



Estyn

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Greenfield Playgroup

**Community Centre
School Lane
Greenfield
Flintshire
CH8 7HR**

Date of inspection: March 2022

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

About Greenfield Playgroup

Name of setting	Greenfield Playgroup
Category of care provided	Sessional Day Care
Registered person(s)	Greenfield Playgroup
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Charlene Holt
Person in charge	Charlene Holt
Number of places	25
Age range of children	2 to 4 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	The setting takes funded children from January each year. The RI confirms 8 children are funded.
Number of children funded for up to five terms	
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 9:15am to 11:45am Monday to Thursday 12:30pm – 3:00pm (education funded sessions).
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	No
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 the service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	11/01/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	01/02/2012
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	29/03/2022
All children come from backgrounds where English is the main language at home. None of the children have English as an additional language.	

Non-compliance

We notified the provider that the setting was not compliant with the Regulations. A notice was not issued, but these are identified as areas for improvement, and the RI must address these.

Recommendations

- R1 Implement professional advice consistently to meet children's individual needs effectively including those with additional learning needs
- R2 Improve practitioners' interactions with children to ensure that they support their skill development during play activities
- R3 Improve children's numeracy and Welsh language skills
- R4 Strengthen processes for target setting and improvement planning to ensure a clear impact on learners' experiences and skills

What happens next

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Estyn and the Chief Inspector of Care Inspectorate Wales are of the opinion that focused improvement is required in relation to this setting. The setting will draw up an action plan showing how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn and CIW will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Well-being:

Many children are content and express enjoyment. They are beginning to form friendships and are becoming familiar with routines, helping them to develop a sense of belonging.

Many children communicate confidently as their wants, moods and needs are generally considered. For example, when a child showed practitioners their empty plate after eating all their snack, they knew the child wanted more crackers with cheese. This made the child feel valued as they know they will be listened to. Many children enjoy introducing us to their friends and telling practitioners what they want to play with. A child spoke to us excitedly about their superhero costume and showed off their wellies with flashing lights proudly.

Many children cope well with separation from their parents / carers because they are welcomed warmly into the setting. However, not all children receive effective additional support when they need it. Most children are familiar with the daily routine and show us how they wash and dry their hands and put the paper towel in the bin provided. Many children feel comfortable and approach practitioners with ease to make their requests.

Children interact positively with practitioners. Many co-operate well and are generally suitably interested and engaged. They enjoy the social occasion of snack time; they sit nicely at the table and are well mannered. Most children are forming friendships and are learning to take turns and share. For instance, during water play two friends help one another to fill a bottle, one child holds the bottle while their friend pours in the water carefully. A few children help one another to step into a large cardboard box and laugh as they tell us 'It's a rocket!'

Most children are suitably engaged in their play and learning. They enjoy appropriate opportunities indoors and outdoors and can also relax and have quiet times. For example, children investigate insects excitedly with a magnifying glass and search enthusiastically for a ladybird. A few children choose to have some quiet time and practise their writing skills, developing their imagination in the home corner using the toy iron to press the baby dolls clothes or rolling out playdough to make pretend food. A few children enjoy practising their cutting skills and use the scissors carefully to cut out different shapes. They name the shapes correctly and tell the practitioner confidently 'this is a big square' and a 'little triangle'. A few children enjoy their time in the outdoor sand pit and use the hand tools well to dig and scoop the sand into buckets.

Nearly all children have suitable opportunities to develop their independence. For instance, a few children work well as a team to build a ramp with a selection of wooden blocks. They work together effectively to design an obstacle to roll different vehicles down, experimenting with motion and speed. Younger children enjoy mark making on the shed wall and pouring water down the slide to see how fast it would go. We saw a child concentrating appropriately, as they build a lovely construction

with magnetic bricks. They are learning to do things for themselves with positive encouragement from the practitioners.

Learning (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):

Most children make suitable progress from their starting points during their time at the setting. They are eager to engage with the many resources available to them and enjoy playing and learning new skills alongside their friends.

Many children develop their communication skills appropriately. They express their preferences to practitioners clearly, convey their emotions suitably and approach them to ask for assistance when required. Many are beginning to chat with their friends about their play. For example, they decide the sand in their buckets is actually 'ice cream' today. Nearly all children show an interest in books, for example by joining in at familiar points during story time.

