



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

# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Rhostyllen Playgroup**

**Parish Hall  
Vicarage Hill  
Rhostyllen  
LL14 4AR**



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## **Description of the service**

Throughout this report any references to 'Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales' (CSSIW) should be read as 'Care Inspectorate Wales' (CIW).

Rhostyllen Playgroup operates from a room, dedicated to their sole use, situated in the Parish Hall in the village of Rhostyllen. The service is registered to provide care to 30 children. The service offers the provision to children aged 2 years 3 months – 4 years. The service is open at the following times:

Monday 09:15 – 11:45

Tuesday 11:20 – 14:40

Wednesday 09:15 – 11:45

Thursday – Closed for Playgroup

Friday – 09:15 – 11:45

There is an additional Toddler service which is not run by playgroup staff and at which parents are required to stay with their child on Tuesday and Thursday mornings 09:15 – 11:00.

The registered persons for the service are Deborah Roberts and Rhiannon Rowbottom (known to parents and children as 'Jane') Deborah Roberts (Debbie) is the person in charge of the day to day management of the service with Jane Rowbottom acting as deputy. The service is provided through English and use of Welsh is promoted it does not provide the Welsh Language 'Active Offer'. The service provides education for 3 and 4 year olds (foundation phase) and is also inspected by Estyn.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children's well-being is core to the delivery of this service and a main focus of the leadership and management. Staff and leaders know their children well and understand how to make their learning and development relevant, engaging and fun. They plan for and set appropriate challenges for children, interacting with them well and modelling positive behaviour. Children are cared for in an environment which is for their sole use and which is safe. It is furnished and decorated effectively to provide children with a suitable play environment. Partnerships with the owners of the building, the Local Authority early education team and parents are productive and meaningful.

### **2. Improvements**

Since the last inspection, the play room has been freshly decorated and new pin boards have been installed to showcase the children's creative work. Leaders have actively encouraged children to contribute to topic planning and have taken on board their ideas for this term's topic – Dinosaurs.

Staff use social media effectively as a tool for sourcing new and creative ideas in relation to the topic the children are learning about.

Staff recognise the advantage of sharing positive practice and timetable regular visits to other services to observe their practice as a tool for developing their own.

### **3. Requirements and recommendations**

We made recommendations in regards to leadership and management specifically in relation to the need for staff signing in procedures to be monitored and the slight amendment of some paperwork.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children are happy and confident to speak and express themselves. They contribute their ideas to topics and have their suggestions listened to. Children feel valued, are learning to be sensitive to the feelings of others and feel safe. They are provided with a variety of uninterrupted child initiated play and opportunities to take part in adult led activities.

## **Our findings**

### **1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?**

Children express ideas, speak clearly and confidently and make independent choices.

Children were able to speak and express themselves openly throughout the session. We found children were able to express non-verbal signals to staff and have their needs met as a result of these. Children contributed ideas for themes and topics, for example the current Dinosaur topic and enjoyed learning through a variety of carefully planned, related activities. Children were offered a choice of which equipment they would like to take with them on their walk, they confidently expressed a preference and independently selected a good variety of digital cameras, magnifying glasses and notebooks from around the playroom.

Children using this service flourish from purposeful conversations knowing that they are highly valued, listened to and understood.

### **1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?**

Children are happy in their play, feel safe and have a strong sense of belonging.

Children were familiar with the routine of the service and all were settled on our arrival and continued to be so throughout the afternoon. Children played alongside their friends working co-operatively and beginning to form friendships. They felt recognised and valued, as each child had a named place mat for lunch and snack time. Each child had their own peg to hang their coats on and all were happy and confident when collecting these and demonstrating how they could put their coats on using the special technique the staff had taught them. Children's art work was considerably displayed on the walls and washing lines hanging across the play room. These showcased the children's self portrait collages and hand print dinosaurs, each one had the child's name and the suffix –osaurus to make it identifiable for the child. Children smiled throughout the session and enjoyed their time at the service.

Children have experiences which make them feel confident, valued and enjoy their learning through play.

### **1.3 How well do children interact?**

Children are learning to follow instructions and are developing an understanding of the need for rules in order to stay safe.

Children benefitted from the opportunity to go for a walk in the local environment. The walk took the children through the nearby park and local residential areas. