Fresh water is available for the children when they choose and the PiC was open to the suggestion of developing a water station to allow the children to access this water independently. Tissues are also stored within easy reach of children who are encouraged by staff to use them as needed.

Children's self esteem and sense of achievement is enhanced with the opportunities provided to develop independence skills.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are well qualified and experienced. They create good opportunities for children to develop a healthy lifestyle and promote children's development by planning a good variety of appropriate activities. They give warm and sensitive care and have consistent and realistic expectations of children.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Children are kept safe and well because staff implement the playgroup's policies and activities to promote children's health. There is a designated child protection officer who demonstrated that they understand their duty of care in relation to safeguarding children. We recommended that all staff complete safeguarding training. The RP agreed to update the child protection policy with information on Prevent duty. This is a government strategy which places a responsibility on providers to protect children from radicalisation and extremism. The play group has achieved a gold standard Healthy Snack Award designed to promote and protect all aspects of children's health. The RP agreed to update the menu with information on food allergens. Staff help children understand why they need to wash their hands at certain times. Children's specific dietary needs are identified and staff provide healthy snacks and drinks. An audit of their infection control has been completed to ensure they are following up to date hygiene procedures. The outside area is not currently available for use; however, other forms of physical activity such as busy feet form part of each session to ensure children are active. Staff implement the Caerphilly Healthy Early Years Scheme (HEYs) initiative. An appropriate level of staff are trained in paediatric first aid and aware of children's specific health needs.

Staff are appropriately trained and implement the required policies and procedures to ensure that children's health and welfare is promoted.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff have realistic expectations of children and strategies to manage children's social behaviour are age appropriate and positive. Staff work closely together to ensure they have a consistent approach in line with their behaviour policy. Acting as good role models, staff encourage children to undertake tasks such as tidying up and sit with them for their snacks to promote their social skills.

Staff promote positive interactions between the children by working closely together to implement consistent and effective strategies.

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

Staff are motivated, well qualified and keen to promote children's development. Staff work well together and are aware of their individual roles; this helps ensure that the sessions run smoothly, allows them time to engage with children and provide responsive, nurturing care. Children's personal needs are attended to promptly. Staff knew the children well and were sensitive to their different needs, abilities and backgrounds. Children's development is monitored and assessed in order to plan for the next steps in their learning. This is documented for the children and activities are

planned according to children's individual needs. We discussed how this could be further developed by reviewing their current profiles for children. Staff knew when to engage with children, using questioning well to extend children's language skills. They encouraged children to make their own decisions, and when to allow children to play uninterrupted. Parents we spoke to and their questionnaires indicated that they feel their children are developing well since starting at the group. The RP is aware of those children who may require extra help and works with parents and the local authority to try and ensure they receive the support they need. The club has signed up for the Caerphilly Road to bilingualism and we noted that the use of incidental Welsh was very good and integrated well into the session. Resources help reflect a diverse society and the RP told us a variety of festivals are celebrated to help give children a multicultural perspective.

Staff have the training, experience and the motivation to ensure that children receive a high level of support and their development is promoted.

3. Environment

Summary

Overall, appropriate systems are in place to ensure that the physical environment is secure and safe. The room used for play is large, stimulating and comfortable. The lay out and range of resources allows children to make choices and follow their interests. However, we noted that there were risks in the outdoor play area to children's safety that required urgent attention.

Our findings

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

Overall, the RP ensures children are able to enjoy a safe and secure environment. Maintenance checks for the building and appliances are carried out by Caerphilly Borough Council. The RP ensures that annual risk assessments are reviewed as necessary and that daily checks of the premises are carried out so that any actions required to ensure children's safety take place promptly. Accident records are maintained appropriately. We recommended that these are audited regularly to help identify any recurring accidents with specific children or certain areas of the premises. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly and recorded. We recommended that these fire drill records included comments on how the drill was carried out. However, we saw that the exterior wall in the outdoor play area had large sections of peeling paint which were all over the play area. There were exposed drainage holes in the wall which could be a hazard for children. We informed the RP that this was an area of non compliance. We have not issued a non compliance notice as the RP explained that she has been in contact with the committee of Oakdale Community Centre to action these repairs. She had also closed the outdoor area for children's use until all repairs had been completed. We undertook a third visit to the setting and observed that extensive repair work had commenced on the wall and the RP conformed that she would inform us when the work had been completed.

In general, leaders ensure that the play group provides a safe environment for children, however, risks need to be identified promptly removed to ensure children's safety.

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

The indoor play space is very well organised and child friendly with plenty of room for children to move freely. The space available to children is organised in zoned areas around the seven areas of learning and is considered from a child's perspective. The indoor area provides a rich environment for play and active learning. The layout and design promotes children's independence and is welcoming and friendly. All resources are clearly labelled and accessible to children and this encourages independence and choice. There is a separate kitchen to which children do not have access and an office for confidential conversations.

The RP is keen to ensure that the environment is of a high standard and continually improving.

