



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Childcare Inspection Report on

The Venture Wrexham Ltd

**The Venture
Garner Road
Wrexham
LL13 8SF**



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Description of the service

The Venture Wrexham Ltd is registered to provide care at The Venture Playgroup. The playgroup uses a building within the adventure playground on the Caia Park estate. They provide care as part of the Flying Start initiative for up to 26 children between the ages two and three years. They are open Monday to Friday and provide two sessions a day from 9.15am to 11.45am and 12.45pm to 3.15pm. The responsible individual for the company is Malcolm King and the person in day to day charge is Karen Davies.

The group is English speaking but uses Welsh during the session in songs, counting and colours.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

The children at The Venture Playgroup are happy and settled and are cared for in a stimulating environment. They have developed good relationships with staff who provide enthusiastic and consistent care. The group is well established within the community and has excellent relationships with the health visitors and local schools. Relationships with parents are also excellent and the group provides support in numerous ways within the community. Children have opportunities to play out of doors each day and there is a good range of toys and equipment both indoors and outdoors. Staff are very experienced and are well qualified. They continue to increase their knowledge by attending training on a regular basis.

2. Improvements

The group received a grant this year and have refurbished the toilet and nappy changing area. They have been awarded the gold award from the Design to Smile initiative and a grade 5 from the Food Standards Agency for food hygiene.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We informed the responsible individual of the fact that supervision of all staff is a legal requirement. The manager was made aware of the need to have the most recent phone number for CSSIW on the complaints policy.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are very settled at the playgroup. They are able to move freely around the room and make choices from the many stimulating and imaginative areas of play. Children are familiar with the routine which gives them a sense of security. Children use good manners as staff act as good role models. There are sufficient resources both indoors and outdoors to develop all aspects of children's play.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children have access to a wide range of toys and equipment throughout the session and are encouraged to make choices about their play.

We saw children moving around the room, exploring the numerous different areas of play provided. Children were asked what they would like to play with and encouraged to develop their language skills. For example; by asking if they would like to play with the red or the blue train. Children were offered a choice of cereals at snack time. Two of the four children present have English as a second language. The staff have learnt some words to assist with their understanding of the children. Children were encouraged to speak English and were praised when they said a new word. During the story time, the children were offered a bag to choose an item from and this was a way of each child choosing which song to sing next.

Children are able to communicate their needs and make choices in a variety of ways.

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

Children are settled and happy. They are able to follow an adaptable routine, which helps them to feel safe.

We saw that the children were very settled as soon as they were left by their parents. We were told by the manager that staff work with the Flying Start health visitor and the parents to develop strategies when a child does not settle and this has reduced the time taken for a child to settle. We saw children were given a five minute warning of any changes, such as registration, snack time and playing outside. Whilst the children are too young to understand what five minutes means, it did alert them to the fact that the bell would be ringing to signal a change. After five minutes a bell rang and children were told it was time to tidy away or move to another area of the room. Children responded well to the routine of the group. We were told that the routine is flexible enough for staff to respond to any

changes such as the weather, good or bad. We saw that staff did not take the children out for so long on the day of the inspection due to the excessive heat outside. They also provided drinks of water throughout the session to keep children hydrated.

Children are familiar with the routine at the service which gives them a sense of security and the routine is developmentally appropriate for their needs.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact well with one another and the staff.

We saw a child watering the plants asking for more water and staff filling up the watering can. We saw one child looking at ladybirds on the wooden staging area and spending time with a member of staff looking for more ladybirds, and talking about how they look and the way that they fly. Children played well together and were encouraged to take turns and share toys where necessary. Good manners were supported by staff acting as good role models and encouraging children to say please and thank you. One child was told “you have good manners saying please and thank you”.

Children are engaged and busy and enjoy their time at the playgroup; their interactions with one another and adults are very positive.

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

The children benefit from having access to an imaginative and stimulating play space.

We saw the children in particular enjoyed playing in the sand tray, and one child brought a car from the garage and car area to play with in the sand. The member of staff encouraged play for this child by helping to make roads in the sand and helped language development by talking about their play “can you see the tyre tracks?”. We saw children enjoy an informal story session in the book area. One child left the area during the story but returned with a doll in a pushchair to listen to the remainder of the story. The children also enjoyed the sheer curtain in this area, using it for hiding behind.

Children are able to explore their environment freely and safely

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

The environment and overall ethos of the playgroup supports children to become independent and prepares them well, for when they move on to nursery.

