



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Little Sparks**

**Llangattock Church in Wales School  
Llangattock  
Crickhowell  
NP8 1PH**



**Date Inspection Completed**

17/01/2020

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<b>Ratings</b>	<b>What the ratings mean</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	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
<b>Good</b>	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.
<b>Adequate</b>	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.
<b>Poor</b>	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

Little Sparks was registered in July 2019 and is run by the governors of Llangattock Church in Wales Primary School. The playgroup is located in the primary school building and is open Monday to Friday from 9am until 12:59pm. The service provides care for up to 16 children aged three to four years. Joanne Caines is the person in charge, who manages the service on a day to day basis. Kathryn Marshall, the head teacher, is the responsible individual who oversees the service on behalf of the board of governors. Care is provided mainly through the English language with good use of incidental Welsh.

### Summary

Theme	Rating
<a href="#">Well-being</a>	Excellent
<a href="#">Care and Development</a>	Good
<a href="#">Environment</a>	Good
<a href="#">Leadership and Management</a>	Good

#### 1. Overall assessment

Children are very happy and thoroughly enjoy their time at the service. They benefit from a very good range of activities to support their all-round development. Children experience warm and nurturing relationships with staff who know them well. The environment is resourced to a good standard and play areas are inviting inside and outside. There is strong leadership, which aims to meet the requirements of the Child Minding and Day Care Wales Regulations (2010) and National Minimum Standards.

#### 2. Improvements

This was the first inspection following registration.

#### 3. Requirements and recommendations

We (Care Inspectorate Wales) notified leaders that they were not compliant with the regulation relating to health needs of children as they had not ensured that at least one person caring for children has an up to date first aid qualification. We did not issue a non compliance notice because leaders had already taken action to address this.

We made recommendations in relation to Care and Development and Leadership and Management themes which are listed at the end of this report..

#### 1. Well-being

**Excellent**

## **Summary**

Children experience an excellent service that provides warm, nurturing care and an exceptional range of resources and activities to promote their all-round development. They have many opportunities to express themselves and make choices about play and activities. Children settle in quickly and are developing strong friendships with other children and staff. Children are very happy; they have lots of fun in their play and eagerly participate in a wide range of exciting activities that support their learning.

## **Our findings**

All children can contribute ideas and make decisions about activities, songs, stories and how they spend their time at the service. They move freely around a wide range of activities, indoors and outdoors; and their play is mostly self-directed. Children express themselves exceptionally well and we saw that staff listened carefully, showed interest in what the children had to say and responded positively. Children have a very strong voice and communicate their needs and wishes confidently.

Children experience very warm relationships with each other and staff. Children arrived happily and they greeted others with smiles. Children settle quickly because their individual needs are fully acknowledged. For example, initial sessions are flexible until the child is ready to cope with separation and parents regularly attend weekly 'stay and play sessions'. Children clearly know and enjoy routines; they raised their hands in a high five at the end of activities and fervently joined in singing familiar songs. Children feel a sense of belonging because staff know them well and talk about family; children's coat hooks are labelled with their names and photos; and their work is displayed in the playroom. Children feel safe and happy.

Children co-operate and play together extremely well. We heard children saying 'please' and 'thank you' without being prompted; we saw them sharing resources and engaging in imaginative play together. Children eagerly helped to put out craft materials; they passed toys and equipment to each other; took turns to build a tower; served each other in the play restaurant and waited in turn to climb the slide. Children sat quietly with hands on knees and sang a 'please and thank you' song before eating their snack. They smiled proudly when praised for cooperative and kind behaviour and achieving personal goals. Children interact extremely well with their friends and with staff.

Children are active, curious learners and freely enjoy stimulating activities or read and relax in quiet areas. They receive much praise and encouragement from staff, to boost self-esteem, feelings of achievement and confidence. Children engaged in their activities for a good length of time and were eager to talk about what they were doing. They excitedly pressed play doh into moulds to make 'chocolates', 'cakes' and 'cups of tea'; they described the colour and tastes of their fruit and the shape of their sandwiches. They described their feelings and the

weather and excitedly pointed to a rainbow in the sky. Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning.

Children become increasingly independent because they have many opportunities to explore, develop and learn. Children learn to self-register by finding their photo and putting it on the registration board; they wash their hands and dress with minimal prompting or support. They take turns to put out beakers and snack boxes; help themselves to water and milk at snack time; help to put out craft resources and most of them tidied up when they finished playing. Children joined in eagerly with familiar responses, phrases and actions. Welsh is used incidentally and children are beginning to understand and use the language; for example we heard children use Welsh words for colours, numbers and fruit and they sang songs in Welsh. Children make very good progress and are developing well.

