Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

The Venture

The Venture
Garner Road
Wrexham
LL13 8SF



Date Inspection Completed

23/08/2024

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About The Venture

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Open Access Play Provision
Registered Provider	The Venture (Wrexham) Ltd
Registered places	200
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	31 August 2022
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service 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.

Well-being	**Excellent**
Care and Development	**Adequate**
Environment	**Good**
Leadership and Management	**Adequate**

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children's wellbeing is flourishing. They show interest and amazement in discovery through their play and learning experiences. Children are delighted and express enthusiasm and enjoyment while following their own interests. They clearly have a strong sense of belonging and are very familiar with the daily routines. Children engage in purposeful activities and their curiosity is extended as they take part in a broad range of interesting experiences outdoors. Interactions between children and practitioners are consistently stimulating, and children cooperate enthusiastically and feel inspired and motivated. Children are developing increasing independence and self-help skills.

Practitioners are developing their understanding on how to keep children safe and healthy. They are responsive and sensitive to the individual needs of all children and interactions are positive. Practitioners organise interesting play and learning experiences for children.

Leaders make sure the environment is welcoming and secure. There is a variety of re-cycled and natural resources and equipment to stimulate children's play and learning. Leaders have created an inclusive environment where children and their families can play, socialise and relax together.

Leaders are dedicated, hardworking and committed, they manage the setting appropriately. They have built positive partnerships with parents / carers, those using the setting and professional agencies. However, improvements are required to meet with regulations and standards.

Well-being Excellent

Children have exciting opportunities to make choices and decisions about what affects them. As a result, their wellbeing is flourishing. They are very confident communicators as their wants, moods and needs are fully considered. For example, children enthusiastically gave a tour of the play area, their running commentary showed how proud they are of their play area and how much they enjoy using the facilities. They spoke animatedly about the variety of play experiences they can choose from. Children said excitedly '*come and see the biggest slide in Wrexham'*. Children spoke in detail about the food on offer and politely made their requests for more food which practitioners responded to in a timely manner. Children enjoy talking about their families and this led to a lively conversation about seeing their '*great grandad'*. Children have freedom to make their own choices and direct their play following their interests successfully.

Children are happy and content. Their feelings, interests, verbal and non-verbal requests are responded to in a timely manner by practitioners. As a result, this makes children feel valued as they are listened to. For instance, a child's non-verbal request for a cuddle was responded to sensitively by a practitioner making the child feel secure. They are familiar with the daily routines and show how they line-up for their snack at the café counter.

Interactions between children and practitioners are consistently stimulating and children cooperate enthusiastically and feel inspired and motivated. When children do show unwanted behaviours, they learn and respond well to correct their behaviours. For example, when a child shouted at their friend, they took on board the practitioner's explanation why this was not appropriate as their friend was standing close. The child co-operated well and lowered their voice as they continued to communicate. Children share the hand tools well to make their creations and take turns to jump off high towers. Children are learning to be respectful towards the resources and of others. They are learning that their friends may have different needs and abilities and show acceptance of this.

Children are highly motivated, animated, and fully engaged in their play and learning. They eagerly enjoy participating in interesting and stimulating opportunities outdoors. Children enjoy demonstrating how they can swing from height, climb rope ladders and whizz down long slides. They enjoy organising areas with crash mats to practice somersaults, flips and splits. Friends had fun making a den from re-cycled materials, they helped one another to secure the netting and shared the seat they had made using a crate. Children enjoy being creative and used a variety of different paints and brushes to decorate a re-cycled tyre. Some children enjoyed painting their own faces and used the mirrors in the sheltered cabins to perfect their design. Children enjoy problem solving. For instance, friends experimented with walking across the resistant band bridge, they tried different ways of walking across to perfect their balancing skills and not fall off. They persevered well to ride their bikes up and down slopes to practice their cycling skills while being considerate not to get in the way of their younger friends' play.

Children have interesting opportunities to develop their independence skills enabling them to do things for themselves successfully and to problem solve effectively, develop creatively, to experiment and be imaginative.

Care and Development — Adequate

Practitioners know children well. They have a warm and friendly approach to care giving. They praise children consistently for their efforts and take delight through celebrating their achievements. Practitioners support children to speak and express themselves well as they receive a consistent response. Practitioners promote children's home language, and this helps towards creating inclusivity.

