



Inspection Report

Machen Village Hall Playgroup

**Machen Village Hall
The Crescent
Machen
Caerphilly
CF83 8ND**



Date Inspection Completed

18/12/2023

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About Machen Village Hall Playgroup

Type of care provided.	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Heather Street
Registered places	35
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	5 June 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

<u>Well-being</u>	Good
<u>Care and Development</u>	Good
<u>Environment</u>	Good
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Adequate

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

Summary

Children's voices are consistently listened to, and their preferences are considered. They are happy, settled and have many opportunities to make choices about their play. They are active and enjoy access to toys and resources laid out for them. Children are confident in their play and are developing their independence skills effectively. Children are establishing good relationships with other children and staff.

Nearly all staff have a childcare qualification and other relevant certificates to support them to provide care for children effectively. They are very experienced in childcare, work well as a team and are clear regarding how to keep children safe and healthy. Staff manage interactions in a positive manner and meet children's needs effectively. Staff provide a good range of play and learning activities.

The setting operates from a large, well-maintained hall and is set up and packed away daily. Leaders adapt some facilities to meet the needs of children attending. Staff ensure that interesting resources are provided for children. Leaders have policies and procedures in place to ensure the environment is safe for children and a few have been reviewed and updated during this inspection.

Leaders are relatively well organised and, in the main, ensure that the regulations and national minimum standards are met. They have taken immediate action to review some policies during the inspection process, others need to be further reviewed to ensure they clearly reflect changes to legislation and the provision of Flying Start. Staff consistently maintain daily records and paperwork is generally well maintained. Leaders review the quality of the service, but this has not always been effective to identify improvements required. They have developed positive partnerships with parents/carers.

Well-being

Good

Children can speak freely, confidently and make many choices regarding their play. They are active participants in their play choices and move confidently around the playroom, spending time on different activities. They can choose freely to go inside or out during the session and between free play or more structured activities. For example, during carpet time their opinions are sought as staff ask them *“what (song) shall we start with,”* and *“does anybody have a story they want us to read today.”*

Children are settled, comfortable and clearly familiar with the routines of the setting. They run in excitedly and are warmly welcomed by staff and other children. Children laugh and smile, playing happily together and engaging staff in their play. Children spontaneously go to staff for cuddles and reassurance, such as if they fall over or want to show them their painting. A child smiled broadly as a member of staff talked to them about their outfit and commented on how nice their hair was. Children have strong relationships with staff and are at ease in their company.

Children are forming friendships, in line with their age and stage of development. They play happily alongside each other or together. For example, some share blocks on the mat and others co-operate on the slide. Children chat together and with staff while eating their snacks. They freely move between the activities, sustaining interest in the ones they are most excited by. Children are confident to approach staff if they have a problem or need reassurance. They engage happily with staff as they play and learn, knowing that staff listen to them and value what they say and do.

Children are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning, following their own interests with the resources available each day. Children concentrate and persevere with activities such as jigsaws and painting and are happily absorbed with various toys. Children excitedly engage with the outdoor activities that are set up. For example, riding on trikes and playing in the outdoor kitchen. Children thoroughly enjoy song time, joining in enthusiastically, smiling and laughing.

Children have good opportunities to develop their skills to become independent. They serve their own food from the ‘buffet style’ snack and many successfully open their packed lunch food at lunch time. Children are supported to use the toilet on their own and many can access the facilities independently.

Care and Development

Good

Staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They are knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the setting's safeguarding procedures. Staff are aware of their own responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns. They promote good hygiene, by cleaning tables before snack and ensuring children know to wash their hands before eating. Staff have a good understanding of children's allergies and medical conditions and implement the settings procedures effectively. They carry out fire drills however, they have not been at regular intervals to ensure all children and staff know what to do in the event of an emergency. Leaders took immediate action to address the issue.

Staff are consistently warm, patient and kind in their interactions with the children. They use positive behaviour management strategies as outlined in the behaviour management policy. Staff routinely praise children for sharing, taking turns and using good manners. They engage well with children who occasionally display unwanted behaviours, by re-directing their energies into other activities. For example, a child who did not want to engage in the carpet time activity was offered an alternative activity and staff explained how their friends wanted to listen. Staff act as good role models for the children, putting emphasis on using good manners with each other and children.

Staff know the children very well but have not consistently tracked their developmental progress. Leaders have begun to implement a process to do this more effectively and link the child's next steps to activity planning. Staff ensure that younger children and those with emerging learning needs are supported well and they make suitable adjustments, to ensure they receive care appropriate for their individual needs. Some children receive additional support, but there is no established system to ensure that children, especially those under two years, receive care from a consistent staff member. Staff are enthusiastic and make activities such as story time fun and interesting. They successfully extend children's learning throughout their play, introducing concepts such as big and small and developing their memory skilfully during a carpet activity. Staff introduce numerous Welsh words and phrases during the session and photographs show how activities promote the Welsh culture and a diverse society.