## **2. Care and Development**

**Good**

### **Summary**

Staff work very well together and are responsive to children's needs and preferences. They have a good knowledge of their responsibilities to keep children safe and promote good health. Staff are good role models. They consistently manage interactions in a very positive way, with a strong focus on celebrating children's achievements to promote their self-esteem and confidence. Staff know the children well and are committed to providing a wide range of appropriate activities to encourage children to learn and develop.

### **Our findings**

Staff have a good working knowledge of the policies and procedures in place to keep children safe and healthy. A clear safeguarding policy outlines the procedures for reporting concerns about children to an appropriate agency. Staff encourage healthy eating by asking parents to provide a fruit snack each day. Children have access to their individual water bottles throughout the session and have a choice of milk or water at snack time. Staff were well informed about any child with allergies or dietary needs. We saw good hygiene practices. Staff clean the tables before and after snack with anti-bacterial spray. They ensure children wash their hands thoroughly before eating and after going to the toilet.

Staff work in line with the behaviour policy and ensure they have a consistent approach. They are good role models, treating children with respect and valuing them as individuals. Staff put children at ease by introducing us and they said that we were there to join in their play. They listened to the children; they were interested in what children had to say and gave them plenty of time to finish conversations and activities, which promoted social skills and turn taking. We heard lots of praise for positive behaviour and when reminders were needed, staff were calm and clear about what was expected and why. Staff used routine phrases, songs and lowered tone of voice very successfully to gain attention and cooperation. They were effective in encouraging children to sit together for routines such as snack time to prepare them for more formal education.

Staff promote children's play, learning and all round development effectively. They monitor and assess children's progress and plan developmentally appropriate, exciting activities, to ensure that all children can engage, have fun and learn. We saw that staff encouraged and facilitated children's independence and celebrated every success. Bilingual posters on the walls encourage children's recognition and use of the Welsh language and we heard staff use Welsh words and phrases. Children learn about the world and different cultures through books, food, toys, activities and various celebrations. Staff encourage children to use the outdoor play area whenever possible for physical exercise and to talk about nature; discuss weather and listen to different sounds.

### **3. Environment**

**Good**

#### **Summary**

Children experience a good variety of play and learning opportunities because leaders create an inviting and stimulating environment indoors and outdoors. The environment is safe, secure and well maintained. The premises are easily accessible and suitable for the age range of the children. Resources and equipment are good quality and enrich children's all round learning and development.

#### **Our findings**

Leaders ensure that children are safe at the playgroup. The playgroup has a secure entrance and secure boundaries to the outside play areas; visitors must show proof of identity and sign in and out; staff undertake daily checks of the playroom and outdoor play area. Infection control is managed well and the person in charge is aware of the guidance from public health. We saw staff clean tables with anti-bacterial solution and there are signs in the toilet to remind children to wash and dry their hands properly. All the records for health and safety, building maintenance and fire safety were up to date. Inspections for heating, fire alarm and electrical systems are carried out by the school and we saw evidence of annual testing of the heating system and portable appliances. Records evidenced that leaders have reviewed risk assessments and there have been no accidents or incidents since registration.

Leaders ensure the premises are very suitable, child friendly, stimulating and promote the Foundation Phase of learning. The playroom was bright and airy with space for a good range of activities as well as areas for children to relax. There is age appropriate, child sized furniture and equipment. Play areas were well set out with resources within children's reach for choice and independence. A washable floor surface allows for messy activities, dressing up and a play house (converted to a Chinese restaurant for Chinese New Year celebrations) encourage role play. A carpeted area with cushions provides an area for reading, comfort and reflection. Children have direct access to a good sized outdoor area with shelter for all weather play and a good range of equipment including a slide, play house and mud kitchen. Children also have access the school's community garden to learn about growing flowers and vegetables and to observe wild life.

Leaders provide a wide variety of good quality resources to encourage children's curiosity and imagination and support their learning and development. This included using everyday items and recycled items for crafts to raise children's awareness of environmental issues. We saw a wide range of good quality resources including books and multicultural resources that reflect the wider society and promote equality. Resources were clean and in good condition.



## **4. Leadership and Management**

**Good**

### **Summary**

Overall, the leadership and management of the service is good. Leaders have a clear vision for the service and communicate this well. Records and documentation are well organised and up to date. Leaders have effective methods for monitoring and improving the quality of the service and involve children, parents and other professionals in this. Leaders were fully engaged in the inspection process and strive to ensure they meet national minimum standards and comply with regulations.

