



Inspection Report

Ladybird Playgroup

**Nelson Community Care Centre
Bryncelyn
Nelson
CF46 6HL**



Date Inspection Completed

10/08/2021

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About Ladybird Playgroup

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Paige Lloyd
Registered places	16
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	9 December 2019
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 children who use, or intend to use the service.

Summary

This is an inspection undertaken during the Covid19 pandemic; therefore, we have focused on the priority areas for this setting and not the full quality framework.

There are inconsistencies in the standard of care provided by the setting. Whilst we found most children were settled, at times, a minority of children were visibly distressed which impacted negatively on the remainder of children. There were examples of positive, caring and affectionate interactions between staff and children. However; staff were not always able to manage or meet the care needs of a minority of children. The setting has adequate indoor and outdoor space which is secure and safe however; activities and play choices are limited and not always suitable for the age range of children attending. The quality of the leadership and management is poor at the setting. Leaders do not always safeguard children by making proper provision for their care and welfare and provide them with the individual support required for their particular health need or disability.

Well-being

Overall, we found there are inconsistencies in the experiences of children attending the setting. Most children make confident decisions about what they want to play with and choose resources independently or with suitable support from staff. However, not all children can speak or communicate their needs. A minority of children's attempts to express themselves do not receive appropriate responses. For example, a child was unable to communicate their needs effectively as staff failed to develop appropriate communication tools to support their individual needs. This led to the child becoming very frustrated which impacted negatively on the other children and the staff present.

In general, many children are content, settled and form close emotional bonds with familiar adults which helps them feel secure and relaxed. However, a minority of children become extremely anxious and distressed as staff are unable to engage them in appropriate activities or meet their individual needs. For example, a child who became very frustrated had a number of physical outbursts including raising their voice, kicking, and pulling staff to the floor. This had a negative impact on both children and the staff present.

Overall, most children behave well, are polite and enjoy receiving praise and recognition from staff for good manners and being kind and helpful. They play alone or alongside their friends as they learn to share and work together happily. For example, a few children took turns to choose a song to sing while waiting for their snack to be served. We heard children saying please and thank you especially during snack time. However, a minority of children with individual behaviour management needs, became frustrated, disengaged and agitated and this behaviour impacted negatively on the other children present.

There are inconsistencies in the level of children's engagement and enjoyment of their play at the setting. Children have the freedom to choose from the resources and activities available, although the play areas, both indoors and outside, lack variety or choice to cater for all their developmental needs. Overall, most children appear content with this situation. However, a minority of children, who require individual care support and clearly planned structure and routines, were uninterested in most of the resources and activities on offer. People running the setting explained that during the summer club there is no set routine or planning. They agreed that there was a lack of variety, activities and age appropriate resources to meet the developmental needs of all the children present.

Most children's self-help skills are developing well. They often wash their own hands and put on shoes and coats to go outside. They do this independently with some support from the staff. Children's developmental records demonstrate that they are getting some opportunities to practise important skills including language and literacy, numeracy and physical development.

Care and Development

Overall, we found the standard of care is not always consistent at the setting and there are significant areas of improvement required to ensure children's individual needs are met at all times. The arrangements for safeguarding children by making proper provision for their well-being do not meet requirements and are a serious cause for concern. People running the setting fail to ensure that each child is provided with the individual support required for their particular health need or disability in line with regulatory requirements. This is a serious matter and we have issued a priority action notice.

The setting has a range of useful policies and procedures to support a safe childcare service. There are suitable procedures to manage accidents, administration of medication and first aid and staff keep appropriate records. Many staff have attended safeguarding training and most hold relevant first aid qualifications. There are some useful risk assessments, including fire safety, in place to maintain a safe service. However, people running the setting do not review the effectiveness of these regularly.

The setting has developed a specific COVID-19 policy, risk assessments and suitable 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. The setting provides an adequate range of hot meals, snacks and drinks. We saw the children enjoy a snack of ham sandwiches, cucumber, party sausages, cheese with yoghurt for dessert and water to drink. Outdoor play is timetabled and children can enjoy some physical exercise in the small play area outside.

