



Childcare Inspection Report on

Markham Playgroup

**Institute Building
Abernant Road
Markham
Blackwood
NP12 0QH**



Date Inspection Completed

23/01/2020

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2020.

You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice

Description of the service

Markham Playgroup Ltd has been registered since February 2019 to provide full day care for a maximum of 19 children. Care is currently provided for children between two and four years old. It operates from the Institute Building in the Markham area of Caerphilly. The Responsible Individual (RI) is Helen Williams who is also the Person in Charge (PiC), with responsibility for the daily management of the service. The playgroup is an early years' education provider and also offers Flying Start places. It operates Monday to Friday, 9.15am to 2.50pm, term time only. The primary language of the playgroup is English with incidental Welsh used throughout the day.

Summary

Theme	Rating
Well-being	Good
Care and Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership and Management	Adequate

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy and settled at the service. They have warm and affectionate relationships with staff. Children access a very good range of activities that appeal to their interests and support their all round development. Staff are well qualified and have a good understanding of child development. They attend all required training and are enthusiastic about their roles. The environment is very well maintained and stimulating for children. The arrangement of resources, at low level, promotes children's independence. Leadership is generally effective and the service runs smoothly on a daily basis. However, some improvements are required to ensure that good practice is consistently maintained and that all suitability checks are undertaken in a timely manner.

2. Improvements

This was the first inspection since registration.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We have advised the registered persons that improvements are needed in relation to suitability of workers regulation 28 (2)(b)(i) in order to fully meet the legal

requirements, as a Disclosure and Barring Service check for a member of staff had not been renewed in the required timescale. 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 responsible person to take action to rectify this and it will be followed up at the next inspection.

1. Well-being

Good

Summary

Children are happy and settled at the service. They have formed good bonds with staff and are beginning to develop friendships with their peers. Children have plenty of opportunities to follow their own interests through free choice play and their independence is promoted. Routines are well established and children's achievements are celebrated.

Our findings

Children have a strong voice. They are confident to communicate because they know they will be listened to. Children happily approach staff to ask for help or just to chat. Younger children seek attention from familiar adults who recognise and respond to their needs. For example when one child was tired they were given a pillow and able to lie down quietly to rest. There are plenty of resources that can be accessed independently by children. This allows them to follow their own interests and make choices about activities they want to take part in. Children make appropriate choices because they are very familiar and comfortable in their environment and know what is available to them.

Children feel happy and valued. Their work and photographs are displayed around the room, demonstrating that their efforts are valued. Children are relaxed and happy at the service. Routines are firmly embedded and children know what to expect. This helps to create a sense of security.

Children interact well and are forming good relationships with staff and their peers. We observed children playing happily together or alongside each other, depending on their age and stage of development. We observed one younger child at the writing table copying an older child using a variety of resources such as crayons, pencils and scissors. They worked happily alongside each other for a good length of time. Children are beginning to understand the expectations of behaviour. When two children had a minor disagreement, they responded well to staff intervention and support. They apologised, gave each other a hug and carried on playing.

Children enjoy their time at the service. They demonstrate their enjoyment through lots of smiles and laughter. Their learning is mostly child led and they are able to take part in activities that interest them. For example, when children approached a member of staff with some dolls, they spontaneously started singing 'ten in the bed'. There are ample opportunities for children to be physically active and enjoy outdoor play. They are able to take appropriate risks in a safe environment.

Children develop well and acquire suitable independence skills. During snack time we saw children serving themselves and pouring their own drinks. Many are able to put their own coats and shoes on and they access toilets with appropriate levels of support from staff. They make very good use of real life items in role play such as fruit and vegetables to chop

in the role play kitchen and this helps children to develop their independence and self help skills.

2. Care and Development

Good

Summary

Staff have good knowledge of child development and provide activities to meet individual needs. They are aware of key policies and these are consistently implemented. Staff understand the safeguarding process and are confident about how to report a concern. Safeguarding has a high priority within the service.

Our findings

There are good systems in place to ensure that children are kept safe and healthy. Staff attend all required training such as paediatric first aid, safeguarding and food hygiene. There is a detailed safeguarding policy and staff we spoke to were confident about the process for reporting concerns. Medication forms are available and include all necessary details. Accident and incident records were of the usual nature for the age and developmental stages of the children and gave no cause for concern. They are monitored monthly to establish any trends and patterns. Fire evacuation drills are carried out regularly and records are kept, although the timescale for fire drills does not match what is stated in the policy. Children are served a healthy snack menu and drinking water is available throughout the day. The service is currently working on phase 3 of the 'Healthy Early Years Scheme' and gives an award for the healthiest lunch box.

Interactions are well managed by staff. The service has a behaviour management policy which promotes positive behaviour management strategies. We saw that this was consistently implemented by staff. On the day of our visit, there was a happy and relaxed atmosphere. When reminders were needed, staff did this in a calm and sympathetic manner. Children respond well to requests from staff and follow instructions well. We noted that staff were good role models, treating children and each other with respect. Expectations of behaviour are consistent and we heard lots of praise for positive behaviours such as good manners and sharing.

Children are cared for by nurturing staff who understand their individual needs. Staff spoke to us about individual children, explaining their needs and preferences. They complete planning every two weeks and all staff contribute to ideas for activities and help to complete evaluations. Planning is often adapted to follow the direction the children take it in, allowing them to have control of their own learning. All children have a key worker to ensure they receive consistent care. They take responsibility for observing children's progress and identifying next steps in learning. Many activities are differentiated to ensure that children receive the appropriate support. There is a strong emphasis on activities to support multiculturalism and diversity and incidental Welsh is used very effectively throughout the sessions. Staff are knowledgeable about children with additional needs. They attend

training on speech and language and implement effective systems to support children who require additional support.

