



Childcare Inspection Report on

Machen Village Hall Playgroup

**Machen Village Hall
The Crescent
Machen
Caerphilly
CF83 8ND**



Date Inspection Completed

12/06/2019

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Description of the service

Machen Village Hall Playgroup registered in September 2003 to provide care for a maximum of 30 children. It currently operates as full day care, providing care for children between the ages of two and four years. The service operates from the village hall in Machen, which is owned by Caerphilly County Borough Council. The Registered Person (RP) is Heather Street, who is also the Person in Charge. The service operates from 8.15am to 3pm, Monday to Friday. It includes a playgroup, breakfast club and wraparound care for children attending the local school nursery. The main language of the service is English with use of incidental Welsh.

Summary

1. Overall assessment

This was a focused inspection that only looked at some aspects of the well-being, care and development and leadership and management themes. We found that children are well settled, happy and engaged in a variety of appropriate play and learning opportunities. In the main, policies and procedures support practitioners to provide safe care for children. The service is generally well managed, although some attention is required to ensure the service meets the regulations in all areas.

2. Improvements

The following recommendations from the last inspection report have been addressed:

- The policies and risk assessments identified as requiring improvement at the time of the last inspection have been reviewed;
- practitioners personnel files have been re organised;
- the registered person has developed a system to ensure that they are confident the building is safe because they have copies of building maintenance certificates;
- more opportunities for independence have been provided at mealtimes;
- children's developmental records have been improved; and
- routines have been considered to provide opportunities for children who do not wish to take part in group activities.

In addition, attention has been given to the outside play area and it is now a clean, inviting and interesting area for children to play.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We have advised the registered person that improvements are needed in relation to maintaining attendance records (regulation 30 (1) (a) Schedule 3 6 - Keeping of records) in order to fully meet the legal requirements. A notice has not been issued on this occasion, as there was no immediate or significant impact for children using the service. We expect the registered person to take action to rectify this and it will be followed up at the next inspection.

We made recommendations regarding reviewing specific policies and procedures, record keeping and the key worker system. More information can be found in section five of this report.

1. Well-being

Summary

This was a focused inspection, we have not considered this theme in full, and therefore we have not issued any ratings.

Children are happy and settled at the service. They have a good choice of activities and are able to develop a good range of skills appropriate for their age and stage of development. They have warm relationships with practitioners, engaging them in their play. They enjoy their play and learning, because they are interested in the activities available.

Our findings

Children make choices and decisions frequently. They moved between activities freely, spending time exploring items that interested them. Most children speak up with confidence, making their needs known to practitioners and asking questions. For example, we heard children ask practitioners for help to glue a picture of Humpty Dumpty and asking to play outside or to use the toilet and they were supported to do this.

Children are settled and have formed positive attachments. We saw children engage in activities with confidence and enthusiasm. We frequently saw small groups of children engage positively with each other playing 'dens' under a table. On numerous occasions, we saw children approach practitioners for support or a cuddle before going to continue what they were doing.

Children are beginning to understand concepts such as sharing, waiting and taking turns. They are developing caring relationships with practitioners and peers. They readily approached practitioners to engage with them and called them 'aunty', providing a relaxed and informal atmosphere. Some children play alongside others, which is appropriate for the age and stage of development. However, we saw older children chose to play with others, starting to explore rules of behaviour. They listened to practitioners and responded positively when they were reminded to be kind, or to give something back until it was their turn. This reinforced their understanding of what behaviour was acceptable.

Children are happy, relaxed and enjoy their play and learning. They enjoy a good range of free play activities, which captures their interest and stimulates thinking and learning. We heard children laughing and some sang songs spontaneously. Children were confident to explore their environment seeking out activities that interested them. Many spent much of the time outdoors, happily riding on toys, playing in the sand or climbing on the play frame.

They engaged practitioners in their play, enquiring further about an activity that interested them. Other children used their imagination and adapted equipment to support their play.

Children have good opportunities to develop a range of skills. Younger children were supported to try to do things for themselves, such as eating and using the toilet. They were able to develop their own interests by having the freedom to play with their chosen activities for most of the session. They enjoyed listening and answering questions posed by practitioners, extending their language and communication skills.

2. Care and Development

Summary

This was a focused inspection, we have not considered this theme in full, and therefore we have not issued any ratings.

Practitioners are very experienced and confident in their role. They are knowledgeable regarding implementing procedures that keep children safe and healthy. They manage interactions and children's behaviour positively. They know the children well and strive to meet their individual needs effectively.

Our findings

Practitioners are very experienced in their roles, with most having worked at the service for many years. In the main, there are good policies and procedures in place to keep children safe, which practitioners implement well. There is a child protection procedure in place but this did not make it clear what action would be taken in the event of an allegation being made about a practitioner or manager. We spoke with all managers and practitioners regarding a variety of safeguarding matters. They were all able to confidently tell us of the correct action that would be taken in the event of having any safeguarding concerns. They also outlined clearly how they could escalate any concerns if needed. Additionally, staff were knowledgeable about the policies on how to record and monitor pre-existing injuries and accidents, but there were no records to show they understood these procedures. Practitioners were clear regarding the process to change nappies and we observed them using gloves and keeping records in line with the policy, including noting any issues. The policy did not include reporting any marks that may only be viewed during nappy changing.

