Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Jack and Jill Playgroup

Learning Action Centre
Abertillery Comprehensive School
Alma Street
Abertillery
NP13 1YL



Date Inspection Completed

25/06/2024

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About Jack and Jill Playgroup

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Sharon Paul
Registered places	30
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	07 February 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
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	**Good**
Environment	**Excellent**
Leadership and Management	**Good**

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

Summary

Children are extremely relaxed, happy and confident at the setting because their interests are highly valued, and their voices are always heard. They have developed exceptionally strong bonds with staff and interact very well with their friends. They are thoroughly engaged in their play and learning and have excellent opportunities to develop their independence skills.

Staff keep children safe and successfully implement policies and procedures. They work well as a team and effectively support children's needs. They provide consistently warm and responsive care and support and plan a range of fun activities led by children's interests. They keep purposeful records of children's progress.

The environment is extremely welcoming and exceptionally well organised so that children can access resources independently. Risk assessments are robust, and effective safety measures ensure the setting is secure and children are safe. An excellent variety of toys, resources and experiences promote children's all-round development and skills.

The leadership and management of the setting is effective. Leaders make improvements where necessary to benefit the children in their care. Staff feel well supported by management and enjoy their work. Policies and procedures are robust and implemented effectively. Parents speak highly of staff and are complimentary about the care their children receive.

Well-being — Excellent

Children have an extremely strong voice, confidently follow their own interests and make decisions about how they spend their time at the setting. For example, we saw children immersed in a variety of their favourite activities such as using climbing apparatus and mark making in the outdoors. They are extremely confident communicators. For example, we heard children making a variety of requests including *"Can we have the buckets out please?"* as they compete against one another to see who can make the biggest sandcastles.

Children feel extremely safe, happy and relaxed. They are very familiar with routines and on arrival, quickly become immersed in the wide variety of activities on offer. They have developed strong bonds with staff and their key workers. They chat to them with great ease, seek out spontaneous cuddles and comfort and readily invite them into their play. They have positive self-esteem because staff take time to celebrate their work by sharing and praising their achievements.

Children thrive on interacting with one another. They thoroughly enjoy each other's company and have developed wonderful friendships. We saw children work cooperatively on tasks and readily share resources as they help one another fill their water tank and use their nets to capture a variety of sea creatures. They are kind, caring and considerate, for example, after a child fell from their bike, another child asked, *"Are you okay?"* gently patting them on the back and helping them to get back onto their feet.

Children are extremely motivated and engage exceptionally well in the activities on offer. They show high concentration skills and sustain great interest in their play. For example, outdoors, children were engrossed in making green tea from freshly picked leaves. They enthusiastically strained their teabags and stirred the leaves before using their teapots to pour out the mixtures. They approach staff saying, "*Here you go, here's a cup of tea for you".* Children thoroughly enjoy singing their favourite songs and rhymes and we saw them jump up and down with excitement as staff praise them for joining in with the actions.

Children develop their self-help skills superbly, doing things for themselves naturally and consistently. We saw them confidently select their own hats for sun protection and access the toilets and wash their hands independently. During rolling snack time, they confidently serve themselves, pour their own drinks and clear away by placing any remaining food or drink into waste recycling bins. They help to tidy up and put resources away after their play. Staff remain near enough to support and intervene where needed but encourage children to work things out for themselves.

Care and Development — Good

Staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy and implement their policies and procedures successfully. They have a strong knowledge of the process to follow should they have a concern about children's safety, welfare or well-being. There is a clear safeguarding policy in place, however we noted that this did not refer to the latest Wales safeguarding procedures. Staff keep accurate records relating to accidents, incidents and pre-existing injuries which are formally evaluated to identify any emerging patterns. There is a clear medication policy and procedure that is followed. However, although parents are informed of any medication administered, there are no formal records in place to record the entries and ensure parent signatures are obtained. All staff hold paediatric first aid training, enabling them to deal with minor accidents confidently. Staff follow good hygiene procedures and implement thorough cleaning practices to help keep children healthy and safe. Food provided to children is freshly prepared, healthy, and nutritious and staff follow clear and agreed procedures to manage any food allergies or individual dietary requirements. Continuous access to daily outdoor play experiences offers children the benefits of physical exercise and fresh air.

Staff have very positive relationships with children and are extremely responsive and nurturing, meaning children approach them with great ease. Interactions demonstrate warmth and kindness as they lower to children's level to interact and engage with them. They work in line with the setting's behaviour management policy implementing positive strategies such as distraction methods and use consistent positive language and praise. We heard phrases such as *"Wow, that's amazing, I'm so proud of you"* and *"Thank you, that's so kind of you, diolch yn fawr"* often. They act as good role models and manage any unwanted behaviour with gentle verbal reminders. For instance, *"Remember, we need to share everybody"* and *"Remember, only kind hands and feet".* They sit with children at snack times to model good social skills and continuously prompt and remind children to use manners such as 'please' and 'thankyou'.

Staff support children's learning and development effectively. There is a key worker system in place which allows staff to have a good knowledge of children's individual needs. They plan a range of play experiences that appeal to the children's interests and undertake regular observations to track their progress and identify next steps in their progression. Staff facilitate learning naturally and, in the moment, asking a variety of questions to extend children's learning. For example, "*Where in the world would you go if you had a flying car?"* encouraging them to use their imagination. Staff have recently implemented the new curriculum for Wales in line with Welsh Government guidelines, however this has not yet been fully embedded across the setting. Staff work closely with various outside agencies, ensuring they meet the needs of children requiring additional support. They promote the Welsh language by using incidental Welsh with children often.

