



Inspection Report

Polka Dots Childcare

**Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church
Heol Pencarreg
Cardiff
CF14 2QQ**



Date Inspection Completed

01/02/2022

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About Polka Dots Childcare

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Polka Dots Childcare Ltd
Registered places	16
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	First Inspection Post registration
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people /children who use, or intend to use their service.

Summary

Children are very happy, settled and make good progress in the playgroup. They enjoy their time playing with their friends and have lots of choice and opportunities to develop different skills and become independent. Children have formed close bonds with the staff who understand them very well and treat them as individuals. Children can speak freely and are encouraged to share their ideas with staff who show genuine interest in their views and opinions. Staff pay close attention to the safety matters. They understand their responsibilities to report concerns and have good knowledge of the safeguarding procedure.

The environment is clean, welcoming and organised so that children can access facilities and resources with ease. The two playroom areas are spacious and children can access the outdoor play area directly. Children freely choose what they want to play with. Staff ensure that there is a suitable selection of age appropriate activities and resources available that keep children engaged in physical and imaginative play.

There is a good range of policies and procedures to support the running of the service which have been recently reviewed and updated. The staff work very well as a team and managers are dedicated and highly motivated. There is a very good level of staff looking after the children at all times. They work closely with parents in making decisions about their child's well-being and keep them very well informed and updated on a daily basis.

Well-being

Children feel very safe, happy and valued at the playgroup. They are free to choose what they want to play with and the toys and activities are appropriate for their age and stage of development. They frequently approach staff and enjoy spending time playing with them alongside their friends. For example, we heard lots of laughter at the sensory play table when children and staff played together with the playdough scented with five spice during the Chinese New Year celebrations. The children's interests are central to the activities and play opportunities made available to them. For example, during a recent theme based on dinosaurs the children took an interest in sharks. This natural curiosity was encouraged and children explored this further with shark books and an under the sea themed tray with play sea creatures and sharks.

Children have fun with the activities on offer as there is an emphasis on following their natural curiosity and interests. For example, children were keen to feed 'noddles' to the play tiger and had good fun setting up 'lunch' for the staff from their play kitchen. Children feel safe and secure as they are familiar with the routine of the club. For example, they came into the playgroup calmly with big smiles on their faces as they were greeted by their familiar key workers. They selected toys and activities to play with and settled immediately.

Children develop positive, healthy relationships with their friends and staff and are happy to seek support when needed. Children behave very well, are extremely polite and enjoy receiving praise from staff for good manners and being kind and helpful. The playgroup provides a calm and relaxed atmosphere.

Children's self-help skills are developing very well. They often wash their own hands, tidy up after play and put on their coats. They do this independently with support from the staff when needed. Children are gaining confidence in using simple Welsh words and phrases while answering simple commands and in songs.

Care and Development

Staff follow clear procedures to ensure they meet the health and safety needs of children. They are very confident in recording accidents, incidents and the administration of prescribed medication. Staff recognise the importance of updating their First Aid training and a suitable number of qualified first aid staff are on duty at all times. The nominated child protection person has developed a safeguarding policy for the playgroup. She ensures the policy is kept up to date and is understood by the staff. Staff are confident in recognising signs and symptoms of abuse. For example, the two staff interviewed were able to discuss the safeguarding procedures and were clear about their duty to report any concerns with management or appropriate authorities. Most staff have up to date safeguarding training with a small number due to complete refresher training in the coming months.

Staff provide a good range of freshly prepared, healthy snacks and drinks to the children. They know the children's individual food preferences and are able to meet the needs of specific dietary requirements. During the inspection, the children enjoyed a Chinese style food tasting session of noodles, egg fried rice, prawn crackers and dipping sauces with water to drink.

The playgroup has developed a specific COVID -19 policy, risk assessments and good procedures to protect children during the current pandemic. Good hygiene routines are in place to promote children's health, including encouraging children to wash their hands at appropriate times. Staff take regular lateral flow tests and visitors to the playgroup complete a COVID- 19 doorstep risk assessment.