Practitioners manage and support children's social development effectively ensuring that they follow the guidance laid out in the behaviour management policy. We noted that they responded to any behaviour matters positively and appropriately, focusing on positive reinforcement and encouragement using gentle reminders to support children's understanding. For example, during a disagreement between two children, we heard a practitioner explain clearly to children reminding them of the importance of waiting their turn. She then asked the children if they understood, to which they responded yes. There was frequent praise and acknowledgement of children's achievements, giving children a sense of pride and self-worth as a result.

The consistent team of practitioners promote children's play and learning effectively and provide warm and responsive care. They were on hand to support children when required

and sat down with children to participate in tabletop activities. For example, during a craft activity we heard a practitioner extend a child's thinking and develop their language skills by asking open questions. The team plan a good range of play and learning activities and children were fully engaged in activities during the visit. Additionally, practitioners review the effectiveness of their planning to ensure that the activities available to children meet their needs. Photographic evidence and planning records showed that children have the opportunities to celebrate key dates such as Remembrance Day, and cultural events such as Chinese New Year to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Practitioners complete observations and assessments of children's development and identify their individual needs to plan for the next stage in their development. We noted that there was no key worker system operated and the registered person explained how the service operated to ensure children received as consistent care as possible from practitioners. This included maintaining a consistent staff group who know the children well and staff meeting regularly to share information about children's needs. We saw that staff supervised the children well, whilst allowing them space to make their own decisions regarding their play. Practitioners introduced Welsh into the session using songs and basic Welsh phrases.

3. Environment

Summary

This was a focused inspection, we have not considered this theme, and therefore we have not issued any ratings.

However, we found that the registered person had set up a system to ensure she is confident that the premises is safe. This included ensuring risk assessments are updated regularly and keeping copies of building maintenance certificates.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

This was a focused inspection, we have not considered this theme in full, and therefore we have not issued any ratings.

Overall, the registered person manages the service well and is receptive to advice and recommendations from other professional agencies. She is keen to make improvements to the service to benefit the children and meet regulations and national minimum standards. She manages practitioners effectively and has developed strong partnerships with parents, the community and other professionals such as the local school.

Our findings

The service is generally run in an organised and effective manner. The registered person has managed the service and most of the practitioners have worked there for a number of years. Over the years, policies, procedures and record keeping have evolved. There are generally good systems in place, although some procedures, namely child protection and nappy changing, need to be reviewed further. The statement of purpose accurately reflects the service. We found record keeping was inconsistent. For example, the children's files we saw contained all the required information, enabling the service to be responsive to their needs. However, contracts between parents and the service were signed by parents but not all were signed by the registered person. We also found records of attendance did not always record the time practitioners were present to care for children or the actual time that children were at the service.

The registered person told us about how she has strived to operate a good service by keeping herself updated regarding best practice such as Prevent and monitoring children's development. She is receptive to advice from CIW and is keen to make any improvements required. She has acted on recommendations made at the last inspection.

The registered person is clear regarding her responsibility to employ and manage practitioners effectively. We saw records that showed practitioners had monthly one to one supervision/appraisal sessions with managers to discuss practice and any other matters that may be required to support them in their role. Practitioners also told us how they attended regular staff meetings that kept them updated regarding any changes to policies and procedures and any matters that are relevant to their care of children. All practitioners told us how much they enjoyed working at the service. They worked well together as a team, smoothly transitioning between activities such as nappy changing, setting up activities and supervising the children in their chosen activity.

Managers and practitioners have developed good partnerships with parents and provide them with sufficient information so they can support their children's development at the service. They have strong links with the local school and have effective transition arrangements that support children to move from the service to the school. Additionally, they have established good communication methods for the wrap around service, ensuring information is conveyed to parents effectively. The service also has links with the local authority regarding offering the Child Care Offer and with the Safeguarding Training Officer. The service is well established in the local area and has developed connections with the nearby allotment owners, who provide some plants for children to grow in the outside area.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Review the child protection policy;
- consider the benefits to children of operating a key worker system;
- review the nappy changing policy;
- ensure that contracts are signed by all parties; and
- ensure all staff sign to confirm their understanding of policies.

6. How we undertook this inspection

We undertook a focused inspection of the service to consider information shared with us through our concerns process. We also took the opportunity to consider any progress made following recommendations made at the last inspection:

One inspector undertook an unannounced visit, spending approximately five hours at the service. We:

- reviewed a variety of information held by CIW;
- spoke to all practitioners and leaders;
- observed children engage in activities for a relatively short period of time;
- we considered some operational records and policies and procedures; and
- provided feedback to the registered person.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Heather Street
Person in charge	Heather Street
Registered maximum number of places	30
Age range of children	2 years – 4 years
Opening hours	8.15am – 9.15am Breakfast Club 9.15am – 3.00pm Playgroup
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	28 September 2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	12 June 2019
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. This may be 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. 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:	

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