Overall, staff work together to ensure they have a consistent approach to managing behaviour and act as good role models for the children, We heard them encourage good manners including please and thank you and were calm and gentle with the children. However, staff do not have a suitable understanding or procedures in place to support children's additional needs. For example, staff were unable to manage the behaviour of a minority of children and said they were unaware of any specific strategies or plans in place for their care. As a result, we saw some behaviour that impacted negatively on the experiences of the children at the setting.

The planning for children's development, recording observations and identifying next steps in their learning are informal and not yet well developed. People running the setting said they recognised this as an area in need of improvement. Staff have undertaken Welsh language training, although we heard limited use of Welsh throughout the visit.

Environment

Overall, we found the environment is not always suitable for the care needs of children. The setting is secure and provides adequate space for children to play and learn. A suitable range of risk assessments are in place to maintain a safe service. However, people running the setting did not always review risks assessments in a timely manner when they identify potential hazards. For example, they failed to review issues raised by staff around the school pick up times until an incident occurred. They carry out regular fire evacuation drills and maintain some basic records. Records of maintenance safety checks for the building and appliances including portable appliance testing and gas safety checks were not available at inspection.

The indoor and outdoor areas provide a limited range of play opportunities for children to be independent and active. The outdoor area is small and can only be accessed at set times of the day. The play choices available are basic and more suitable for younger children. Older children played with the resources available, however, these did not offer age appropriate challenge or interest for their stage of development. Staff follow current best practice guidance to protect children from the risk of COVID-19. This includes a combination of cleaning toys, resources and surfaces at set times throughout the week.

Leadership and Management

Overall, we found that although people running the setting have procedures in place to ensure the smooth running of the service, not all of these systems are followed consistently. However, we found they were very open to discussion and demonstrated a very strong commitment to resolving issues identified during the inspection. They acted upon the areas of noncompliance and put in place a plan to improve areas for development. They have developed a suitable range of policies and procedures that set a clear vision for the service. However, they do not monitor how these are implemented consistently. As a result, staff do not follow all important procedures well enough, including those set out in the school collection policy.

People running the setting understand the importance of ensuring that mandatory training for staff is completed. Training records looked at confirmed that many staff have completed up to date mandatory training and offered a choice of additional training to help develop their skills further. We spoke to three members of staff who demonstrated a suitable understanding of the policies and procedures in place for the setting. Staff confirm that they feel supported by a management team who are available for advice, guidance or support throughout the working day. Recruitment files examined demonstrate that people who run the setting 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. The setting has arrangements for managing staff performance and most practitioners have useful opportunities to discuss and reflect on the quality of their work during their annual appraisal. However, people who run the setting do not ensure that all practitioners receive regular supervision to establish clear improvement targets.

People running the setting have undertaken a quality of care review and the required CIW online Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) to help plan for improvement. There is a suitable complaints policy available for parents. There are a number of communication systems at the setting including regular feedback including written, verbal, text and phone calls. We spoke to parents who were very complimentary about the setting. One commented, 'Staff are really friendly and my child love going there.'

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

- R1. Develop the planning for activities to help children practice new skills.
- R2. Ensure that the environment offers a good choice of activities and resources suitable for all age groups of children attending.
- R3. Ensure all risk assessments are reviewed regularly and any potential hazards addressed without delay.

Areas for improvement and action at, or since, the previous inspection. Achieved

Areas for improvement and action at, or since, the previous inspection. Not Achieved

None

Areas where priority action is required

The registered person has failed to ensure that each child is provided with the individual support required for their particular health need or disability .

Regulation 24 (2) (a)

The registered person has failed to safeguard children by making proper provision for their care and welfare at all times.

Regulation 20 (1) (b)

We found poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's wellbeing. Therefore, we have issued a priority action notice and expect the provider to take immediate steps to address this and make improvements.

Areas where improvement is required

The registered person has failed to ensure that risks to the health and safety of children are identified and eliminated.

The registered person has failed to ensure that all employees who look after children receive appropriate supervision in order to develop clear targets for development.

The area(s) identified above require improvement but we have not issued a priority action notice on this occasion. This is because there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service. We expect the registered provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

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