Children are encouraged to hang aprons up following water play both indoors and outdoors. Aprons were located close by so that children can access them independently. Hand washing is encouraged before snack and when children return indoors. A mobile sink is

used for this purpose. We saw that the toilet area was well stocked with soap dispensers and paper towels and this area was designed specifically to encourage children to learn to use the toilet independently. The nappy changing unit has steps to allow the children to access the unit without the need for lifting them.

Children are very well supported by the staff team to learn, develop and become more independent.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff work well as a team and with other professionals to make sure that children are safe and healthy. They are very experienced at managing interactions and developing language skills. Staff receive support from the Flying Start team in Wrexham and work hard to make sure that the group is meeting the Flying Start criteria.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff have significant experience and knowledge to support them in keeping children safe and healthy.

There is a safeguarding policy which staff are all aware of. Staff have completed training around safeguarding children and are due to update their training this term. Staff understood the procedures for safeguarding. We saw records of existing injuries which were well documented and included making parents aware that the information was recorded.

All staff updated their first aid training in January 2017. We saw accident records, which were signed by staff and parents. A copy of the accident record is given to parents.

Staff demonstrated good hygiene practices during the session. The service has been awarded a 5 rating for food hygiene, the gold award for Design to Smile and a certificate from public health dieticians for healthy snack and drink provision. In addition the service has registered for the Healthy and Sustainable Pre School Initiative with Welsh Government. We saw children washing hands before snack, after outdoor play and after using the toilet. Children brushed their teeth supported by staff who sang a song about brushing teeth. Children had a choice of Weetabix or Rice Krispies for snack followed by a choice of fruit. The staff made sure the children had sun cream and hats on before going outside and encouraged the children to play in areas where there was more shade.

The service implements best practice in relation to healthy eating/lifestyle programmes to improve outcomes for children

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff have an excellent understanding of child development and are able to implement strategies to manage the individual needs of the children.

Staff completed a positive approach to behaviour in May 2017 to update their existing knowledge and skills. They demonstrated how the behaviour policy is put into practice during the session, using distraction where necessary to manage behaviour. Staff use positive behaviour management, offering lots of praise such as “well done for helping to tidy away”. A good ratio of staff to children: three staff and four children on the first visit and three staff with five children on the second, meant the staff were able to offer one to one support at times.

We saw staff offering cuddles when they were needed and constantly using positive reinforcement to encourage children to use words and develop their language skills.

Staff promote positive behaviour well through celebrating good behaviour.

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

Staff use their experience and training well to meet the individual needs of children.

Staff use post it notes to record observations made during the session. A planning meeting is held each week to discuss each child and the observations staff have made. The key worker is responsible for transferring this information to the “All about me” document which supports staff in knowing the stage of development for each child. This also provides staff with the information to help them to plan for the next stage of learning for each individual. Staff were seen to promote Welsh language by counting and talking about colours in Welsh.

Language skills were developed throughout the session during play, informal story time and at story time. Staff used appropriate songs and rhymes throughout the session to reinforce language development.

Staff provide a language rich environment and are good language models themselves.

3. Environment

Summary

Policies and procedures are in place to support staff in making sure the premises are safe and secure. The premises are well maintained and suitably furnished to provide for all aspects of play. The playgroup has a good range of toys and equipment both indoors and outside.

Our findings

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

The group have all of the required policies to support staff in making sure the environment is safe for children.

We saw these policies are made available to parents to view before children start at the playgroup. They are reviewed when any changes are required or annually as part of the review of the service. The phone number on the complaints policy is an old number and needs to be updated. The door to the playgroup is closed during the session and there is added security of a locked gate to prevent children from leaving the room unaccompanied. The outdoor play area is secure with access from the playgroup room. The kitchen is separate from the room used by the children. We saw the group had comprehensive risk assessments including risk assessments for any outings such as the recent visit to Chester Zoo.

Leaders ensure premises are safe and secure and the safety requirements in Standard 24 of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare are well implemented. They adhere to all other health and safety requirements.

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

The premises were set out to provide a welcoming and stimulating environment for children.

The playgroup uses a hall which is part of the Venture playground facility. There is a secure outdoor play area with direct access from the hall. The room was set out into different areas of play and children were able to move around the room to engage in the play of their choice. The areas of play provided children with opportunities for all aspects of play and to encourage the use of all senses. The outdoor play area has different areas for play including a hard surface, a grassed area and another area which is a mix of sanded area, some grass and a safe surface. This area contains a wooden platform leading to a slide and some wooden play houses.

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?

The resources and equipment are in good condition and there is sufficient variety for children to be offered a good range of learning experiences.