3. Environment

Good

Summary

Children are cared for in a clean, bright and stimulating environment. Indoor and outdoor play areas are secure. Hazards are identified and where possible eliminated. Playrooms are well organised and provide children with opportunities to develop independence and choice. Resources are plentiful and of very good quality.

Our findings

Leaders ensure that the premises are safe and comply with the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare. Staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the safety and welfare of children and adhere to the service policies. Entrance is gained through a locked door and visitors are required to sign in. We noted that identification was checked. There are detailed risk assessments in place and staff told us that they all take responsibility for daily checks of all play areas and when risks are identified they are, as far as possible, eliminated. Staff showed us daily cleaning schedules that ensure toys and play areas are cleaned regularly. We noted that all areas were very clean and free from hazards, demonstrating that the systems work effectively and are consistently implemented. We noted that staff positioned themselves well throughout the setting. This helped to ensure that they could monitor the children's safety in an unobtrusive manner and be on hand to offer assistance if needed. We heard lots of communication between staff and they worked well together. This ensured that all areas of the service were suitably supervised and children were able to take appropriate risks in a safe environment.

Leaders ensure that the environment is warm, welcoming and stimulating for children. We saw that the rooms were arranged in a way that allowed children to move freely between activities. Resources are stored at low level, allowing children to access them freely. Each playroom has plenty of natural light and direct access to an enclosed outdoor play area. Very good use is made of the outdoor play areas that provide opportunities for children to explore and take risks as well as providing space for quiet activities such as reading. There are areas for children to make use of a good range of natural and reusable resources. These include mud kitchens, water play, various areas for planting and a bug house. We were told that children had picked the fruit and vegetables they had grown, such as beans and strawberries and eaten them at snack times.

Leaders ensure that resources are plentiful and of very good quality. The service has recently adopted the 'curiosity' approach. Many areas such as the role play kitchen are enhanced with household and everyday items such as real food, cutlery and utensils. There is a strong commitment to recycling and the service is currently working towards part three of the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-school (recycling). There is a very good range of

resources to promote multiculturalism and diversity. Art and craft materials are plentiful and children have very good variety and choice.

4. Leadership and Management

Adequate

Summary

Our findings

Overall, leadership of the service is effective. The RI/PiC and deputy manager have been in place for a considerable time and they are committed to providing a quality service. A comprehensive and up to date Statement of Purpose is in place and provides an accurate picture of what the service offers. Leaders ensure that the service complies with the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 and National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare. A good range of policies and procedures ensure that the service operates smoothly on a day to day basis. The staff team is well established and consistent. Leaders ensure that required training is updated in a timely manner. However, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for one member of staff who has been at the service for many years had not been renewed within the required timescale. This was addressed immediately following the inspection, therefore a non compliance notice has not been issued. All safety and insurance certificates were up to date. The nursery is not able to provide an 'Active Offer', which is a Welsh Government strategy to strengthen Welsh language services, although we heard lots of incidental Welsh being used throughout the service.

There are suitable systems in place for the self evaluation and improvement of the service. The Self Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) has been completed and submitted. A comprehensive quality of care report has been produced and draws upon the views of parents. It does not currently include the views of staff or children. Leaders ensure that good practice is highlighted and areas for development have been included in an action plan for improvement. The RI/PiC was able to give examples of how their development plan has impacted on children. For example, changing the location and appearance of the writing table has enhanced children's interest in writing and they now use it frequently.

Overall, management of staff is effective. Staff reported that they feel very well supported by leaders. Staff recruitment procedures are robust and staff files contain all of the required information. Staff meetings take place but these are often as needed and formal minutes are not kept. Staff appraisal is undertaken annually but supervision meetings have been inconsistently carried out. We saw that staff are encouraged to attend training and leaders support their continued professional development.

The service has established partnerships with parents and outside agencies. We were told that the service has good links with local authority advisory teachers who attend regularly to offer advice on the Foundation Phase. We saw that good use was made of specialist support agencies for advice on meeting the needs of children with additional needs and we

saw that advice received was put into practice and included in individual development plans. We saw parent questionnaires that reported a good level of satisfaction with the service. Comments included; *'I cannot believe how much welsh my child speaks, they can count up to 10 in Welsh'* and *'My child's behaviour has changed since coming here, they will sit for a story with me now and sing songs, you're all great thank you!'*

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Consult staff and children and include feedback in the quality of care report;
- Ensure staff have regular supervision;
- Complete a staff training matrix and
- Ensure fire drills are carried out regularly, in line with the policy.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was an unannounced inspection carried out as part of our normal schedule of inspections. Two inspectors visited the service for one day. Approximately seven hours was spent at the service by both inspectors. The following methodology was used to gather evidence for this report.

- Spoke to the RI, practitioners and children;
- observed care practice and interactions between practitioners and children;
- undertook a visual inspection of the premises;
- looked at documents and key records including contracts, development records, risk assessments, reports from other agencies and staff files;
- considered information held by CIW including the last inspection report and
- we gave feedback to the RI/PiC 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	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Responsible Individual	Helen Williams
Person in charge	Helen Williams
Registered maximum number of places	19
Age range of children	2 – 4 years
Opening hours	Monday to Friday 9.15am – 2.50pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	Post registration
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	23 January 2020
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
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 does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh Language. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow up strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.'
Additional Information: None	

Date Published 25/03/2020