



Childcare Inspection Report on

Lots of Tots Flying Start Playgroup

**Lots Of Tots Flying Start Playgroup
Awel Y Mor Primary School
Ffordd Ysgol
Port Talbot
SA12 6TP**



Date Inspection Completed

09/10/2019

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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

Lots of Tots Flying Start Playgroup is situated in a dedicated area within Awel Y Mor Primary School. It offers care for a maximum of 28 children aged between two and three years old. Two sessions per day are offered. The morning sessions run from 9:00am to 11:30am and the afternoon sessions operate from 12:10pm to 2:40pm. The service is open Monday to Friday during school term time and for the first three weeks of the school summer holidays. The responsible individuals are Alan Smith and Sara Smith, on behalf of the registered organisation, Lots of Tots Childcare Ltd. The person in charge of the service is Louise Pickering. The service operates primarily through the medium of English but a significant amount of incidental Welsh is also used.

Summary

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

1. Overall assessment

Children are very settled and happy at this service. They can be confident that their individual needs and preferences are well supported. Staff are caring and positive and they work effectively as a team to support children successfully. The environment is very welcoming, spacious, safe and well-resourced to meet children's play and development needs. Leadership at the service is effective and there are strong partnerships with parents and other professionals.

2. Improvements

The service had made improvements to the environment and practice to ensure they met the needs of children with autistic spectrum disorders.

Following our inspection visit, leaders confirmed that the outdoor area which was not in use at the time of the visit, due to building works, was back in full use.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made recommendations in relation to further supporting children's independence and further developing the quality of care review process. These recommendations are detailed at the back of this report.

1. Well-being

Good

Summary

Children feel very safe, happy and valued. They are confident that they will be listened to and they really enjoy their play. They have good opportunities to develop their individual skills and some opportunities to develop their independence.

Our findings

Children have a strong voice at this service. They made frequent choices, they were able to follow their own interests and their individual needs and preferences were well supported. For example, children were asked if they wanted to do a speech and language activity or not. When one child chose not to, that was respected. Children chose what they wanted to play with from the resources available and chose from different foods for snacks.

Children feel very secure at the service. There was a very flexible settling-in policy in operation and children were well supported to settle, attending for shorter periods of the session where needed. Children who needed comfort items were able to keep those with them for as long as was needed and their comfort and happiness was paramount. Some children who were newly settling sat in the laps of members of staff and all children were settled during our visit. Children had the opportunity at circle time to identify if they were feeling happy or sad.

Children form very positive bonds with staff. They happily approached them to share their toys and news and to tell staff if they were not happy about something. For example, a child approached a member of staff and said *"Guess what? I've got lots of new toys!"* and a child protested that another child had two dolls and she wanted one.

Children really enjoy their play. They were really engaged in their chosen play and with adult-led activities. For example, children engaged well in circle time activities and singing. They had huge smiles when joining in with action songs. They were very engaged playing as a group, with dolls and one child spent a significant amount of time painting and was able to continue to do this as she chose. A child told us proudly, *"I've made a dolly!"* when playing with play dough.

Children develop their individual skills well and they have some opportunities to develop their independence. For example, children's communication skills were developing well through singing, lots of talking about their play and taking part in focused speech and language activities where necessary. They had opportunities to practise their gross motor skills through participating in action songs and building and they had opportunities to develop their fine motor skills through sensory play and manipulating play dough. Children had some opportunities to develop their independence. For example, they put their own paper towels in the bin when they had washed their hands. However, they often had significant support from staff to do things that they could learn to complete themselves, such as putting their coats on and pouring their drinks.

2. Care and Development

Good

Summary

Staff are kind and positive. They work together effectively to meet children's needs well. They give children individual attention and good support, particularly where additional needs are identified. Staff implement good systems of observation to support children's development and they follow procedures well to keep children safe and healthy.

Our findings

Staff effectively keep children safe and healthy. They followed good hygiene procedures when providing food and supervising tooth brushing. They implemented the Designed to Smile scheme and the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-schools scheme. There were robust procedures in place for children who had specific medical needs and all staff had current paediatric first aid training. Staff had undergone safeguarding training and there were clear procedures in place should there be a concern in relation to child protection. Staff provided children with healthy snacks, such as fruit and vegetables and they ensured that they had access to drinking water throughout the day. Although children did not go outside to play during our visit, photographs and discussion with staff showed that they had regular opportunities to play in the outdoors at other times. Staff supervised the children very well throughout the day.

Staff manage children's behaviour positively. They praised children regularly, saying for example, "*da iawn*" (well done), "*good waiting*" and "*good listening*". They gave children reminders about sharing and using 'kind hands'. On a rare occasion when there was unwanted behaviour, we saw staff crouching to the child's level and speaking clearly to them about being kind to their friends.

Staff meet children's needs very effectively. There were effective processes in place to ensure that staff were able to meet children's individual needs, including additional needs. The staff knew the children's needs and preferences very well. They observed children carefully and tracked their progress, identifying where additional support was needed. They worked closely with professionals such as advisory teachers and speech and language therapists to ensure that children's needs were fully met. Staff had completed additional training to enable them to support children well, such as Elklan speech and language training.

