Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Tongwynlais Around School Group

Village Hall, Merthyr Road, Tongwynlais, Cardiff, CF15 7LH

07354 378472

The inspection visit took place on 12/05/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	The Committee of Tongwynlais Around School Group
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	32
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	No
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:

Well-being	Good
Care & Development	Good
Environment	Adequate
Leadership & Management	Adequate

Summary:

Children are happy and settled. They are confident communicators and have opportunities to make choices about things that affect them. Children behave well, playing together or alongside each other and developing close relationships with staff. Children enjoy a range of play and learning opportunities and receive encouragement to be independent and do things for themselves.

Staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy including their responsibilities in relation to child protection. They interact very well with children building positive relationships and acting as good role models. Staff support children's play and learning well.

Leaders ensure the environment is safe, secure and suitably clean. The indoor play space is large and light, and leaders provide a suitable range of toys and resources. However, children cannot access most of these independently. There is currently no available outdoor play space.

The leader is enthusiastic and committed to providing high quality childcare although outcomes for children can be limited by their environment. She is aware of her regulatory responsibilities and mostly meets the requirements of the National Minimum Standards. Paperwork is generally organised although some documents were not available during the inspection visit. The leader

continually considers the effectiveness of the provision, but the annual quality of care review and improvement planning does not currently reflect this.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children are happy and settled. They have suitable opportunities to make choices about things that affect them such as requesting resources or choosing if they want milk or water at snack time. Children learn to make decisions as they vote for the story they would like and for how they spend their time at the end of the session during challenge time. They are confident communicators as they know staff will respond to them and take account of their requests and ideas.

Children are happy and settled. They chat readily with staff and approach them for help or support when they need it, showing they feel safe and valued. Children become very familiar with the routines and rules of the playgroup, this helps them feel secure and develop a sense of belonging. They learn to consider keeping themselves safe as they walk to and from school, waiting at the zebra crossing and thanking the drivers when they stop for them.

Children interact well with staff and peers. They behave very well, playing cooperatively alongside each other learning to share and take turns. Many make friends and play together. Children listen when staff ask them to do something and follow instructions. For example, when they are asked to wash their hands for snack or when walking to and from school. They develop positive, friendly relationships with staff and engage easily in conversations as they eat lunch together or take part in activities.

Children enjoy a range of play and learning opportunities. They are active learners and initiate their own play from the activities provided. For example, they showed excitement when exploring a large selection of dressing up costumes, enthusiastically choosing what they wanted to wear, with some then engaging in role play games relevant to their chosen costume. Children develop their early literacy skills as they draw and colour or look at books. Children also enjoy group times. Nearly all join in well, listening to and joining in with stories and songs, counting or discussions. They have good opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills throughout the session.

Children have a variety of opportunities to develop self-help and independence skills. They receive support and encouragement to manage their own belongings including their lunch boxes, putting any artwork in their ‘home pockets’, hanging up their coats and using the bathroom independently. Children help to pour their own drinks at snack time and serve themselves with what they want to eat from the selection available, they put on their own coats and carry their own bags when walking to and from school. Learning to do things for themselves successfully promotes developing confidence and self-esteem.

Care & Development — Good

Staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. There is a mostly suitable child protection policy in place to support staff although procedures for reporting to external agencies are not fully clear. Staff are confident in knowing who to report any concerns to within their own organisation and the safeguarding lead demonstrates an appropriate understanding of her role. Staff keep accurate attendance registers for children and staff. There are suitable systems for managing and recording accidents, injuries, incidents and medication administered which are shared with and signed by parents. Staff follow good hygiene procedures such as ensuring children wash their hands before eating and sanitising tables. They provide healthy snacks for children such as fruit, crackers or breadsticks with parents providing lunch boxes. Staff operate a suitable system to manage allergies and food preferences which includes details of signs, symptoms and remedies for any allergies.

Staff interactions with children are consistently warm, positive, and respectful. They are good role models and develop close relationships with children. Staff are kind and caring and use techniques such as explanation and distraction to encourage appropriate behaviour.

