



Childcare Inspection Report on

Rhuddlan Playgroup Plus

**Ysgol Y Castell
Hylas Lane Rhuddlan
Rhyl
LL18 5AG**



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Description of the service

Rhuddlan playgroup plus operates from the nursery classroom within Ysgol y Castell Primary School, Rhuddlan. It is registered for up to 30 children and provides care to children from the age of 2 years and 4 months. The service is open from 9.00am to 12.45pm Monday to Friday in term time. The registered person is Abbe Williams, and the person in charge is Ruth Sharp. English is the main language of the service, but Welsh phrases are frequently used. This service does not provide the 'Active offer' of the Welsh language. The service provides some early education funded places for 3 year olds (Foundation Phase) and is inspected by Estyn.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy, are given opportunities to make choices and have their needs met. They are cared for by staff who are well qualified and experienced in the delivery of childcare and who are committed to securing best outcomes for children in their care. The environment allows children to move freely around the areas laid out within the room, which are designed to encourage different types of play. Leadership is not as robust as it should be and there are some issues to address. The service has a good working partnership with the school and other agencies to ensure all children make positive progress.

2. Improvements

- The recommendations made at the previous inspection have been addressed.
- The person in charge completed risk assessments prior to this report being issued.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We found the service did not meet legal requirements in relation to staff files, informing CIW of changes to the service, the statement of purpose, complaints and the completion of the quality of care review. We found these did not affect the care of the children; therefore we have brought them to the attention of the registered person who must address them.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children feel safe, happy and valued. They are encouraged to participate in group activities and are familiar with the routine. They are learning how to interact with their peers and adults. Children are given opportunities to be active, explore and engage in play based activities, whilst learning about the world around them and developing their independence.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children make choices and decisions.

Children were made to feel valued because all had the opportunity to participate and be listened. They were able to move freely around the room choosing to play in the different areas available to them. Some children chose the table top activities, whilst others enjoyed the different role play areas, in particular the "café". Children made choices at snack time from the fruit and vegetables which were offered to them, which encouraged decision making as well as choice.

We made an observation which showed a member of staff encouraging a child to sit next to her and engage in an activity. The child was made to feel valued by the member of staff maintaining eye contact and listening to what the child was saying.

Children participate well and are encouraged to express their opinions.

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

Children are familiar with the routine, which gives them a sense of security and allows them to feel safe and happy.

All of the children were very settled at the service and were familiar with the routine. For example, they made a line and followed the signals given in Welsh before walking down the corridor to the hall. They quickly found a place to sit for their snack and followed instructions for putting their plate into the bowl following snack.

Most children followed instructions when participating in the music and movement session and the smiles and laughter indicated their enjoyment

Children gain a sense of belonging from the familiar routine and consistency of staff.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact and co-operate well with their peers and adults.

Children listened carefully to instructions and cooperated well together to tidy away the toys when asked to do so. They responded to a bell used to gain their attention at times when they needed to listen to instructions. They interacted positively with staff and other children when using the toys and equipment, learning to share and take turns. For example, we saw children playing in the café deciding between themselves who would be the chef, waiter and customers.

Children were given positive encouragement to manage their behaviour and to use good manners.

Children are learning to manage their behaviour and experience positive interactions which help them to develop.

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

Children are encouraged to have fun and be curious.

Children enjoyed the range of play activities available to them, moving freely between the areas of play which interested them. Children enjoyed the Sticky Kids music and movement session which was followed by some yoga. These activities gave children the opportunity to be active indoors whilst developing skills such as balance and coordination. Children had fun outdoors chasing and popping bubbles and were curious to see how big a bubble the member of staff could blow. The children enjoyed the story and singing time at the end of the session. They sang with a sense of enjoyment and it was evident they were familiar with the songs.

Children are actively engaged with the play opportunities presented to them.

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

Children make progress and are learning to become independent.

Children are familiar with the routine and this helps them to develop their independence. For example, snack time provided the opportunity for children to learn to wash their hands and begin to develop good hygiene practices. They chose the fruit/vegetable they wanted to eat at snack time. Most children were able to put on their coats for outdoor play using a technique they had been shown. One child was praised for putting on their coat when they had been unable to do so previously. One child is chosen as leader for the day and was responsible for leading the line of children to go to the hall and outdoors. This also involved leading a series of actions before moving and helps to develop confidence.