Practitioners are developing their understanding of keeping children safe and healthy. They have a suitable understanding of safeguarding procedures. The person in charge has completed further safeguarding training which has enabled her to improve her understanding. Practitioners' mandatory training is current and suitable for the ages of children being cared for. They complete accident and incident records accurately and these are either signed by parents / carers or a note added by the practitioners to acknowledge parents / carers have been kept informed. Owing to the nature of the setting and the regulatory requirements around open access play provisions, attendance records for children are not always completed fully with their age and daily hours of attendance and practitioners are not consistently recording their breaks. There is no clear audit of who is caring for children at certain times during the day. Practitioners regularly conduct fire drills to raise children's awareness of what to do in the event of an emergency.

Practitioners are partly following the Welsh Government food and nutrition guidance for childcare settings. Most options are healthy but unhealthier options of biscuits and jam filled sandwiches are also offered. Practitioners supervise children appropriately most of the time. However, they are not promoting personal hygiene practices effectively. For instance, children are not being encouraged to wash their hands before eating and fresh drinking water is accessed by children by placing their mouths to the outdoor tap faucet or cupping their unwashed hands to drink from. Practitioners are not raising children's awareness of the potential risk of choking and the importance of taking time to sit down and eat their food properly. For example, children continued to eat as they played, some at height on rope swings and others while practicing their somersaults. Practitioners have not identified the risk of potential scalding to children as they and parents / carers consume hot drinks in the play area. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action. Following our visit the responsible individual confirmed he is addressing these matters.

Practitioners follow the positive behaviour management policy appropriately. They are responsive and sensitive to the individual needs of all children. Practitioners provide all children with support in learning how to manage their emotions and behaviours. For instance, a practitioner explained clearly and patiently to a child why their unwanted interactions were not welcomed and asked the child to consider how this would make their friend feel. As a result, the child apologised to their friend and demonstrated improved interactions. Practitioners are at hand to provide children with the support they need to

become better citizens and are responsive to their non-verbal requests when they see a child requiring comfort, reassurance or support.

Practitioners implement the play work principles consistently and organise interesting play and learning experiences for children. They respond in a timely manner to children's requests and interests. For instance, a practitioner supported a child to use a variety of hand tools to make a swing out of re-cycled materials. Another practitioner helped a child to work out, through a variety of questions, how they could collect blackberries from a hedge which was too tall for them to reach.

Environment — Good

Leaders work diligently to create an attractive and interesting environment to develop children's play and learning. They ensure the environment is welcoming and keep most areas clean.

Leaders ensure required health and safety checks are complete and they follow appropriate procedures in relation to visitors accessing the setting. They complete risk benefit and dynamic risk assessments suitably and outline the actions to be taken to reduce and prevent risks to children. However, these have not been regularly reviewed. Leaders make sure practitioners implement appropriate cleaning routines. However, toilet facilities are not cleaned regularly throughout the day to keep them clean and fresh for children to use and handwashing equipment such as liquid soap is not always readily available. Some items in the first aid box had expired.

Leaders ensure children and their families are warmly welcomed and have created designated areas for them to play, socialise, relax and learn new things. They have created access to an on-site café where children are provided with food and parents / carers can access hot drinks. Information about health, welfare and educational opportunities are nicely displayed alongside a '*help yourself library'* of books and DVD's.

Leaders make sure the layout of the play area promotes children's independence effectively, enabling them to access resources, equipment and apparatus with ease. There is a good selection of hand tools, recycled and natural resources to develop children's sensory, language, numeracy, and self-awareness skills. Leaders have created more naturalistic play areas, making greater use of features such as logs, slopes, ditches and planting areas, along with sand and some access to water play. This helps to ignite children's imagination and curiosity. Leaders make sure there is a good range of equipment for children to challenge themselves, such as high swings, rope ladders and balancing equipment. Most of the central play surface is sand which helps with physical impact as some children enjoy practicing their gymnastic skills and jumping from height. Leaders are highlighting to children the importance of respecting their environment. For example, a child enjoyed using a litter picker, working alongside a volunteer to collect rubbish and debris from the play area to help keep it clean. Leaders present children's artwork attractively, showing children their efforts are valued.

Leadership and Management — Adequate

Leaders are passionate about creating an environment that promotes a child's moral understanding and to develop life skills through their play and learning experiences. The responsible individual makes sure partnership working is strong creating a setting where the child is at the centre of everything they do. However, improvements are required to meet with regulations and standards.

Leaders have an up-to-date and satisfactory statement of purpose reflecting the service provided and have submitted the assessment of service statement to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Leaders are not consistently submitting notifications to inform CIW of significant events or changes to the setting which impact on children's welfare. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action. Leaders have produced policies and procedures, but these have not been reviewed regularly to make sure they are up to date and include reference to current Welsh legislation and guidance. For example, the safeguarding policy is not based on the expectations of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action. Following our visit, the responsible individual took immediate action to address this matter and submitted a compliant safeguarding policy to CIW. Leaders have a suitable understanding of their role and responsibilities to promote the Welsh language and culture.