Staff support children's development appropriately. There was clear and detailed planning in place. Staff supported children to name objects and pictures as they played and asked simple questions, such as, "*Does this go fast or does it go slow?*" and "*Is that a boy or a girl?*" Singing was a prominent feature of this service which could support children in their language development and which they enjoyed enormously. Some staff used Welsh very frequently and naturally in their practice and others used some incidental Welsh vocabulary and sang Welsh songs with the children.

3. Environment

Good

Summary

Leaders provide a very suitable environment which meets children's needs well. It is well-resourced and designed to support children's independence. At the time of our visit, the outdoor play area was out of use due to essential building maintenance but this was back in use by the time of the writing of this report. The environment is spacious, welcoming and very safe.

Our findings

Leaders ensure that the environment is very safe. There were detailed risk assessments in place and these were reviewed regularly. They included a risk assessment in relation to the temporary circumstances of the outdoor play area and usual entrance being out of use. The premises were very secure and there was a safe system for entry to the service. Leaders ensured that a record was kept of visitors.

Leaders provide a spacious environment with all the facilities that children need. There was plentiful space for the children to move around freely to play and there were stimulating areas of learning established. For example, there was a role play area in a small room off the main area and a construction area. The environment was well-maintained, airy and bright. There were fresh, bright displays which included children's own work, which could contribute to children's sense of belonging.

Resources and equipment are of good quality. There was sturdy, suitably-sized wooden tables and chairs and children could easily access the resources available as they were stored at their level. Children could access the toilets independently and there were picture prompts available to support them to use the toilet and wash their hands as independently as possible. Leaders provided a wide range of resources to children which included 'real-life' items and sensory resources. For example, there were some plastic items in the role-play area but also real food packets such as salt and coffee containers and yogurt pots. They provided a range of 'junk' for children to build with in the construction area as well as a variety of construction resources. There were sensory items to explore such as dried pasta, leaves and feathers as well as handmade scented play-dough.

At the time of our visit, we did not see the outdoor environment in use as it was cordoned off for safety reasons whilst building work took place. Staff told us that under the temporary circumstances, they had been able to make use of the school's outdoor area, although we did not see this in the two sessions which we observed. We were told by staff and leaders that the playgroup's dedicated play area was used on a daily basis under normal circumstances on a free flow basis. We saw photographic evidence that this area was back in use before the completion of this report.

4. Leadership and Management

Good

Summary

Leadership and management of the service is effective. There is a good working relationship between leaders and staff. Partnership working is a particular strength of the service. Leaders work very effectively with parents and with other professionals to meet children's needs. Leaders review the service appropriately.

Our findings

Leadership of the service is good. The responsible individuals worked closely with the person in charge. They had developed an informative statement of purpose which was further updated during the course of the inspection, as well as a range of child-centred policies. There was a good system in place to ensure that policies were regularly reviewed.

Self-evaluation and planning for improvement is developing. Leaders reviewed the service and considered parents' and children's' views as part of their reviews. Two separate reports had been produced in response to parents' and children's' views rather than one comprehensive quality of care report which included all of the relevant views and targets. However, staff views were also highly valued and there were regular staff meetings where staff could voice their views and contribute ideas. Leaders had also recently completed a detailed review of the provision in relation to the needs of children with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) . They had made adaptations to the environment and the practice to meet these needs, such as ringing a bell as a warning when the activity was going to change and putting clear, simple signs on doors to show where children could and couldn't go.

Leaders manage staff effectively. We checked a sample of staff files and found that almost all of the relevant documentation in relation to safe staff recruitment was in place. Leaders confirmed that documents that weren't available during the visit had been obtained by the time of the writing of this report. Leaders ensured that there were always at least the minimum number of required staff looking after the children. They ensured that staff updated their necessary training in a timely manner and that they had opportunities to attend additional, relevant training. There was an effective system in place for induction, supervision and appraisal of staff. Record keeping was generally good although there were some gaps in the records of staff attendance. The responsible individual informed us, following our visit, that he had taken action to address this and that this would be monitored.

Leaders form strong partnerships with parents and other agencies to improve outcomes for children. We spoke to a number of parents who were very complimentary about the service, particularly how well staff communicated with them and how well their children were supported. Leaders and staff worked closely with professionals such as Flying Start professionals, health visitors, speech and language therapists and advisory teachers, in order to meet the needs of all children. We spoke to visiting professionals who were very

positive about how well the leaders and staff work with them. Leaders had also continued to develop their partnership with the school in which they are based.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommend that the responsible individuals should:

- provide more opportunities for children to develop their independence; and
- further develop the quality of care review and reporting process.

6. How we undertook this inspection

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

One inspector visited the service on 9 October 2019 for approximately five and a half hours. We:

- inspected a sample of documentation and policies;
- observed practice and completed observations using the SOFI 2 tool to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care being provided by staff;
- spoke to the children, parents, the person in charge, staff and visiting professionals;
- read one returned CIW questionnaire from a parent and one from a member of staff; and
- provided feedback by telephone to one of the responsible individuals and the person in charge on 24 October 2019.

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 Sessional Day Care
Responsible Individual	Sara Smith Alan Smith
Person in charge	Amanda Louise Pickering
Registered maximum number of places	28
Age range of children	2 to 3 years
Opening hours	9:00am to 11:30am and 12:10pm to 2:40pm, Monday to Friday during school term time and for the first three week of the school summer holidays
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	8 December 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	9 October 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
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 is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Additional Information:	

Date Published 11/12/2019