Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Caldi Tots Playgroup

West End Flying Start Centre
Masefield Road
Caldicot
NP26 4JY



Date Inspection Completed

09/02/2024

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About Caldi Tots Playgroup

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Sessional Day Care
Registered Provider	Monmouthshire County Council Child Care and Play Services
Registered places	20
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	28 September 2017
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.

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

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

Summary

Children thrive at the setting. They have very clear bonds of affection with staff members and make excellent developments in their social interactions. Children are confident to explore their environment and make choices about how they spend their time.

Staff work very well together to ensure all children are safe and developing appropriately. They are very responsive to children's needs and manage interactions positively. Staff place high importance on active play, and they plan, observe and track effectively to ensure every child develops. They use efficient infection control procedures and have thorough safeguarding knowledge.

People who run the setting have systems in place to ensure the environment is safe and secure. The facilities are attractive, accessible and well maintained. Both indoor and outdoor areas have a wide range of stimulating, age-appropriate resources that meet children's needs well.

People who run the setting are committed to improving standards for the children and families that attend. They have clear policies and procedures in place and a Statement of Purpose which accurately reflects the day to day running of the service. The experienced staff team are enthusiastic and take great pride in their work.

Well-being Excellent

Children have excellent opportunities to make choices about how they play. They move very freely around the indoor and outdoor environments, choosing resources and activities that interest them. For example, we saw a child sitting in a puddle of mud thoughtfully investigating the feeling of the mud in their hands. Children are very confident to request resources or support through verbal and non-verbal methods as they are assured staff will understand their attempts to communicate. They use early speech supported by hand signs and frequently replicate the actions made by staff to build their non-verbal communication skills.

Children are very happy and feel highly valued at the setting. They look to staff for support and reassurance if needed and demonstrate very close relationships with all staff members. Children are familiar with daily routines and this predictability makes them feel very safe and secure. Many children join in with tidying up or feeding the setting's goldfish. They laugh as they listen to staff singing 'Mr Hapus ydw i' and respond well when staff acknowledge their feelings, "*You were Mr Hapus when you were popping the bubbles*".

Children interact well and play kindly together or alongside their friends. Some children show great sensitivity and care when discussing bumps a friend had the previous day. Children enjoy engaging staff in their games, such as throwing balls into a hoop. They use developing language to chat with staff about what fruit they are hoping will be served for snack.

Children have very good opportunities for all types of play. They can concentrate on activities for age appropriate lengths of time. They are very active and express significant enthusiasm and enjoyment when they are outdoors. They thrive on activities such as stomping in muddy puddles, washing ride-in cars and trying to pop bubbles while shouting "*pop, pop, pop!*" While indoors, they engage excitedly in activities that interest them such as looking at books and typing on a laptop.

Children develop a wide range of skills as they play and develop their independence. Staff encourage and give children the confidence to do things independently before they intervene. For example, they encourage children to pour their own drink and clear away their crockery at snack time. Children develop their physical skills effectively through removing and putting on their shoes and coats. They wash their hands before snacks and after messy activities, with support if needed.

Care and Development Excellent

Staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibility to keep children safe and healthy. They follow clear hygiene practices such as cleaning tables before and after snack times. Staff manage allergies effectively through a clear allergen chart, daily food diaries and care plans. They complete nappy changing, accident, incident and pre-existing injury records appropriately. Staff follow a clear medication policy by storing medication and recording administration suitably. They receive regular safeguarding training and have a very good understanding of their roles in protecting children. People who run the setting record safeguarding information in significant detail and store this information efficiently. All staff members have paediatric first aid qualifications.

Staff care for children in an exceptionally warm and nurturing manner and clearly know the children very well. They use confident interactions which enable all children to be fully included in all activities. Staff use questioning to guide children to think in different ways such as, "*Which finger is best for popping the bubbles?"* Staff consistently praise children for their achievements and positive behaviour. They respond very positively to build children's self-esteem, for example by responding to drink spills with, "*Oopsie daisy, accidents happen*". Staff demonstrate politeness and good manners in simple language so children begin to understand expectations of social behaviour. For example, they ask each other if they would like some more snack and reply, "*Oo, I've had enough thank you*". Staff work together to ensure they have a very gentle and consistent approach to managing behaviour in line with the setting's policy.

