



Childcare Inspection Report on

Bluebells Flying Start Playgroup

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

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



Date Inspection Completed

11/12/2019

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Description of the service

Bluebells Flying Start Playgroup is one of several flying start settings operated by Newport City Council (NCC) within the Childcare and Play Team. NCC employ a Responsible Individual (RI) to oversee the operational aspects of the playgroup and a Person in Charge (PiC) to run the playgroup on a daily basis. The Playgroup is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to care for 17 children on a sessional basis. They care for two and three-year-old children during school term times and are located within the Alway Centre in Newport. The playgroup is one of two flying start services that operate from the centre. The language of the service is English with incidental Welsh introduced daily.

Summary

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy, have fun and enjoy attending. They readily make choices and build strong attachments with staff, helping them to feel safe and secure. Staff know and understand their roles well ensuring children's health care needs are strongly met and supervision is robust. Children participate in a broad range of stimulating activities both at the setting and in the local community that support and enrich their individual learning needs. Good quality resources and equipment and an inviting playroom create a welcoming environment for children to thrive. Safety records and documentation are mostly in place but risk assessments could be improved. The motivated leadership, management and staff team work well together to support the smooth running of the playgroup. Most records and management systems are in place and partnerships with parents and the community are effective.

2. Improvements

Although this is the first inspection since registration, staff have built strong links with the other flying start service that operates from the centre. We identified one area of non-compliance in relation to registers for staff and children not being consistently completed. We did not issue non-compliance on this occasion because the RI agreed to review the arrangements for completing the children's register on a Friday and reinforce with staff the importance of using the new electronic signing in and out system at all times.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We agreed three recommendations to enhance the practice and outcomes for children further. These include: risk assessments, the quality of care process and children's records. These are outlined in more detail at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children feel safe and supported to express themselves and interact positively with staff and their friends. They have good opportunities to make choices and decisions about their care and are happy and have great fun in their play. Children engage well in planned activities and respond positively to new experiences that enhance their learning and skills.

Our findings

Children are fully aware of the options open to them and confidently make appropriate choices. We noted the children smile broadly at the warm welcome from staff and happily go straight off to play, finding the activity or toys they wanted to play with. We also saw that during the session children chose if they wanted to join in the planned activity. At snack time we observed most children eagerly select what they wanted to eat, while others decided to just have a drink of water or milk. Children benefit from good opportunities to express their feelings. At circle time children express their views and feelings on how they feel the session went for them by putting their name card against a happy or sad face on the board. Staff explained how a child had previously come in saying there were angry and displayed their angry face. Now every morning the child comes in and talks to the member of staff about how they are feeling, expressing different emotions. We heard the child confidently state "*I am so excited, this is my excited face*" cheering, smiling and waving their arms in the air.

Children have built strong emotional attachments with staff and feel safe and supported. They were familiar with the daily routines and coped well with the transitions when given five minute warnings about tidy up time or snack time. We noted the children mostly complied with the rules and co-operated with tidying away the toys. Children are active, curious learners who respond positively to new experiences. On a visit to a local care home to sing Christmas carols to the residents, the children felt safe with their key person. As a result, most children were happy to interact and colour in pictures alongside the elderly residents. The children were interested and happily engaged in a broad range of play experiences and planned activities that support and encourage their learning. We observed several children spend long periods exploring the texture and smell of the shaving foam and experiment making different patterns with their fingers. They had immense fun splashing in the large puddle in the garden, laughing and cheering with sheer delight. Children learn new skills and benefit from good opportunities throughout the session to practice and develop their self-help skills. We observed children access the water station independently with staff on hand to support when needed. They were encouraged to wash and dry their hands, dispose of the paper towel, pour their own drinks at snack time and wipe up any spills.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Safeguarding is given high priority and underpins all aspects of practice. Staff supervise the children closely and implement the settings health and safety policies and procedures robustly. They are positive and work well as a team to consistently manage children's interactions. Children make good progress because staff plan a wide range of stimulating activities based on informative observation and assessments. This enables staff to tailor activities and support to their key children's individual learning needs.