Staff work together to ensure they have a consistent approach to managing behaviour in line with the playgroup's behaviour management policy. For example, staff praise children enthusiastically when they play co-operatively. Staff act as good role models as they are very kind and respectful towards each other and the children. Staff have a suitable understanding of individual children's needs, abilities and backgrounds. This helps them to plan age appropriate activities that will keep the children interested.

Environment

People running the service follow a suitable set of procedures to ensure the environment is safe for children. Overall, the setting is secure and provides ample space for children to play and learn. Staff carry out regular fire evacuation drills. Maintenance and safety checks are checked routinely for the building and appliances including portable appliance testing. The playgroup is based in a community church hall. Due to the age and fabric of the building, an ongoing programme of repairs are in place. For example, the manager explained that the toilets and outdoor area are a focus for development over the coming months.

A useful range of risk assessments are in place to maintain a safe service. Staff use a daily safety checklist of the premises in order to identify and where possible eliminate any risks to children's safety. The neighbouring property is currently having building work completed and there are access gates to the premises from the outdoor play area. The manager discussed the safety measures in place and checks they have agreed to undertake to ensure the ongoing safety of the children. For example, during our visit, we saw that there was a locked safety bolt on these gates throughout the morning of the playgroup session.

The indoor area provides a good range of play opportunities for children to be independent and active. There are a suitable number of children's toilets, which are located in the entrance hall of the playgroup. There is an outdoor play space for children which offers an adequate quantity of activities for children to develop their physical skills and imaginative play. For example, some children enjoyed climbing on the wooden frame and balancing on the wooden logs while other took turns on the ride on toys. The manager discussed plans to develop this area further including the additional screening from the neighbouring property, upgrading the boundary dividers and additional outdoor resources.

Staff provide children with a suitable quantity of interesting age appropriate resources that are well maintained and stored where children can access them freely. There is a small number of Welsh and multi-cultural resources available. They follow current best practice guidance to protect children from the risk of COVID-19. This includes a combination of regular cleaning of toys, resources and surfaces at set times throughout the session.

Leadership and Management

People running the after school club have a good understanding of current best practice and show a commitment to continually improve the quality of the service provided to children and parents. They have developed a good range of policies and procedures that set a clear vision for the service and make sure that all understand and staff follow them. For example, they have a statement of purpose that outlines the details of the care service they offer to parents and children. When areas for improvement are brought to the manager's attention, she welcomes this advice and acts on it without delay. There is an up to date COVID 19 policy in place and procedures have been updated based on current best practice guidance.

People running the playgroup understand the importance of having a team of well trained, confident staff and check that all their mandatory training is up to date. For example, training records demonstrated most staff have completed up to date mandatory training. We spoke to two members of staff who showed that they had a thorough understanding of the core policies and procedures in place for the playgroup. Staff said that they feel very well supported by a management team who are available for advice, guidance or support throughout the working day. Recruitment files demonstrate leaders are clear about their responsibility to ensure that staff are recruited safely and have the necessary qualifications and experience required to care for the children. Staff are offered some support and guidance by the management team during informal supervision and appraisals sessions.

People running the service have completed a quality of care review and the required CIW online Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) to help plan for improvement. They work in partnership with parents in order to plan for each child's individual needs and promote good outcomes for children. There is a suitable complaints policy available for parents. There are a number of good communication systems at the playgroup including regular daily verbal feedback, phone calls, emails and displays outside the club. Parents we spoke to were very complimentary about the service they received. One commented 'My child loves it there. I would recommend it and all the girls are super friendly.'

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

- R1. Continue with the programme of repair and redecoration to the building and outdoor areas.
- R2. Increase the availability of Welsh and multi-cultural resources.
- R3. Develop the supervision and appraisal system for staff in line with Social Care Wales best practice guidelines.

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	N/A

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Date Published 02/03/2022