The children have access to good quality resources made in a variety of materials. We saw a number of toys being used which were made of wood, including wooden building blocks, and a wooden clothes airer. We saw dressing up clothes were provided, and these included a range of scarves for children to use their imagination in dressing up. Sand and water are always available and the children had a sand tray for mark making. A tray was also provided to provide materials found at the seaside as a means of children exploring that environment and for staff to encourage language.

The outdoor play area has some large equipment in place including a large wooden structure, a slide and a number of wooden play houses.

Staff ensure that all children have access to a wide range of good quality developmentally appropriate play and learning resources indoors and outdoors.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Overall, leaders work to and often exceed the national minimum standards and the regulations. They have built an established team who have clear roles and responsibilities and deliver quality care to children. Leaders have not reviewed the quality of the service they provide recently but are in the process of gathering information to complete the latest SASS (self assessment of service statement). There are positive relationships with parents. Some information about the service and records are needed.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The manager is aware of her responsibilities to work to the national minimum standards and regulations.

There are systems in place to monitor and update policies and procedures where necessary. There is a statement of purpose which accurately reflects the service provided. There is a comprehensive file of policies and procedures and these are made available to parents in the reception area of the centre. The manager and staff team are very aware of their responsibilities as a Flying Start group within the community and work with the Flying Start team which includes attending training on a regular basis. Staff understand what constitutes best practice relevant to the children in their care.

Leaders ensure that the service complies with all relevant regulations and regularly exceed the National Minimum Standards

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The manager is aware of the need to evaluate and improve the service and demonstrates that she has systems in place to do so.

A review of quality of care has not been provided since 2014, but the service has been reviewed through the Flying Start initiative using the ITERS (infant toddler environment rating) in June 2016 and was recorded as being “quality childcare which Flying Start are proud to have on board”. Some aspects of the service have been reviewed by other professionals as part of the Design to Smile and Healthy Eating initiatives and have demonstrated that they have considered areas for improvement through these initiatives. The staff meet each week to discuss individuals and how to progress the group.

The manager and staff are open to new ideas and are willing to try out different ways of working.

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

There is a sense of support and a commitment to training for staff. Evidence of supervision of all staff is required.

We noted that staff have worked together for many years and have established good support between themselves and the manager, who works alongside staff in the morning as part of the rota. Staff are all qualified and there is a positive culture of continuous professional development. Staff have completed annual appraisals, but there is no evidence of supervision meetings for some staff.

Leaders ensure there is a strong culture of continuous professional development which is modelled by leaders and value the experience of staff.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Leaders work closely with parents in order to meet children's needs and to keep them informed of their child's development.

We saw parents spend time at the end of the session talking with staff and it was evident that they have developed good relationships which can only benefit the children.

We were told that the group have an excellent relationship with the Flying Start Health Visitor who provides support in relation to the behaviour of individual children.

We saw that children's progress was recorded regularly and parents told us they were kept up to date and invited to contribute and add more information. Parents had completed questionnaires where they stated their appreciation of the care provided and we spoke to some parents who were very complimentary about the service. Parents were informed about the service, activities and events as information was displayed in the entrance hall of the playgroup and by word of mouth. We were told by the manager of the help and support provided to parents outside of their remit of caring for children including providing support to parents to access other services. There were good links with local primary schools which made an easier transition for the children when they moved from the service to school.

Leaders have developed effective partnerships which benefit the children.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Areas of non compliance identified at this inspection

We informed the responsible individual that their service was not compliant with the following regulation;

Regulation 29 3(a). The registered person must ensure that all employees who look after relevant children receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal.

We did not issue a non compliance notice as we did not find evidence, on this occasion, this had an impact on the wellbeing of children. We told the responsible individual that this matter should be addressed.

5.3 Recommendations for improvement

The correct telephone number for CSSIW should be provided on the complaints policy.

6. How we undertook this inspection

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

- One inspector visited on 19 June and 26 June 2017;
- we inspected a sample of children's files and looked at policies;
- we spoke to the person in charge, the responsible individual, 4 parents and 3 members of staff;
- we observed practice during the visit and completed observations on one child using the SOFI 2 tool to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care being provided by staff.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website www.cssiw.org.uk

About the service

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| Type of care provided | Childrens Day Care Sessional Day Care |
| Responsible Individual | Malcolm King |
| Person in charge | Karen Davies |
| Registered maximum number of places | 26 |
| Age range of children | 2 years to 3 years |
| Opening hours | Monday to Friday 9.15 to 11.45 and 12.45 to 3.15 |
| Operating Language of the service | English |
| Date of previous CSSIW inspection | 9 April 2014 |
| Dates of this inspection visit(s) | 19/06/2017 and 25/06/17 |
| Is this a Flying Start service? | Yes |
| Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer? | No |
| Additional Information: | |