



Childcare Inspection Report on

Cwmlai Playgroup

**Cwmlai School
Penygarreg Road
Thomastown
Porth
CF39 8AS**



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Description of the service

Cwmlai Playgroup provides sessional day care including wrap around care for up to 32 children between the ages of two and four years old. The service was registered in 1994.

The session operates during term time mainly, although it does provide a service for three weeks of the main school holidays. The service runs from 9am to 1pm Monday to Friday with some children leaving at 11.50am, wrap around service runs until 12.15pm and then other children leaving at 1pm. Mrs Mair Harris is both the registered person and the person in charge.

The service is primarily run in English although the Welsh language is also incorporated.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children attending the playgroup are happy and engaged in their play. Children are developing their independence; and are very familiar with the routines of the service. The service has a team of staff members who have worked together for some years. The registered person and the deputy leader have been in post since the service opened.

2. Improvements

A new shed for the storage of outside toys has been purchased.

3. Requirements and recommendations

No non-compliance was noted at this inspection.

We made four recommendations relating to training, supervision and appraisal and additional documentation under the leadership and management themes

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are happy and settled at the service. They have formed good relationships with their peers and staff who care for them. There are plenty of opportunities for children to follow their own interests and develop their skills.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children at the service have a voice and all attempts to communicate are valued.

Children were consulted appropriately and most of the activities were child led, allowing children to follow their own interests. They made appropriate choices because they knew the options available to them. Conversation was encouraged and children were confident to communicate, with staff and each other, there was lots of chatter and laughter throughout the day. We saw children confidently approaching staff to ask for help or just to chat. Children were clear about what they liked and disliked and responded appropriately to these, for example, during snack time they choose their snacks from a plate. Children clearly said “no” to anything they did not want, for example, some children did not want any banana but others wanted the toast or buttered crackers, others confidently asked for second helpings if they liked it.

Children have a strong voice.

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

Children at the service are happy and settle well.

Children are familiar with the daily routines. They separate well from parents and settle well within the service. One child was tearful, but soon calmed after having a cuddle with a staff member. They then happily took part in an activity in the tuff tray. Children’s work displayed on the walls, provided a sense of belonging. Children talked animatedly about their families, holidays and things they liked with staff.

Children feel valued, safe and happy.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are developing positive relationships; they interact well with staff and peers.

Children play happily together or alongside each other depending on their stage of development. They were polite, said ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ and were beginning to understand the rules of behaviour. We heard lots of praise and encouragement for good manners and joining in with activities. Children cleared toys away before circle and snack time and smiled and

responded happily at the response from staff who told them *'thank you so much for helping, good job guys'*. The children were excited at this recognition and one child said *'I like to help, I do it at home'*. A number of children told us they like coming to the playgroup because they enjoyed playing with their new friends.

Children are supported to develop relationships and are beginning to understand the rules of behaviour.

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

Children are enthusiastic and enjoy their play and learning.

We saw that there were many opportunities throughout the day for children to take part in free play. This was interspersed with a focused adult led activity, following the week's theme of 'All about me' and quieter times when children enjoyed a story and some singing during circle time. During free play, adults played alongside the children, supporting and facilitating this, constantly engaging with children. Children influence the activities planned by staff and engage well in adult led activities. Children accessed the resources independently from the good variety available. One child played alone for some time; absorbed in a jigsaw on the floor, at one point they asked a staff member for some help with it. Most children listened very well to stories and showed their enjoyment and engagement by their positive responses. During free play, children played indoors or outside in the playground. The doors were open so that they could make independent choices and they came back and fore to the playroom during this time. Children responded enthusiastically to praise from staff.

Children are motivated and enjoy the activities provided.

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

Children are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop and become independent.

Children are developing self-help skills such as toileting and hand washing, and respond positively to the encouragement and guidance they receive from staff. Children developed independence skills by setting the tables out with plates and cups for snack and lunchtime and then helping to clear away. They selected what they wanted for snack from the options put before them. When it was time to go home they got their coats from the coat pegs, tried to put them on independently, and got their lunch bags and backpacks. Records showed that most children develop well in line with their age and stage of development. They lead their own learning for much of the session, supported well by staff. Children enjoyed outdoor play, with free flow access from the playroom.