Our findings

Staff have good understanding of their role in keeping children safe and promoting their health. Detailed and informative policies and procedures are well understood and implemented robustly by staff to help underpin safe practices. Discussions with several staff highlighted they have confident knowledge of safeguarding issues and good understanding of the procedures to follow with any child welfare concerns. Staff supervised the children closely throughout the session and on the outing and talked to the children about expectations. For example, always holding staff's hands and sitting nicely on the bus. In line with the Outings Policy, all children wore high viz bibs, staff had a maximum of two children and we saw the PiC frequently count the children to ensure all were present. Robust hygiene practices were consistently followed by staff. They wore disposable aprons and gloves when serving food and changed these when preparing the children's toothbrushes. Daily brushing of the teeth and staff modelling and singing the toothbrush song, helped reinforce good oral health practices. Children benefit from a well-balanced menu for snack in line with the settings Healthy and Sustainable Pre-school award. They enjoyed their crackers and fruit and were confident to ask for more oranges or milk.

Staff are consistent, fair and positive in their approach to managing interactions. When children were running around the room, we heard a member of staff regularly remind them to use walking feet inside. Although initially the children failed to listen, most staff in the room then helped reinforce the message to promote a consistent approach. We observed all staff to be kind and caring and frequently praise the children to recognise and celebrate their achievements and good behaviour. We heard staff regularly use Welsh during daily routines to actively encourage children's Welsh language skills. We observed a sample of children's Foundation Phase profiles and learning journals which staff update regularly. Observations of children's achievements are used routinely to assess children's progress and identify their next steps. Staff we spoke to confirmed that activity planning is completed as a team and details of their key children's next steps are discussed and used to inform the planning. As a result, children benefit from a broad range of stimulating activities that are tailored to their individual needs.

3. Environment

Summary

Robust safety and security measures are in place to help safeguard children's welfare and staff are deployed effectively to closely supervise the children and keep them safe. Most safety records are detailed and maintained appropriately but risk assessments could be strengthened and updated. The playroom is bright, warm and inviting and quality furniture and resources enrich children's play and learning experiences.

Our findings

Welcoming, child-friendly spaces help engage the children in meaningful play experiences. Named coat pegs, photographs of the children and examples of their work decorate the walls, helping children feel a strong sense of belonging. The playroom is well organised and provides suitable space for children to play with some clearly defined areas of learning offering different play experiences. There was a broad range of good quality toys and resources that staff plan and routinely rotate to provide children with different play and learning experiences. Low-level storage units and child-sized furniture enable children to access activities and resources easily. Whilst the garden area is not directly accessible from the playroom and is shared with the other flying start service, children have set times in the session for outdoor play. Children in each group also wear different coloured wet suits to help staff identify their children easily. Staff are beginning to make use of the local community to enhance children's experiences and learning opportunities. Children enjoyed a bus trip to see Father Christmas and visited a local residential care home for the elderly.

A Premises Management System is regularly monitored by a Newport City Council Health and Safety Officer ensuring all health and safety procedures, records and appropriate safety measures are in place. A review of the fire log indicated that fire drills take place four times a year and discussions with staff highlighted they had suitable knowledge of the procedures to follow in an emergency. General risk assessments are in place for the playroom and other areas playgroup use within the building. However, there were no risk assessments for each type of outing undertaken, including visits to the care home, to see Father Christmas and travel on public transport. Nevertheless, we noted on the trip to the care home staff were vigilant and supervised the children closely. Robust security measures are routinely followed to ensure the safe arrival and collection of children. Entrance to the main building is through an intercom and a keypad entry system on the playroom door. This ensures no person can enter the playroom unsupervised. We observed staff stand in the hallway and on the playroom door at arrival and collection times and throughout the session, supervise the children closely both inside and outside.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The leadership and management of the playgroup is strong and they work closely with staff to create a strong, supportive team ethos. Staff have good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and work hard to ensure these are implemented robustly to ensure session runs smoothly. The high staff to child ratios enable staff to nurture and tailor their support for their key children. Strong systems are in place to monitor staff performance and the quality of the service but measures to engage staff in the annual Quality of Care review could be strengthened. Partnerships with parents are effective and staff work closely with other professionals and agencies.