Nearly all children develop their physical skills well. They access many resources to help them develop fine motor skills, eventually leading them to experiment with mark making and using writing tools. For example, in the water area they use pipettes and spray bottles. This helps to develop the dexterity they need to draw in chalk in the outdoor area or make simple attempts at writing their own name on sticky notes. Most children also develop gross motor skills suitably by choosing to play in different parts of the outdoor area. For example, they balance on tyres and wooden blocks, attempt to pass a ball to and fro with a friend using bats, or take their baby dolls for a brisk walk. Many children develop problem solving skills appropriately. For example, they decide which container would be best to fill a watering can without spilling as much water.

A few children take advantage of the limited opportunities to develop their numeracy skills during sessions. For example, they count alongside a practitioner when opportunities arise, or begin to consider language such as 'heavy' or 'not as heavy' when playing in the sand. However, overall, children's numeracy skills are underdeveloped. Similarly, children have very few opportunities to listen to the Welsh language. As a result, most children's ability to speak Welsh is limited. For example, most children will count to three in Welsh when prompted in a group situation.

Most children develop creative skills appropriately through art and craft activities. They choose to experiment with a range of different mediums, for example by painting pasta to make three dimensional collages. Many children's creativity through other mediums such as music, role-play and dance are less well developed.

Nearly all children develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills well. For example, they use a digital camera to take photographs during a session, or programme 'walkie talkies' to deliver messages to their friends and this helps to develop their communication and language skills appropriately.

Care and development:

Nearly all practitioners have a friendly, caring approach and manage interactions appropriately. They support children to follow their own interests effectively and organise, interesting play areas to develop children's curiosity and skills.

Practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. They take reasonable measures to minimise risks of harm to children's welfare and safety. The setting's arrangements to safeguard children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Nearly all practitioners have completed first aid and safeguarding training suitable for the age ranges of the children they care for.

Practitioners promote healthy lifestyles appropriately. For example, they follow good hygiene procedures and encourage children to wash their hands, helping to develop their personal hygiene practice effectively. They provide healthy snacks with a choice of milk or water to drink. Practitioners record accidents and incidents but not all of these are completed fully. They undertake fire drills; however, records lack information on how to make improvements in the future. We did not observe nappy changing. However, the person in charge showed us the procedure taken and this was in line with current infection control guidance.

Nearly all practitioners praise children for their efforts appropriately but occasionally some miss opportunities to acknowledge children's individual achievements effectively. They provide a welcoming environment and make sure nearly all children are provided with reassurance and comfort.

Practitioners organise suitable opportunities for children to make choices and decisions about their play and learning. They track younger children's progress but the outcome and evaluation from these observations are not always fully considered to aid the next steps for progression. Practitioners provide appropriate and sensitive support for children who have an additional learning need. However, they do not consistently implement professional advice well enough to make sure support is fully effective and tailored to meet the individual needs of each child.

Practitioners encourage children to play outdoors in the fresh air and this helps to develop their physical skills well. They provide children with some opportunities to learn about the world around them, for example by going on nature walks, planting flowers and learning about insects. However, raising children's awareness about their wider society is underdeveloped. Practitioners are developing children's learning about some aspects of re-cycling and using natural materials effectively. This helps children to practise using their sensory skills well.

Practitioners use some basic spoken Welsh during activities, but this is at the early stages of development. Some practitioners support children appropriately to practise their fine motor skills. For instance, a child uses tweezers carefully to choose and pick up tiny coloured sticks and the practitioner gently encourages them to name the colours. Photographs of children show them participating in a variety of craft activities, such as painting, gluing, sticking and being active outdoors playing in the rain and engaging in their local community to develop better social skills.

Teaching and assessment (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):

Practitioners provide children with access to a range of suitable resources and ensure that children have plenty of time to play uninterrupted. They allow children to make choices about where they want to play and give them the freedom to move between indoors and outdoors as they wish.

Recently, practitioners have adopted a more responsive approach to planning. This is at an early stage of development. In the very few strong examples where this works well, practitioners adapt the provision and introduce opportunities to develop suitable skills, as a result of the children's interests. For example, a practitioner noticed a group of children were fascinated by a tractor cutting the grass in a nearby field. She fetched a box of ICT resources and challenged children to make a programmable toy move up and down in lines, copying the tractor. This challenge enthused the children, brought a renewed energy to their play, and encouraged them to talk about the ICT they were using. Children then decided to investigate the other equipment in the box, which provided them with valuable opportunities to develop their communication skills, such as using telephone handsets to chat to each other. However, overall, practitioners do not identify enough of these opportunities during sessions to ensure children develop a broad range of skills. For example, children have very few opportunities to develop their numeracy skills. In the strongest cases, practitioners play alongside the children, modelling suitable language and introducing new vocabulary, but this approach is inconsistent.