Children are given opportunities to develop their independence.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are qualified and experienced in keeping children healthy and safe. They set consistent and realistic boundaries for children's behaviour and act as positive role models. Staff provide a good variety of activities which are fun and help children develop new skills. They track the children's progress and understand individual needs.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff promote healthy life styles and know how to keep children safe.

Staff provide healthy and nutritional snack and drink options. Fruit and vegetables such as carrot sticks, apples, bananas and cucumber are available on a daily basis. Staff provided opportunities for children to be physically active. Once a week, the children are able to use the school hall for movement to music and outdoor play is an integral part of each day. Bicycles encouraged children to be active as did chasing after the bubbles. All staff have a relevant child care qualification and have completed paediatric first aid and child protection training. Good record keeping demonstrated an awareness of their responsibilities.

Staff ensure children are kept safe and physically active.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff set realistic boundaries to promote positive behaviour.

Staff were consistent in their approach to behaviour management. They were very aware of all of the children and were quick to step in to avert any potential problems. For example, staff separated some children when they were in the hall for music and movement and kept some children close to them to manage their behaviour. Staff managed the numbers in the café area to make sure that children could play safely and explained to children the reasons they could not play in this area until there was room. Staff offered children regular praise for good behaviour which helped make it clear to children what was expected of them. This was particularly noticeable when children were praised for sharing and taking turns.

Staff manage behaviour well and set good examples.

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

Staff understand how to plan and assess children's development in order to meet their individual needs.

Staff are well qualified, and created a calm and nurturing environment for the children. Staff had an up to date understanding of child development and the Foundation Phase and implemented this well through the daily routine.

One member of staff took responsibility to record comments made by children at circle time. This was to check children's understanding of instructions and the discussions about the current theme of winter.

Staff devise activities based around a theme. For example, a home made bingo/lotto game using winter images. There were also opportunities for free play, which allows children to follow their own interests. For example, we saw two children preparing a picnic in the role play area and taking it with them in their car to the beach, using their imagination and role playing.

The planning and assessment tools are provided by the Early Entitlement team for Denbighshire County Council. All staff take their turn in recording information to support each child in their development.

Staff plan and provide a good variety of enjoyable activities.

3. Environment

Summary

Leaders provide an environment which is bright, clean and safe. There is sufficient play space both indoors and outside for a wide range of play and learning. Furniture, toys and equipment are suitable for the age of the children and enhance their play experiences.

Our findings

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

Leaders maintain a safe and secure environment, but written risk assessments should support this.

The service had moved rooms within the school building during the summer and now occupies the nursery classroom. Leaders had not provided written risk assessments for this classroom following the move. These have now been provided. Procedures are in place to ensure the environment was kept clean and secure.

Leaders ensured the outdoor area provided children with the opportunity to take supported risks while being active, climbing and developing physically. Although not used on the day of the inspection, children have access to a woodland play area and also enjoy rolling down the slope near this play area. These areas provide different opportunities for children to be active and develop skills.

Leaders had appropriate procedures in place to manage cross infection. Children were encouraged to wash their hands prior to having a snack and staff followed good hygiene procedures when preparing the snack.

Leaders consider the safety of the environment to ensure it is free from unnecessary risks.

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

Leaders provide premises which provide sufficient space and facilities to meet the needs of children.

The play space in the classroom is designed to meet the needs of the Early Years Foundation Phase. An adjacent area is available for messy play and access to the outdoor play space is from this area. There is a large covered area directly outside and this will provide an ideal outdoor classroom space when it has been cleared. This will further enhance outdoor play. Furniture and toileting facilities were appropriately sized and promoted the children's independence. The main classroom is divided into different areas of play, allowing children to play in small groups to encourage communication and a sense of belonging.

Leaders ensure the environment is used flexibly and creates a good sense of security and belonging.

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

Leaders provide a wide range of good quality resources which are appropriate and suitable for the children's needs.