Our findings

There is a strong commitment from the RI and PiC to provide a good quality service for local children and their families. They invest time and energy to ensure the playgroups aims are implemented effectively by the dedicated and motivated staff team. Thorough recruitment, vetting and induction of staff has meant they are very knowledgeable of the playgroups policies and procedures. They confidently explained the procedures for the safe collection of children and administering medication, fully aware of the expectations required of them. We examined four staff files and found all the information required to confirm their suitability was in place to help safeguard children. Most records and documents observed were detailed, well organised and stored securely. The Statement of Purpose provides good insight into what the playgroup provides and is routinely updated and shared with CIW and parents. A review of three children's files showed that some information was missing and not all contracts with parents were completed consistently to agree business arrangements. However, these were well organised in alphabetical order and stored securely in a locked cupboard to promote confidentiality. Current systems for recording attendance require improvement to show clearly who is present at any one time. We found the new electronic signing in and out system for staff and visitors and children's registers were not being consistently used or completed.

The flying start programme sets high expectations and provides plenty of opportunities for staff's continuing professional development. As a result, staff told us they had good access to training and felt well supported in their role. Overall, there are robust systems in place to monitor practice and the quality of the service. Staff complete Clear Reviews, assessing and reflecting on their own practice and performance throughout the year. The PiC undertakes monthly observations of each member of staff and uses this information and staff's reflections to inform their termly supervisions and twice yearly appraisals. The RI undertakes an annual Quality of Care Review and uses feedback from the twice yearly Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) assessment and termly parent questionnaires to inform the report. This

provides good opportunities for parents to share their views about the service and their child's care. In response to parents' comments that they did not know who their child's key person was, photographs of staff and their key children are now displayed in the hallway. However, systems for staff to share their thoughts and ideas and contribute to the annual review are not in place.

Partnerships are well established. Parents we spoke to and feedback from CIW parent questionnaires, positively praise the staff and quality of care their children receive. Parents commented "*The playgroup and staff are amazing...*" and confirmed they received lots of information about the playgroup at the welcome meeting for new parents and children. Parents value the termly parent meetings to discuss their children's achievements and ongoing progress and opportunity to agree new targets. Regular newsletters, text messages, a notice board and daily communication ensure parents are kept well informed. Parent participation days, celebration days and weekly Language and Play sessions provide regular opportunities to involve parents in the playgroup.

Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Ensure risk assessments are consistently completed, including all types of outings and use of public transport;
- review the quality of care process so that staff take a more active role in the process and their views are captured; and
- ensure contracts with parents to agree business arrangements are consistently completed including recording information about named persons to collect and agreed days and times of attendance.

5. How we undertook this inspection

This was an unannounced, scheduled inspection undertaken by one inspector over two visits totalling 7 hours and 25 minutes. Evidence for this report was gathered using the following methodology:

- We reviewed information held by CIW, including the SASS, Quality of Care Review report and Statement of Purpose;
- we observed the children's play both inside and outside, their interactions with staff and joined them on a trip to a local care home;
- we spoke to children, staff, three parents and the RI;
- we examined policies and procedures and operational records and documents, including staff and children's files; attendance registers, safety files and children's learning journals and assessment;
- we carried out a visual inspection of play areas and resources; and
- we took account of feedback from three parent and four staff questionnaires.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

6. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Sessional Day Care
Responsible Individual	Sian Williams
Person in charge	Keysha Bird
Registered maximum number of places	17
Age range of children	Two and three-year-olds
Opening hours	9:10am – 11:40am each week day, during school term times
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	None
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	11 th and 12 th December 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Is early year's 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 providing a full service in Welsh as the provider operates in an area where Welsh is not the dominant language. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's ' <i>More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care</i> '.
Additional Information: None	

Date Published 17/02/2020

No noncompliance records found in Open status.