### **Our findings**

The day to day running of the service is effective and it runs smoothly. The responsible individual is a regular visitor and we saw that children and staff approached her readily. The statement of purpose provides a clear description of the service and what it sets out to provide, so that parents can make an informed decision about its suitability for their children. Policies and procedures are well written and we were told they will be reviewed at least annually. The records and documents we looked at were detailed and well maintained. We noted that the operational plan needed to be updated to reflect a change in the service hours; the name of CIW needed to be updated on some policies and contracts with parents did not include all the information listed in National Minimum Standard 2 and we brought these issues to the leaders' attention. Leaders are effective and provide a good quality service.

Since registration self-evaluation procedures have been actively implemented. Leaders consult with parents, children and other professionals as part of this process. Staff gain children's views about activities through asking them or recording what they enjoy doing and how they react. We saw that staff continually evaluated activities and also discussed them with the advisory teacher. This ensured that staff considered children's needs and preferences; children remained engaged and developmental targets were met. At the time of the inspection, questionnaires had been distributed to parents to gather their views and suggestions for improvements and leaders were in the process of compiling a quality of care report with an action plan based on their feedback. There is a suitable complaints policy in place should parents want to make a complaint. No complaints have been received by the service or CIW.

Staff are deployed effectively and are clear about their responsibilities. The playgroup is staffed by the person in charge and one assistant. Leaders follow safe recruitment processes and we saw that staff records contained all the required information. Staff held appropriate qualifications in child care, learning and development; and there were records of regular supervision meetings and appraisals carried out by either the person in charge or the responsible individual. Staff said they were very happy in their work and they felt valued and supported. We found that the assistant had commenced the previous week to cover maternity leave and we reminded leaders that CIW must be notified of all staff changes. The

responsible individual ensured that CIW was notified before our second visit. We found that staff ratios always met or exceeded the national minimum standard of 1 staff to 8 children. However, we found that neither the person in charge nor the playgroup assistant held a current certificate in paediatric first aid as they had expired in November 2019. We notified leaders that this was a serious issue as they were not compliant with the regulations. The responsible individual told us that this was due to a lack of courses as well as a qualified staff going on maternity leave. The responsible individual confirmed that she had arranged for first aiders within the school to cover any first aid requirements in the playgroup and the person in charge evidenced that she had already booked the next available paediatric first aid course in February 2020. We saw that there were satisfactory risk assessments and safety procedures in place and there had been no accidents or incidents requiring first aid intervention since registration. Leaders generally manage staff and resources effectively.

Leaders and staff have excellent relationships with parents and with other professionals, which greatly benefits children. Staff talk to parents to get to know their child's needs, preferences and routines and use the Foundation Phase Profile to map each child's stage of development. Parents attend weekly play sessions to help them to learn what they can do at home to support their child's play and learning. There is effective communication with parents through daily chats, records, notice board and newsletters. All the parents we spoke to were very happy with the service. They told us that staff had supported them to manage their children's toilet training and healthy eating; and that the service was flexible about attendance days and hours to meet their needs. Staff have good links with other professionals including advisory teachers, speech and language therapists, educational psychologists and child protection to meet children's needs. There are excellent links with school. Children attend regular events in the wider school, which supports easier transitions for the children. Partnerships are effective and successful.

## **5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection**

### **5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections**

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

**Health Needs of Children:** We notified the responsible individual that the service was not compliant with Health Needs of Children - Regulation 24(2)(b) at all times at least one person caring for relevant children has a suitable first aid qualification – because paediatric first aid qualifications for both staff had expired in November 2019.

We did not issue a non compliance notice because the person in charge was due to attend the next available course in February 2020 and the responsible individual had arranged for qualified first aiders within the school to provide cover.

We made the following good practice recommendations:

- Confirm that at least one staff has achieved a relevant first aid qualification and provide a copy of the certificate to CIW;
- update the contract with parents to ensure it contains all the information in National Minimum Standard 2;
- update the operational plan to reflect the current service; and
- update the name for Care Inspectorate Wales on policies and procedures when they are next reviewed.

## 6. How we undertook this inspection

This was an unannounced inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector made two visits to the service, the first of which was unannounced.

- We spoke to children, three parents and one grandparent, the playgroup assistant, the person in charge and the responsible individual;
- we observed children and staff in the playroom and outside;
- we observed children using the SOFI-2 tool to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care provided by staff;
- we inspected the premises;
- we looked at a sample of records, documentation and policies; and
- we gave feedback to the person in charge and the responsible individual at the end of the inspection.

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

[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## 7. About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Sessional Day Care
Responsible Individual	Kathryn Marshall
Person in charge	Joanne Caines
Registered maximum number of places	16
Age range of children	3 – 4 years
Opening hours	9am – 12:59pm Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is the first inspection.
Dates of this inspection visits	15 and 17 January 2020
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
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 service 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 the service. This is because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area. However, we recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just words' strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.
Additional Information:	

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