Leaders have written a comprehensive report reviewing the quality of care. They actively seek and implement the suggestions of children, their parents / carers, practitioners and other interested partners to help them evaluate the setting and consider what improvements could be made. This is embedded in practice to measure the success of the service as part of these processes.

Leaders set clear expectations, they manage their teams suitably and challenge any poor performance. However, they do not ensure the recruited team meet the required percentage of qualified practitioners to make sure they have the appropriate skills to meet the individual needs of all children. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action. Following our visit the responsible individual confirmed he is addressing this matter. Satisfactory systems are in place to make sure Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for leaders and practitioners are current. However, leaders have not ensured all the required information has been collated in the practitioner's employment files and volunteer files to ascertain their suitability in caring for children. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action. Leaders conduct one-to-one supervision and appraisal with practitioners. However, these are not undertaken regularly and are not embedded consistently in practice to make sure practitioners are encouraged to think about the quality of their practice and raise any safeguarding concerns. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

Leaders make sure daily group practitioner reflective sessions are conducted to enable practitioners to highlight and talk together about the positives from the day and any challenges experienced. They organise team meetings routinely to keep practitioners up to date about what is going on at the setting and afford them an opportunity to raise any problems or highlight what is working well. Practitioners spoken with said they enjoy working at the setting, few practitioners commented '*I feel proud being able to help children and feel proud I am doing a good job', 'managers are amazing…we are very close like a family', 'I love working here with the children and the people'.*

Leaders have built effective partnerships with parents / carers, professionals and the community. Parents / carers spoken with said they '*really appreciate The Venture*' and their children '*absolutely love coming here'*. Few parents / carers said they also enjoy coming along with their children as '*The Venture is a fantastic place for the whole community…it's not just a children's place but for the whole community*'. Parents / carers said how much they appreciate the care and support for their children and the help they receive with getting information to improve their children's and family's welfare and health. Leaders work collaboratively with external professional agencies and third sector organisations and are registered as a foodbank referral outlet along with a local holiday hunger project providing daily healthy meals for children.

Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	**What each means**
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
25	The responsible individual must ensure unnecessary risks to the health or safety of children	New

	are identified by leaders and practitioners and so far as possible eliminated. The responsible individual must make sure practitioners are supervising children appropriately at all times and encouraging them to practice effective healthy routines to keep them safe.	
31	The responsible individual must ensure Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) is kept informed of any changes to the setting and significant events which are likely to affect the welfare of any child on the premises. Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, in advance of the event occurring; and in all other cases as soon as reasonably practicable, but not later than 14 days after the event has occurred. The responsible individual must make sure they submit these relevant notifications via the CIW online portal.	New
28	The responsible individual must ensure they have gathered all of the required information in the practitioner employment and volunteer files in order to ascertain their suitability in caring for children.	New
27	The responsible individual must ensure the person in charge obtains a Level 3 qualification in Play work. The responsible individual must ensure at least 40% of all ‘other practitioners'' holds a Level 2 play work qualification as recognised on The Play work Education and Training Council for Wales which is appropriate to the post and at least half of these have a qualification at Level 3.	New
29	The responsible individual must ensure all paid practitioners receive regular one-to-one supervision which encourages them to think about the quality of their practice and raise any safeguarding concerns. The responsible individual must make sure all paid practitioners receive formal appraisal at least once a year.	New
22	The responsible individual must ensure the safeguarding policy is based on the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. In producing this policy the responsible individual must also be familiar with the Welsh Government’s statutory guidance on safeguarding children under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.	Achieved

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
Standard 22 - Environment	Make sure all areas of the physical environment are kept clean and fresh throughout the day such as toilet facilities and these are equipped with appropriate handwashing and hand drying equipment.
Standard 24 - Safety	Make sure risk benefit and dynamic risk assessments are regularly reviewed and any changes to the premises or the needs of the children are taken into consideration. Make sure an action plan with timescales identifies action to be taken to minimise identified risks.
Standard 1 - Information	Review all policies and procedures regularly to ensure they are up to date and include reference to current Welsh legislation and guidance. Consider including the most recent review date on all documents.

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Best Practice
Recommendation(s)
Consider recording the ages of children, their daily hours of attendance and the persons looking after them during these times as this record may be needed if any issues occur in future.

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.

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