Staff support children's play and learning well through their interactions. They enjoy being with children and clearly know them well. Staff provide an adequate range of play opportunities and ask children what they would like to do. They respond promptly to children's requests for additional toys and resources. However, staff do not provide a wide range of activities or resources which are continually available for children to freely choose from (continuous provision). This can impact on their ability to freely initiate self-chosen play or extend their ideas through such things as combining or moving resources. Staff plan through themes such as under the sea and provide stories and activities linked to this, for example, adult and child led craft activities. Staff are also skilled at responding to learning opportunities that present themselves in the moment such as discussing things they see or hear as they walk to and from school. Staff lead group times very well and children actively engage with the stories staff read, the songs they sing and the discussions they start. They offer children a 'daily challenge' to end the session when children choose what they would like to do. For example, we saw photos of children playing ball games or working together to complete a large puzzle. Staff keep detailed weekly observation records of children's development or achievements and a lovely scrapbook learning journal. Staff are experienced in working with children with additional learning needs (ALN). They told us of adaptations they have made in the past to support children although no children with ALN currently attend.

Environment — Adequate

The leader provides a safe, secure and suitably clean environment. They ensure children cannot leave the building unaccompanied and record visitors to the playgroup. Safety measures such as radiator covers, locks on cupboards and ensuring the kitchen door is closed are in place. There is a range of general risk assessments in place which the responsible individual is currently reviewing. Staff consistently carry out and record daily risk assessments and safety checks including recording fridge temperatures. Staff carry out and record regular evacuation and lockdown procedures to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency. The playgroup operates from the village hall which is maintained by the hall owners. The leader has access to the records of relevant building checks such as annual boiler servicing and electrical checks.

The hall is very large and spacious. There is ample room for children to move around and play freely. Staff and children access separate toilet facilities directly from the hall which enable children to become independent in their personal care. There is a large and clean kitchen where the playgroup has its own storage cupboard. Staff have developed a foldable screen which provides a barrier to fire doors and the storeroom and enables them to create displays, although this has not been updated for some time. A wheeled peg trolley allows children to access their coats and belongings independently. The playgroup is a pack away setting and storage facilities are limited. The leader therefore provides very little continuous provision which has an impact on the freely available play opportunities for children. There are currently no available facilities at the hall to provide for safe outdoor play.

The leader provides an adequate range and variety of toys and resources which are suitable for the children using them and which children know they can request to have out. However, children cannot access most of these independently.

Leadership & Management — Adequate

The leader is enthusiastic and committed to providing quality care although outcomes for children are sometimes limited by the environment and how it is used. The playgroup is part of the Tongwynlais Around School Group (TAG) which includes an after-school club. Leaders have developed a parent handbook for TAG which includes a detailed statement of purpose. However, this has not been updated with recent relevant changes. The handbook contains other useful information for parents about policies and how the group operates. It is clear which setting within TAG is being referred to at various points. Leaders have a comprehensive range of policies which support the smooth and safe running of the group.

The leader undertakes a quality of care review annually. She consults with children and parents informally and through questionnaires to gather their views of the service the playgroup offers. Responses to the questionnaires are positive and show high satisfaction with the club. She works alongside staff daily and they have opportunities to contribute their views through regular discussions. The report of the review provides a summary of the comments and views gathered along with responses and any changes implemented as a result. However, it does not offer any evaluation of the effectiveness of the playgroup against outcomes for children, consider any areas of the service they would like to improve or develop or identify an action plan for improvement.

The leader and staff work well together. All are very experienced and nearly all are well qualified. The leader ensures staff renew mandatory training such as paediatric first aid, safeguarding and food hygiene in a timely manner. She follows safe recruitment practice and ensures all necessary checks, such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, and documentation are in place. Many staff have been at the playgroup for several years and told us they enjoy working there and feel well supported. The leader provides suitable regular supervision and appraisal meetings for staff.

The leader and staff develop strong relationships with parents. They gather necessary information so they can provide for children's individual needs and keep parents informed about their children's progress and what they do through daily verbal feedback. Parents we spoke to spoke very highly of the setting and said their children love attending. The leader has a strong and effective partnership with the school nursery class. They work well together to support children's learning and development which has beneficial outcomes for children.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

National Minimum Standards

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.

Standard	Recommendation(s)
Standard 20 - Child protection	Ensure reporting procedures are clarified in the child protection policy and all staff are aware of them.
Standard 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Continue to develop the environment to ensure there is wider variety of flexible play and learning opportunities that children can freely and independently access.
Standard 1 - Information	Ensure the statement of purpose is kept fully up to date and Care Inspectorate Wales is informed when any changes are made.
Standard 18 - Quality assurance	Develop the Quality of Care review to be evaluative of outcomes for children and to consider areas for development or improvement.

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