Children are developing well and are becoming independent learners.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are motivated and consistent in supporting children's development and in keeping them safe and healthy. They have a very good understanding of the children's individual needs and work together effectively. They have knowledge of the service's policies and procedures including safeguarding. Staff responded well to all children. 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 practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff have a good understanding of the need to keep children safe and healthy.

Conversations with staff demonstrated that they have a sound knowledge of safeguarding procedures and know who to refer concerns to. Safeguarding training was up to date however, leaders and staff were not aware of 'Prevent', which is a government strategy to help recognise signs of extremism and radicalisation. The service provided children with a healthy snack but children bring packed lunches with them, which they eat together before leaving. We saw well-recorded accident records, dated, and signed by staff and parents/carers. One child grazed their knee during outside play and we saw first aid administered appropriately whilst the staff member constantly reassured the child. Daily registers recorded the children present during each session including the times children arrive and leave.

Parents can be confident that staff keep children safe and healthy at the service.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff effectively manage interactions and have good relationships with children. Staff model good behaviour and use positive methods to manage interactions.

Staff managed interactions very well. We saw staff engage with children, chat to them respectfully and praise them for their efforts and achievements. We heard staff saying '*amazing*' and '*wow that's great guys*' and '*good job guys*'. We heard staff praise the children for their good manners and for helping to clear away toys before snack. Staff sat at the children's level on the floor or at the tables and used appropriate language to communicate with the children. Staff encouraged children to be responsible and asked particular children to lay out the plates on the tables for snack. Staff intervened when children wanted the same toys; they gave children explanations, used distraction methods and ensured that they took turns. Behaviour was very good, but when reminders were needed, these were done in a positive and sympathetic manner and did not interrupt children's play and learning.

Staff are strong at managing interactions.

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

Staff are nurturing, caring and responsive to individual needs.

We heard good use of opportunities for language development in both English and Welsh during focused activities and when staff played alongside children during free play. We heard staff talking to children during role-play in the kitchen area saying *'are you making a cake'* and *'how lovely'*. Children and staff sat on the floor, had circle time, and sang songs in Welsh as well as pointing out the colours on the wall display in Welsh and English. Children appeared to be forming positive relationships with peers and staff who knew them well and responded well to their needs. Staff knew the children well and understood the stages of development for the children in their key working groups. This was evident through the activity planning which all staff contributed to and reflected on. We saw that the activities planned were interesting and stimulating. Children's progress is monitored and next steps in learning identified, using the foundation phase assessments.

Staff promote children's development well and meet their individual needs.

3. Environment

Summary

Children are cared for in a safe and stimulating play environment. They have access to a wide range of resources indoors and a secure outdoor play area that has a number of different areas for children to enjoy.

Our findings

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

The leader ensures that children are cared for in a safe, clean environment and that unnecessary risks to children are identified and reduced or removed.

The premises were safe and secure and we were asked to show our identification on arrival. Staff members completed risk assessments on a daily basis and records confirmed that these were reviewed formally every six months. Fire drills were carried out regularly and logged by the leader; however the last one carried out in partnership with the school had not been logged. We saw good hygiene practices; tables were cleaned between activities and snacks, staff wore aprons and gloves for food preparation, and nappy changes, all staff were familiar with cleaning routines. The leader told us that there were annual tests for heating equipment, electrical installations and portable electrical appliances but the local authority carried this out and no certificates were available for inspection although we saw those from the previous year.

The leader is committed to providing a very safe, clean and secure environment for the children.

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

The leader ensures that the environment is suitable for the age range of children in their care and offers a wide range of play and learning opportunities.

Indoor and outdoor areas are interesting and stimulating and cater for individual preferences. The playroom is arranged so that the foundation phase areas such as writing, role-play and mathematical development are accessible. There is a spacious reading corner; a good range of books and comfortable furniture so that children could relax whilst looking at books. The room is well decorated, bright and stimulating with displays of children's work and photographs. Storage is at low level and labelled in English and Welsh, allowing children to access resources independently. Furniture is child sized and of good quality and effective organisation of the room allows children to move around freely and explore the environment safely.

The leader ensures that children are cared for in a suitable environment.

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

The leader ensures that children have access to a good range of quality resources.

