



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru  
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

## Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

**Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010  
Child Minding and Day Care (Inspection and Information for Local  
Authorities) (Wales) Regulations 2010  
The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010**

# Inspection Report

**Alphabet Playgroup**

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

**Type of Inspection – Focused  
Date of inspection – Tuesday, 7 July 2015  
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## Summary

### About the service

Alphabet Playgroup is registered with Care and Social Services Wales (CSSIW) to provide day care for up to 19 children under 8 years at any one time. The service runs daily during term time, offering morning and afternoon sessions with breakfast and lunch clubs. Children can attend a combination of these sessions provided their total length of stay doesn't exceed 4 hours. The group operates from a demountable building with an adjacent outdoor play area within the grounds of Undy Primary School. This is predominately an English language service with some use of Welsh. The Responsible Persons (RPs), Louisa Sutton and Tracey Millard, have overall responsibility for the service. Ms Sutton is also the Person in Charge on a daily basis together with Tina Morgan. The service is a registered provider of Early Years Education for Monmouthshire County Council.

### What type of inspection was carried out?

This was a scheduled, focused inspection which looked mainly at the quality of life theme. The visit to the service was unannounced.

The findings in this report were based on:

- general observations of child care practices, activities and routines of the session
- discussion with one of the RP and other staff
- a brief visual check of the premises
- scrutiny of documentation held by CSSIW including the previous inspection report
- observations of the interactions between the staff and children and staff and parents
- use of the SOFI tool (Short Observation Framework for Inspection) which focuses on the quality of engagement, mood state and staff interaction experienced by the children
- a visual check of the premises
- scrutiny of some documentation held by the service, including staff training certificates and children's developmental records.

### What does the service do well?

The RPs strive to continually improve the quality of care for the children and their families. The group had been involved in a number of schemes over the past year to help develop the service including the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme, Eco Schools and a scheme to help develop children's awareness of Fair Trade. The RPs are proactive in relation to staff training and development. Detailed weekly newsletters helped keep parents well informed of the group's activities.

### What has improved since the last inspection?

A number of improvements had been made to the outside play space including, the introduction of an area fitted with astro turf and logs for children to enjoy playing with small play resources and a 'potions and perfumes' area to promote their sensory play. Following a recent training event on the role of the environment to promote children's speaking and listening skills, emotional and physical development and general engagement, the RPs had made a number of improvements to the play room. New display boards had been introduced so children's work could be displayed at their height and a calm, relaxing atmosphere had been created by using more neutral colours and de-cluttering; the floor had been replaced with wooden laminate and a display had been created in the entrance hall with photographs and wall paper to help create a more homely feel. All the recommendations made at the previous inspection had been addressed. Consideration

had been given to developing the nappy changing area but due to the limitations of the structure and layout of the building this was an area where changes were limited. However, staff now ensured that the door to the entrance hall was locked when nappy changing took place to ensure privacy for the children.

**What needs to be done to improve the service?**

There were no areas of non compliance identified at this inspection and no recommendations made to improve the service.

## Quality Of Life

Overall, we (CSSIW) found that children were provided with a good range of stimulating, age appropriate activities. Play was mainly child-led. Children were able to express their views and staff listened and responded to their opinions. Children were happy and confident in their environment and relaxed with their carers.

Children have choice and are given a voice because they are encouraged to make their own decisions, follow their interests and express their views. The structure of the session allowed opportunities for freely chosen, unstructured and self-directed play both indoors and outside. Whilst some of the session was given over to adult-led activities such as circle times, for the majority of the session children were free to choose their own activities. We noted how one child had asked to 'go marching' with the musical instruments. Staff initiated the activity involving all the children, asking them which songs they would like to sing while they were 'marching'. The RP told us that they sought the children's views about topics and activities. Their current topic 'Jack and the Beanstalk' had been chosen by the children. We saw the staff had created a 'castle' and undertaken planting activities with the children in response to their suggestions.

Children are active, positively occupied and stimulated because a good range of suitable activities are planned and provided. Different areas for different types of play were well set up and resources were clearly visible and easily accessible to the children. Inside, we saw children enjoying a circle time activity talking about a variety of topics including the weather and days of the week and exploring a new sensory toy. The member of staff working with the children encouraged them to talk about the different materials within the toy, promoting their language and listening skills, as well as promoting their ability to take turns. Outside, the children were busy and involved in developing their skills through a range of activities including riding their bikes and trikes, sand and water play, painting, observational drawings, imaginative play and exploring their environment. We saw much evidence of their planting activities. All in one waterproofs and wellies ensured that children could experience the outside in more inclement weather. The children were well supported by staff in their chosen activities. We saw staff joining in with the children's play when appropriate, asking them questions to help develop their learning such as 'what do our plants need to grow tall?' A review of the weekly newsletters sent to parents and photographs displayed showed that the children enjoyed a wide variety of activities including den making, forest school, cooking, maths activities, parachute games and arts and crafts. The Welsh language was interwoven naturally into the session through simple words, phrases and songs.

Children experience warmth and their well being is promoted because staff are committed to providing a caring and nurturing environment. The group had implemented a key worker system to ensure that children could form strong attachments and feel secure. Activities and displays enabled children to feel a sense of worth and belonging and allowed them to share their home experiences with the staff. We saw staff engaging naturally with the children, chatting with them about their families. It was evident from discussion with the RP that staff knew the children well. We heard staff praise the children for their efforts and contributions and provided support where necessary, whilst promoting children's sense of independence. Strategies were in place to manage unwanted behaviour and these were age appropriate, supportive and low key. The RP affirmed that staff worked together as a team and with parents to ensure consistency in promoting wanted behaviour. We saw a 'superstar chart' which staff used to promote and reward appropriate behaviour and noted that children responded well to this.

## Quality Of Staffing

This inspection focused on the quality of life. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of staffing in detail on this occasion as there were no issues evident prior to the inspection.

## Quality Of Leadership and Management

This inspection focused on the quality of life. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of leadership and management in detail on this occasion as there were no issues evident prior to the inspection.

## Quality Of The Environment

This inspection focused on the quality of life. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of the environment in detail on this occasion as there were no issues evident prior to the inspection.

## How we inspect and report on services

We conduct two types of inspection; baseline and focused. Both consider the experience of people using services.

- **Baseline inspections** assess whether the registration of a service is justified and whether the conditions of registration are appropriate. For most services, we carry out these inspections every three years. Exceptions are registered child minders, out of school care, sessional care, crèches and open access provision, which are every four years.

At these inspections we check whether the service has a clear, effective Statement of Purpose and whether the service delivers on the commitments set out in its Statement of Purpose. In assessing whether registration is justified inspectors check that the service can demonstrate a history of compliance with regulations.

- **Focused inspections** consider the experience of people using services and we will look at compliance with regulations when poor outcomes for people using services are identified. We carry out these inspections in between baseline inspections. Focused inspections will always consider the quality of life of people using services and may look at other areas.

Baseline and focused inspections may be scheduled or carried out in response to concerns.

Inspectors use a variety of methods to gather information during inspections. These may include;

- Talking with people who use services and their representatives
- Talking to staff and the manager
- Looking at documentation
- Observation of staff interactions with people and of the environment
- Comments made within questionnaires returned from people who use services, staff and health and social care professionals

We inspect and report our findings under 'Quality Themes'. Those relevant to each type of service are referred to within our inspection reports.

Further information about what we do can be found in our leaflet 'Improving Care and Social Services in Wales'. You can download this from our website, [Improving Care and Social Services in Wales](#) or ask us to send you a copy by telephoning your local CSSIW regional office.