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

Children have access to a wide range of suitable resources and equipment. There is appropriate furniture for children to sit comfortably to undertake table top activities and eat their snacks. There is a very good range of resources to promote children's learning and development. In general, these are clearly visible, easily accessible to the children and suitably located in the corresponding play areas. The play group has some multicultural resources as well as those which reflect the wider society and promote equality. We recommended that they further develop the range of multi – cultural and Welsh resources available. The RP told us that toys are cleaned regularly and rotated with those in storage to help maintain children's interest and there are plans in place to provide additional resources to extend children's learning opportunities.

The RP ensures that the quality of resources and equipment promotes the development of children's skills and knowledge.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The management team and staff are committed to providing a very good service for the children at the play club and ensure the development of the service. The views of parents and children are welcomed and influence changes.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Managers have a sense of purpose which promotes and sustains improvement and good outcomes for children. There is a Statement of Purpose (SoP) in place that provides an accurate picture of the service and is clear about what parents can expect when they register their children. We recommended that this is updated with information about the current restriction of access to the outdoor area. The RP communicates high expectations about achieving consistently high standards and all staff are involved in this process. She recognises the skills and potential of all her staff and supports them to provide a consistently high quality service. There are clear aims for the service which are focused on children's needs, implemented by staff and shared with parents. We saw examples of monitoring and evaluation documents which ensure that outcomes for children are planned and are informed by children's interests. We recommended that they update all documentation with the change to name of Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

The play group is led by an enthusiastic and well organised RP who creates a positive atmosphere which focuses on ensuring good outcomes for children.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The RP takes part in a number of quality assurance schemes to help improve the quality of their service. They seek the views of parents and children and we could see that they have acted on the suggestions made. The RP told us they will be undertaking a review of the quality of their care when required by CIW in the form of the SASS and will produce a written report which will be made available to parents. We noted that actions recommended by Environmental Health and HEYs were actioned appropriately in order to improve the quality of the environment and service delivered to children. We recommended that they update their complaints procedure with how children can raise a concern and details CIWs role in dealing with complaints.

The RP draws on improvements identified through quality assurance schemes and the views of parents and children to evaluate the service and plan for improvement.

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

Staff told us they feel well supported and encouraged to develop their professional skills and knowledge to help improve and develop their practice. Recruitment procedures are appropriate to ensure that the staff employed are suitable to care for children. Staff receive supervision and appraisal which gives leaders the opportunity to review staff practice, offer positive comments, and identify any support needed or training required. We recommended that leaders update their training on supervision

and appraisals and complete supervision of staff on a more frequent basis. An induction system is in place which staff told us enabled them to feel confident in their roles.

There are effective procedures in place to recruit and support staff and assist with their development in order to ensure good outcomes for children.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The play group works closely with parents to promote good outcomes for children. Parents are invited to share their knowledge about their child before they start so that their child's preferences and needs may be identified and appropriate plans to support them put in place. Parents told us that there are a number of good communication systems at the play group including regular feedback. The RP told us that they have good links with the teachers of the schools where the children attend to ensure that children's developmental needs are well understood and aid their smooth transition into mainstream education.

The play group works effectively with parents and relevant schools to ensure children's well being is promoted.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Areas of non compliance identified at this inspection

We found that the service was not compliant with regulations 25 (a) in respect of managing risks in the outdoor environment. These were not matters of serious concern however we notified the provider in order that she could take remedial action.

5.3 Recommendations for improvement

- Update the menu with information on food allergens;
- ensure children can reach the sink independently in the washroom area;
- increase the availability of Welsh and multi cultural resources;
- developing the snack time routine in order to give children further opportunities to develop independence including pouring their own drinks and selecting their snack;
- all staff to update safeguarding training including Prevent duty;
- RP to update training on supervision and appraisals and complete on a more frequent basis;
- update children's registration forms with doctors contact details and the designated pick up person;
- review assessment files and further developed current profiles for children;
- audit accidents and medication records for children;
- update fire drills records with comments on how the drill was carried out;
- update all documentation with the change to name of Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW);
- update complaints procedure with how children can raise a concern and CIW role in dealing with complaints and
- update child protection policy with information on Prevent duty.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector undertook three visits to the service. The third visit was used to assess the progress of the repair work on the external wall in the play area of the setting. We observed the children undertaking their activities and the care provided by the staff;

- We spoke with several parents via phone calls and reviewed a sample of CIW questionnaires in order to ascertain their views;
- we looked at an extensive range of records and documents including staff files, accident records, policies and procedures, children's developmental records and children's individual targets;
- we looked at the premises, risk assessments and other documentation relating to safety measures and took account of the security measures in place and
- we spoke with the RP and staff to obtain their views and clarify information about the running of the play group and future plans as well as considering the information given to us through two CIW staff questionnaires.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Christine Mann
Person in charge	Christine Mann
Registered maximum number of places	24
Age range of children	2-5years
Opening hours	9am to 11.00am and 12:00pm to 2:00pm, Monday to Friday during school term time
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	30 May 2015
Dates of this inspection visits	17 May 2018 & 18 May 2018 & 15 June 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	