



Inspection Report

Alphabet Playgroup Limited

**Undy Primary School
Pennyfarthing Lane
Undy
Caldicot
NP26 3LZ**



Date Inspection Completed

12/01/2023

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About Alphabet Playgroup Limited

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Alphabet Playgroup Limited
Registered places	19
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	20 November 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	NO
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	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>	Good

Summary

Children are happy and settled at the playgroup. They have a strong voice and opportunities to make good choices. Children develop trusting relationships with staff and with their peers. They have good opportunities to develop their independent skills.

Staff are nurturing and promote children's development effectively at the playgroup. They encourage children's curiosity, letting their interests lead their play and learning. Staff manage children's behaviour well and they encourage children's social skills consistently. Provision for children with additional needs are supported and staff ensure that all children are safe and healthy.

The playgroup is a secure and safe environment that is accessible for all children. Both the indoor and outdoor areas are equipped with well-maintained, good quality resources and furniture. These are age appropriate and allow children of all stages to develop.

The management team are motivated and manage the playgroup effectively. All policies and procedures are regularly updated, and records are kept securely. The managers undertake frequent self-evaluation, the playgroup has well-qualified and experienced staff who share the management's vision for the service.

Well-being

Children are happy and enjoy their time at the playgroup. They quickly settle into a wide range of play and learning experiences available to them. Children are confident to independently explore both the indoor and outdoor environments. They make choices freely and can make their requests to staff through verbal and non-verbal methods. We saw many children using and understanding basic sign language to allow them to request a drink or a particular activity.

Children have clear bonds of affection with staff who look after them. They look to their keyworkers for support and reassurance. Most children gain security from the familiar routines and structures that are designed to allow them to play as they wish. For example, children independently choose to play outside in the mud kitchen area or pretend to play in the shop area. However, during the inclement weather they did not use waterproofs. This meant that some children's clothing got muddy and wet. Other children decided to play indoor choosing tabletop activities sorting small world toys into different colours. We saw children beam with pride on receiving certificate for doing very well on their first day. Parents are welcome to send in natural items that their children have collected on local walks such as twigs, leaves and acorns for their child to share with their friends. This creates a feeling of community.

Children learn to take turns and share in their play. Nearly all children behave and interact well for their age and stage of development, while others are learning to manage their behaviour with the effective support of staff. Nearly all children show great care and sensitivity towards each other, considering each other's needs. They interact and play kindly together. We saw children working together to complete a sorting activity. An older child was asked to help to show a younger child how to play the game. The child happily agreed and showed how to sort each colour into the cardboard containers. On completing the activity, the older child encouraged the younger child saying, "Do you want to try it again?". With appropriate support and guidance, all children are able follow staff's good role modelling.

Children of all stages of development enjoy their learning and play. They are self-motivated to initiate their own play and to influence activities because child led activities are readily available. Children have good opportunities for imaginative play and enjoy a range of role-play activities. We saw a child happily playing with dolls for a sustained period, chatting to themselves and the dolls as they played. Children enjoy drawing in a variety of situations both independently and with staff support.

Children have good opportunities to develop their independence skills when washing their hands. However, snack time limited independence as staff placed pieces of toast for each child and poured their chosen drinks into individual cups.

Care and Development

Staff team have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They follow effective health and safety policies and procedures for infection control, nappy changing, toileting and snack time. Staff identify and proactively manage emerging risks and act to remove any issues that are identified. They provide milk, water and healthy snacks during the sessions. Staff know children's individual allergies and dietary needs as this information is easily accessible and clearly displayed in the kitchenette area. They receive regular paediatric first aid and safeguarding and food hygiene training. Staff complete accident and incident records accurately, however, not all of these are shared with parents in a timely manner. This can impact on a child's safety if an injury is not fully known to the parents.

Staff are good role models; they demonstrate politeness and good manners so that the children understand expectations of social behaviour. They follow a clear behaviour policy and give consistent messages to children. Staff encourage turn taking and patience. Staff consistently use basic sign language and body language to reinforce their messages which is particularly effective for supporting children with additional learning needs. Staff know the children well and work in partnership with parents and other professionals to plan for individual needs.

Staff track children's development and progress appropriately and identify next steps and skills to be developed. Management have identified new schemes and programmes to underpin learning and are begin embedding these. The new curriculum for Wales is being introduced to staff by the teaching and learning coordinator and staff have told us that they are confident in delivering the new method. All staff take on Keyworker role for specific children. They maintain close two-way communication links with parents to share children's development and progress. Staff support children's imagination and learning naturally; they play alongside them, encouraging number and language development consistently. The playgroup's Additional Learning Needs Coordinator is knowledgeable and works well with the team and external professionals in developing resources for children with additional needs. This process begins before children start at the playgroup and continues throughout their time attending.