Environment — Excellent

Staff implement highly effective policies and procedures to ensure the environment is safe and secure for children. The setting employs an intercom system ensuring all entry to the

setting is controlled by staff. Visitors are granted access through the building's main entrance and are required to sign in an out. The outdoor area is surrounded by high quality fencing and all gates are always locked. Staff follow robust risk assessments for all areas of the setting and conduct daily visual checks of the indoor and outdoor area to identify and eliminate any possible risks to children's safety. Regular fire drill practices including reverse drills are undertaken to ensure staff and children are familiar with how to leave and re-enter the building safely. Leaders work closely with the local authority safety advisors to ensure routine maintenance checks for the premises and any appliance checks are up to date. Fire equipment is regularly tested.

The environment is warm, welcoming and highly maintained. Children have continuous free access to all resources and environments, ensuring they are curious and active learners. The layout of the environment fosters children's independence allowing them to confidently access low level storage with open shelves and baskets. Clearly defined areas, both indoors and outdoors offer stimulating and generous learning experiences for children. For example, indoors includes a sensory area, nature area, role-play, messy play, construction and investigation areas as well as a cosy reading area. Since the last inspection, the outdoor environment has been developed into a rich learning area and offers extensive opportunities to support children's physical development, curiosity and imagination as well as overall learning. Examples include climbing apparatus and obstacle courses, wet play, a bug life area, role-play, storytelling and planting area. Children's work and photographs are displayed around the setting, providing them with a sense of achievement and belonging. Bathrooms are clean, fresh and well stocked and the nappy changing facilities ensure children's privacy, dignity and respect.

Children benefit from an extensive range of age-appropriate and excellent quality resources, furniture and equipment which is clean and very well maintained. Staff conduct regular checks to monitor resources and ensure they are relevant to children's learning, rotating resources in line with children's interests to keep them highly stimulated and engaged. For example, outdoors we saw children using balancing beams, tunnels and a variety of ride-on toys and were challenged to use numerous different resources such as watering cans, containers and pipes in the wet play area. A good number of resources promote equality, cultural awareness, celebrations, and diversity within the setting. A reasonable number of natural, sustainable and authentic resources have been introduced throughout the setting, however we noted that this could be extended to benefit children further.

Leadership and Management — Good

People who run the setting are highly qualified and have a strong vision for the service. The statement of purpose provides detailed information on how the setting runs. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed, and leaders ensure that staff implement them successfully. Thorough record keeping systems are in place including children's contracts

and registers accurately record the time children arrive and leave the premises. However, staff do not always ensure that they sign in and out of the premises consistently. People who run the setting are very diligent and ensure they comply with nearly all relevant regulations. However, they have failed to notify Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) of a significant event that may have impacted on a child's welfare, which is a regulatory requirement. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

People who run the setting are committed to improving outcomes for children and their families and have established systems in place for the evaluation of the service. They continually reflect on their practice and seek feedback from parents, staff and children to inform the quality-of-care report. In tandem with the Setting Improvement Plan, they use this information effectively to identify priorities for improvement. For example, enhancing the outdoor area to include a patio, new fencing, artificial turf and some gardening plots which has allowed children to develop their understanding of nature and become involved in small gardening projects.

There is a strong ethos of teamwork amongst staff, and they work closely together to improve outcomes for children. Staff files are well organised and demonstrate that leaders are clear about their responsibility to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. A thorough induction policy is implemented, and regular supervisions and appraisals are held to support staff in their professional development and reflect on their practice. Staff told us they feel extremely well supported by management and are confident to talk to managers with any concerns. However, we noted that supervisions do not provide enough opportunities for staff to discuss policies, procedures and any safeguarding concerns. Frequent meetings are held to ensure all staff are kept up to date on relevant information and discuss any issues in relation to the running of the setting.

Partnerships with parents are extremely positive. Staff share information daily about their child's time in the setting and regular dialogue is maintained through verbal feedback, newsletters and private social media channels. Parents reported a very high level of satisfaction with the care their children receive. They told us that staff have a very good understanding of their children's individual needs. Comments from parents included *"I receive comprehensive feedback every day from my child's key worker and all the staff are very friendly, professional, and approachable".* There are strong links with key professionals and agencies to ensure appropriate support is available for all children including those with additional learning needs.

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

31	The Registered Person must ensure that all notifiable events including any safeguarding incidents that occur at the setting are submitted to Care Inspectorate Wales at the correct times as soon as possible but no later than 14 days after the event has occurred.	New

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 20 - Child protection	Update the safeguarding and child protection policy to include reference to the updated Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
Standard 11 - Medication	Ensure formal written records of all medicines administered to children are in place and ensure parent signatures are obtained to acknowledge each entry of medication administered.
Standard 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Continue to embed the new curriculum for Wales within the setting.
Standard 5 - Records	Ensure that all staff sign in and out of the premises consistently.
Standard 13 (Day Care) - Suitable Person	Develop the system for staff supervisions to include further opportunities to discuss policies, procedures and any safeguarding concerns.

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)
Continue to develop the variety of natural, sustainable and authentic resources within the learning areas to help further spark children's curiosity and interest.

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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