Environment

Good

Leaders ensure the environment is generally safe and secure for children. They have some risk assessments for the premises and some activities. Leaders have not ensured these are updated, and they do not reflect risks such as the low wall in the outside area and use of fire doors. Leaders took immediate action to address the issue, ensuring any risks were minimised until a more permanent solution can be found. Staff set up the setting daily and carry out safety checks of the areas used by children which are recorded. Leaders monitor maintenance checks for the building and appliances, such as an annual gas safety check and fire safety equipment are in place. She views these electronically as they are carried out by the local authority who own the building and records that they have seen them. The setting is registered with the food safety department and staff maintain appropriate records to ensure food is provided safely.

Leaders ensure the facilities meet the needs of the children attending. They keep the environment clean, make it child friendly and welcoming for children. They mainly use a large hall that they divide into areas using equipment so that more physical activities such as the climbing frame and slide, are managed safely. They have access to good toilet and nappy changing facilities. Children access an area directly outside the building which staff supervise children to use. Leaders adapt an area for children to sit and eat. Basic sleep equipment is available. However, this is rarely used as very few children attend the setting all day and do not usually require a nap.

Leaders ensure that resources are plentiful and suitable for the age of the children accessing them. They maintain them to a high standard and provide a wide range of interesting activities for children. They store resources in a large cupboard and activities are put out daily according to what activity plans are in place and what is known about the needs of the children attending. Children have free access to what staff put out for them, and additional resources are made available as required, and rotated between sessions. The setting has suitable furniture such as child sized tables, chairs, and soft furnishings. Children can store their belongings on a rack as they enter the building. Some children's work is on display, but wall space is limited due to the multi-use of the facilities.

Leadership and Management

Adequate

Leaders generally manage the service appropriately, but improvements are required to ensure that they consistently meet the regulations and national minimum standards. They have taken prompt steps during this inspection to address the matters raised to a satisfactory standard. The statement of purpose clearly outlines the service provided and has been further updated. The setting's safeguarding policy has been reviewed along with some other policies to reflect the Flying Start element of the service. Leaders are reviewing other policies and has plans in place to share these with staff and parents. Leaders obtain information about children and maintain most daily records suitably. They have taken steps to review their current system for logging the times when children are present, to ensure compliance with the regulations.

Leaders carry out an annual quality of care review of the service. They request parents to complete questionnaires, but their feedback is not included in the report. They do not include the views of children or staff in their review as required. The annual review has not been effective in identifying matters that required attention, for the setting to consistently meet the regulations and national minimum standards. There is a suitable complaints policy in place, should parents want to raise any concerns about the setting.

Leaders have sustained a very stable workforce and staff work seamlessly as a team. They have not employed new staff for a while and maintain staff files suitably, evidencing that nearly all information is present to ensure staff are fit to work with children. Leaders have carried out a review of staff files during the inspection and sought further information from staff to fully meet the requirements. They confirmed that they understand the regulations before employing any future staff. There is a clear system in place to ensure that staff's Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) are up to date. There are good opportunities for staff to receive training as required. Leaders deploy staff effectively to ensure that required staff to child ratios are always maintained and children receive good supervision and support. Staff have received one to one supervision occasionally, but this has not been regular or linked into the annual appraisal. Leaders have taken steps to improve the process and will ensure that this is carried out consistently. Staff told us that they feel supported and valued at the setting.

Leaders have well established partnerships with parents, the committee of the community centre and the community, which support them to provide a good service. They have developed useful links with other relevant professionals, including the local authority safeguarding team and Flying Start team. Leaders are clear regarding the expectations of sharing information about children's development and any other daily events with parents and tell us that they will ensure CIW are notified of any required information in line with the regulations.

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. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status

N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
30 (1) (a) Sch3.06	The registered person had not kept a daily record of the times children and staff were present at the service	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 6 - Working in partnership with parents	Records of children's progress should be maintained consistently
Standard 8 - Nurture and well-being	Consider allocating key staff for younger aged children in order for them to develop an attachment to a consistent carer.

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)
Ensure the annual review of the service effectively identifies any improvements that are required to keep setting up to date with current practices and reflect the views of all parties involved in the review.
Review policies where necessary, to reflect recent changes to legislation and clearly outlines changes since becoming a Flying Start provider. Policy changes should be shared effectively with staff and parents.
Keep risk assessments organised and up to date, especially regarding fire doors and security in the outside area.
Ensure that the improvements made as a result of this inspection are fully embedded in practice and routinely monitored, to ensure they are effective.

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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