Environment

The management team have implemented effective systems and procedures to ensure that the environment is safe and secure. In the main staff and children are signed in and out, noting arrival and departure times as required. However, the registration process was not always completed in a timely manner at the start of each session or at collection time. Access to the building is secure. However, the walkway to the entrance was noted to be slippery because of decaying leaves and the excess mud on the pathway. Since the inspection, the management team have raised this their local authority as a potential hazard of injury to children, parents and visitors alike. There are a range of risk assessments in place for all areas of the playgroup. The person in charge generally plan and conduct fire alarm tests regularly and children and adults at the playgroup take part in termly fire drills. However, on requesting the fire drill log we noted the log seemed to indicate that a fire evacuation practice was not conducted every term as stated in the playgroup's own policy. On discussion with management, we were offered additional evidence of evacuation logs did exist. The management explained that some records were stored elsewhere. We discussed the importance of keeping an organised file. Staff ensure that toilet and nappy changing areas are clean and hazard-free; they are well-stocked with soap and paper towels. The person in charge ensures all building and appliance gas and electrical safety checks are up to date, the management team were reminded that copies are to be included in their record keeping.

The playgroup is very welcoming and accessible to all children. Staff team have acted on the advice of professionals to make good adaptations for children with additional needs to ensure they have full access to all areas and resources. The main playroom is a bright, colourful and stimulating space. It is thoughtfully zoned for different types of play, with designated areas for sensory play and crafts. Each child has their own accessible peg for storing their belongings. Children have easy access to toilet areas and have frequent supervised access to a well-designed outdoor space. Staff use a clean, organised kitchen to prepare snacks.

The management have provided a wide range of clean, good quality resources for children. We saw children enjoying a variety of resources including multi-cultural toys and puzzles, arts and crafts, sensory play and small world toys. staff place resources on low shelves to allow children to reach them independently. The playgroup has sturdy low-level wooden furniture for all children. There is a quiet corner with soft seating and an good range of sensory stimulating resources such as a light table and twinkling lights decorated in the area. The management team have improved the outdoor area organising some activities under the school canopy to allow for play in all weathers. The area is clean and well-resourced with toys and activities such as sand, water tubes, steps and wheeled toys.

Leadership and Management

Both the responsible individuals (RI) and persons in charge (PiC), are experienced and manage the service effectively in line with regulations and National Minimum Standards. They lead their staff team in a shared ethos that is committed to improving good standards for children. They have an up to date statement of purpose which provides parents with detailed information about what the playgroup offers. Both RI/PiCs have a sound system for ensuring policies and procedures are updated and that they refer to new legislation and guidance. In the main, both PiCs ensure that relevant information is kept and stored securely.

The RI/PiC undertakes a suitable annual review of the service and writes a detailed report. The management obtain and consider feedback from staff, children and parents to inform this review and identify areas for improvement. This was available during the inspection. There is a suitable complaints procedure in place and the playgroup has not received any complaints.

The RI/PiC actively support their staff to provide a good quality provision to both children and their families. Practitioners are enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and experienced as a result. All staff files hold the required information. The RI/PiC supports further training and the professional development of staff and has a suitable system in place for monitoring when updates to mandatory training is required. The management hold meetings with practitioners on a regular basis to share information and carry out staff supervisions frequently. The management ensures correct ratios of children to adults are always maintained. They oversee a rota system that allows staff team to ensure that they can observe their key children in a variety of situations.

Both RI/PiC work closely with health professionals and outside agencies to ensure a consistent and effective provision. The RI/PiCs and staff work very closely with parents to ensure they informed of their child's progress. This is via verbal feedback at the end of the day. Partnership with parents is good. Parents told us they feel supported by the playgroup and that staff are always there to answer any questions that they have. They spoke highly of the settling in procedures that were specific to every child and their own needs.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R1. Strengthen the accident record sharing process with all parents so that parents are well informed of any injury to their children in a timely manner.

R2. Ensure that children are dressed appropriate to the daily weather when playing outside.

R3. Encourage children to have more independence at snack time.

R4. Consider the safety aspects of the route to and from the playgroup especially during very inclement weather

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
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N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
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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.

Date Published 06/02/2023

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