Resources are plentiful, ensuring that children have good variety and choice. We saw staff changing resources at each table whilst children enjoyed outdoor play ensuring that there was a wide variety of experiences for them. The outside play area has equipment to develop physical activity such as slides, trikes and scooters as well as a mud kitchen and sand and water play. When the schoolyard is not in use, the children access this to play with the bikes and scooters. . There is a woodland area around the school buildings and the leader told us that children enjoy collecting leaves for art and craft work in the autumn and looking at the variety of trees and plants.

Resources are plentiful, of good quality and suitable for the age range of children.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The leadership at the playgroup is effective. The service meets most of the national minimum standards and regulations. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities which means that the service runs smoothly on a day to day basis. However, some improvements are required in this area.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leadership of the service is effective.

The leader has a clear vision for the service and an up to date operational plan that is shared with staff. A Statement of Purpose is in place that provides an accurate picture of what the service offers, however there was no evidence that this had been reviewed since April 2015. Policies and procedures are detailed and the confidentiality and data protection policy were reviewed recently in light of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), however there was no evidence that other policies had been reviewed since April 2015.

The person in charge was open, friendly, caring and approachable and praised good practice. We viewed a sample of child record forms and parental contracts and found them to be in line with regulations. The playgroup is not able to provide an “Active Offer” of the Welsh language, although we heard a good deal of incidental Welsh used throughout the service.

Leadership is generally effective but improvements are required.

4.2 How effective is self-evaluation and planning for improvement?

There are systems in place for self-evaluation and planning for improvement.

The service has produced an annual quality of care report, which takes into account the views of parents, although, this could be improved by including views of children. Detailed activity and learning planning was in place and was evaluated by the leader and staff; this could be improved by gaining children’s views of the activities on offer. Parents we spoke to and those who had completed questionnaires were very complimentary about the service and the way in which their children were developing.

Leaders are committed to the on-going improvement of the service.

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

The leader manages and supports staff well.

Staff we spoke to reported that they felt well supported and could talk to the leader about any issues they may have. Registers and rotas we saw clearly recorded the number and names of staff and children in attendance during each session and which play worker was working with each group of children. Recruitment processes were robust and all necessary checks had been undertaken. Staff all had valid paediatric first aid and safeguarding training but food hygiene training was out of date. We saw however, that staff had received limited developmental training over the past few years. The leader has a good understanding of current best practice and ensures that this is disseminated to staff, informally and through staff meetings. Staff records showed that a process was in place to evaluate their own practice but this was not reflected in regular recorded supervision and appraisal records.

Management of practitioners, staff and other resources is generally efficient although improvements are required in this area.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The leader ensures that there are effective partnerships in place.

Detailed information had been gathered about children's individual needs and preferences prior to children starting. Parent views had been gathered and used to inform the self-evaluation process. Parents we spoke to told us that the service was invaluable and that their children enjoyed attending. The leader reported that they have strong links with the nursery teacher in the school and this helps greatly with the transition to education.

Overall, partnerships are well established and effective.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Areas of non-compliance from this inspection

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommended that leaders:

- Ensure copies of the service of all electrical installations, gas safety inspections and PAT testing are available for inspection ;
- provide evidence that policies and procedures and the statement of purpose are regularly reviewed;
- be aware of their responsibilities under the 'Prevent' strategy;
- ensure all staff involved in food preparation and handling have up to date Food Hygiene training;
- ensure staff receive regular recorded supervision and appraisals and
- when next reviewing documentation change any reference of CSSIW to CIW.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection, undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections.

- One inspector made one unannounced visit on 26 September 2018 for a total of three and a half hours;
- we held discussions with staff, children and the person in charge;
- we read staff files, children's files, policies and procedures, risk assessments, accident logs and planning documents;
- we gathered feedback from three parents during discussions on the day;
- we read information about the service held by CIW including the self-assessment of service statement (SASS) and previous inspection reports and
- we gave verbal feedback at the end of the inspection.

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 Sessional Day Care
Registered Person	Mair Harris
Person in charge	Mair Harris
Registered maximum number of places	32
Age range of children	2-4 years
Opening hours	9am-11.50am 9am-12.15pm 9am -1pm Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	12 October 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	26 September 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 service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of children who use or intend to use their service. We recommend that the child minder considers Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words' strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.
Additional Information:	