Leaders consider the quality of toys and resources and replace them when deemed necessary. Fundraising helps to support the purchase of new equipment and resources for the children. The service shares resources and equipment with the school's nursery class. The resources were a good mix of plastic and natural resources such as wooden toys. Outdoors, there is a large sandpit, space for the selection of wheeled toys and a physical play area amongst the trees using natural resources and providing a good area for physical play including developing balance. Leaders ensure children have access to technology, but this was not used at the time of the inspection.

Leaders provide a wide range of good quality resources and equipment.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Leaders do not have a clear vision for the service and do not have processes in place for ensuring compliance with the regulations is maintained. Leaders have not completed a review of quality of care for this year or previous years. Leaders ensure staff are well qualified, experienced and deployed effectively to meet the needs of the children. Leaders ensure parents are kept informed and there is a good partnership with the school.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leaders are not always effective in ensuring the service is operated in accordance with the regulations.

Leaders were not able to provide a statement of purpose at the time of the inspection which indicates that there are no clear aims or vision for the service. The person in charge has taken some responsibility to making sure staff are supported and some information is available to parents.

We found most of the policies and procedures were fit for purpose. The complaints policy did not include timescales as per the regulations. Accident records were well documented. We inspected children's records and saw these were well maintained and included all the required information.

Staff understood their responsibilities to promote the Welsh language, encouraging the use of Welsh throughout the service.

Leadership is mostly effective.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Leaders do not have procedures in place to assess the quality of the service they deliver.

Leaders have not provided an annual review of the quality of care in recent years. They have not used the views of parents, staff and other professionals in order to review the quality of care and to establish a plan for improvements. Staff meet prior to each session to review and evaluate the care and activities provided for the children.

There are no systems to gain the views of people involved in the service and to provide an evaluation of the service.

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

Leaders do not have a safe and robust recruitment process.

We found staff files did not contain all of the relevant information to meet the requirements of the regulations and to provide a robust system of checks. The person in charge has begun to address this

issue. Staff have demonstrated a commitment to training, including keeping their statutory training up to date. All staff hold a relevant child care qualification and have the necessary skills to support children to develop their skills.

The recruitment process is not sufficiently robust.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Leaders develop links with partners to develop the service.

Staff work closely with the Early Education team using their forms to record planning and assessments and taking advice on activities. Staff also have close links with the school nursery teacher. We spoke to the nursery teacher, who confirmed they work together in particular when planning around a theme in order to make good use of the space in the room and the resources available. The majority of the children attending playgroup also attend the school nursery and a good relationship helps to ensure a smooth transition into school.

The playgroup has a closed facebook page for parents, which provides information about the service, any fundraising events and photographs of the children (with parent's permission).

Leaders have developed good partnerships within the school and the local authority.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

We informed the registered person that they were not compliant with the following regulations of the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010:

Regulation 15, the registered person must compile a statement of purpose.

Regulation 28, staff files must include all of the required information as specified within part 1 of schedule 2.

Regulation 31 (1)(2), CIW should be informed of any changes to the service set out in this regulation, including any changes to the times of opening.

Regulation 16, An annual review of the quality of care is required and this should include the views of parents, staff, professionals and children.

Regulation 34 (1), complaints that are dealt with locally must be resolved by the registered person as soon as reasonably practicable and in any event within 14 days.

We did not issue non compliance notices on this occasion as we did not find evidence these had an impact on the well-being of children. We told the registered person that these matters should be addressed.

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

None

6. How we undertook this inspection

We undertook inspection as part of our annual schedule of inspections. One inspector visited from 9.00 am. – 12.45 pm. on Tuesday, 15 January 2019. We

- observed the children's engagement and the care being provided by staff;
- observed practice and completed observations using the SOFI 2 tool, to evidence;
- spoke to the person in charge, staff, the nursery teacher and the registered person;
- looked at some records including policies, procedures, children's records and registers and
- we inspected the premises and the quality of toys and resources.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Sessional Day Care
Registered Person	Abbe Williams
Person in charge	Ruth Sharp
Registered maximum number of places	30
Age range of children	2 years 4 months
Opening hours	9.00am to 12.45pm, Monday to Friday during term time
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	29 September 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	15 January 2019
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?	No
Additional Information:	