Practitioners take advantage of opportunities to develop children's sense of awe and wonder for the natural world. For example, they encourage children to appreciate the beauty of a spider's web using magnifying glasses. However, the setting does not provide sufficient opportunities for children to talk about their beliefs and the beliefs of others. Similarly, practitioners do not plan an appropriate range of activities to develop children's understanding of Welsh traditions and culture. Plans to introduce Welsh language into the daily sessions are at a very early stage.

Overall, practitioners support children well in their social development. They act as valuable role-models and ensure that children understand the rules of the setting. For example, they intervene sensitively and effectively to ensure that children take turns and share and encourage them to solve disagreements suitably.

Practitioners generally have a sound understanding of each child's current stage of development, and the allocated key workers prioritise suitable targets for the children. They engage effectively with parents to ensure that they understand children's interests and preferences and provide parents with valuable feedback. Most of the time, this ensures that children are engaged in their play and learning. However, in a few cases, practitioners do not make full use of the information they receive from parents or other support partners to support the needs of all the children, such as those with additional learning needs.

Environment:

Leaders provide a safe and clean environment where children can play and learn suitably.

They ensure that practitioners carry out robust cleaning routines and follow current guidance on infection control. Most of the risk assessments and daily health and safety checks appropriately identify the potential hazards to children and what measures are in place to manage these risks. Information is available to everyone about how to deal with emergencies. Practitioners supervise children well during their activities.

Leaders make sure that the layout of the playroom promotes children's independence, enabling them to explore freely and make their own choices about what they want to play with. They provide a wide range of toys and resources for the ages cared for and children have access to appropriately sized furniture and cosy areas for quiet time and rest.

Leaders ensure that indoor storage of toys and resources are suitable and accessible to children. There is a designated area for children to store their personal items, which creates a sense of belonging. There are some resources which raise children's awareness of the world around them, for example dolls, colourful rugs and books. However, resources and activities to develop children's knowledge about their Welsh heritage and wider cultures are limited. Leaders make sure that children's artwork is attractively presented, showing children that their efforts are valued.

Leaders make sure that areas of learning are suitably organised and that there is a good selection of quality natural resources to develop children's sensory skills. There are ample resources both indoors and outdoors to aid children's play and curiosity including sand, soil and water.

Leaders have organised the outdoor play area attractively with a range of equipment for children to choose from and help develop their physical and fine motor skills. For instance, there are climbing apparatus, re-cycled tyres, pedal vehicles, musical instruments and a variety of hand tools and utensils to use for gardening. There is a variety of equipment to aid children's balancing skills such as wooden steppingstones and ramps. Leaders make sure that children have the opportunity to learn about the natural world and have organised these areas effectively.

Leadership and management:

The setting leader and deputy have a clear commitment to ensuring the best outcomes for children within a safe and caring environment. They are assisted in their work by a supportive committee and practitioners who contribute to the strong ethos of teamworking. Leaders create a positive environment where children and staff feel valued. However, some systems and procedures do not meet fully with requirements and there is a need for further improvement.

The setting's statement of purpose is clear and an accurate reflection of the service it provides. Leaders did not submit the most recent assessment of service statement within the required timescale. Most policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and implemented suitably. Leaders allocate funds appropriately, for example by buying additional resources for the outdoor area providing children with more opportunities to develop their physical skills. Leaders ensure that they employ suitably qualified practitioners and allocate appropriate roles and responsibilities.

However, not all the required information has been gathered in the practitioner's employment files and children's individual records.

Leaders identify suitable areas for improvement by evaluating different aspects of the setting's work. For example, they have very recently identified the need to develop the use of the Welsh language in the setting. However, their processes for planning improvement are less well developed. Leaders do not identify suitable actions, nor allocate sufficiently clear expectations and success criteria for all practitioners to work towards. This is also reflected in the processes for supervising and appraising practitioners' own performances. These processes tend to rely on the practitioner's self-evaluations rather than setting clear targets for future performance. Overall, practitioners receive a suitable range of professional learning opportunities. For example, leaders ensure that practitioners understand issues relating to safeguarding, paediatric first aid and infection control procedures. However, leaders do not always ensure the training needs of all practitioners support the setting's current areas for development.

Leaders create and maintain appropriate links with partners, such as the local authority's Early Years Advisory Teacher and parents. They share valuable information with parents on a regular basis. For example, they use the setting's private social media page to share operational information, food menus, and examples of children's activities. There are suitable links with the local school to ensure smooth transition when children leave the setting.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (<http://careinspectorate.wales>) (www.estyn.gov.wales)

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