Staff support children's imagination and learning extremely naturally; they play alongside them, encouraging skills development consistently. For example, at snack time, they encourage children to look inside their fruit and think about what is there. They then develop language further by asking the children whether their fruit is juicy. Staff provide a range of planned activities based around seasons which runs alongside impromptu activities focused on children's interests. Staff record planning in good detail, with photos and comments linked to the Curriculum for Wales. Staff record children's development through very detailed observations and while they don't note next steps in writing, verbal discussions demonstrated they have an excellent understanding of what the next steps are for each child and they develop these organically. Staff share developments with parents and carers through twice yearly reports written from the child's perspective. This is supported by praise stickers given to children when they have achieved. For example, when a child drinks from a cup for the first time, they are given a sticker saying this to show their parents / carers. Children with additional learning needs are supported superbly through staff having an excellent understanding of their needs and very close links with other professionals to ensure consistent targets are set to support the children and their families. All staff use the Welsh language very regularly throughout the sessions.

Environment — Good

The setting is based within a purpose built building. People who run the setting and staff ensure the environment is safe and secure. Staff ensure the gate and doors are locked, and that visitors always sign in. People who run the setting have put detailed risk assessments for the building and specific activities in place, and they ensure these are reviewed at least annually. Gas safety testing is up to date. The electrical safety testing certificate had expired but people who run the setting arranged for this to be carried out promptly. There were a number of fire extinguishers but these had not been tested within the last year. People who run the setting undertake fire drills to ensure children know how to exit the building safely, although an increase in the regularity of these would enable children to be more confident in the procedure.

People who run the setting and staff have worked hard to create a very inviting, child friendly and stimulating environment both inside and out. All areas have been set up very thoughtfully to meet the needs of children and promote curiosity and independence. There is a large, light and airy playroom that is set up to allow children to move freely and easily. Children have access to an outdoor area adjacent to the playroom that provides them with very good opportunities to develop their physical and creative skills. This area is partially covered and thus provides for outdoor play in all weathers. There are clean and accessible toilets, together with handwashing and nappy changing facilities adjacent to the playroom. They are well stocked with soap and paper towels to promote an infection free environment.

Children have easy access to very varied and interesting resources that aid their development effectively. Staff ensure children have access to a variety of textures and materials to aid their sensory development. They use a good mix of real-life, natural and man-made resources throughout the setting. Children enjoy the mix of soft and hard furnishings to ensure their comfort as they play and learn. Staff lay out resources thoughtfully to promote children’s curiosity and discovery. For example, they have created an office area with a real laptop, mobile phone and photographs of adults working in different office environments. There is a good range of multi-cultural resources and displays reflect our diverse society. Staff have also included photographs of children with their families into displays which helps children to develop a feeling of belonging. In the outdoor areas, children have access to large play equipment and items that are set up to engage their imaginations.

Leadership and Management — Good

People who run the setting are very experienced and manage the service effectively. They have a detailed statement of purpose that they review regularly to ensure it gives an accurate picture of what the setting has to offer. Some minor amendments were discussed during our visit. People who run the setting review and update policies and procedures at least annually. All staff sign to confirm they have read and understand the policies when amendments are made. People who run the setting obtain and securely store written records for children and staff. They ensure staff sign themselves and children in and out. People who run the setting review accident and incident records but do not formally record this analysis.

People who run the setting are very reflective and keen to deliver a quality service to families. They are very responsive to suggestions and discussions. People who run the setting carry out an annual quality of care review. Parents and staff complete a questionnaire but their feedback is not included in the report. The report identifies current strengths of the provision together with targets and plans of how they intend to achieve them. There is a suitable complaints policy available for parents; no complaints have been received to date.

The team of staff work very closely together to provide a good quality childcare provision to children and their families. The recruitment procedure in place is robust and ensures all required information is available to evidence the suitability of staff to care for children. People who run the setting provide regular training opportunities. They carry out staff appraisals and supervisions. However increasing the regularity of those will allow staff to have a greater number of formal opportunities to reflect on their strengths, any concerns and support their professional development. People who run the setting ensure there are enough qualified and experienced staff so children are always well cared for. They advise Care Inspectorate Wales of relevant events and changes to the service.

All staff work very closely with professionals such as health visitors, speech and language therapists and early years advisors. They work closely with parents through effective daily feedback and organising family activities such as trips to the local library or swimming pool. Parents we spoke with spoke very highly of the staff and felt their children were very well cared for. They also said their children had “*come on in leaps and bounds*” while attending the setting.

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

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 24 - Safety	Ensure all fire extinguisher and electrical safety testing is carried out in a timely manner.
Standard 24 - Safety	Increase the frequency of fire drills.
Standard 13 (Day Care) - Suitable Person	Increase the regularity of staff supervisions.

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)
Formally record analysis of accidents and incidents to identify trends.

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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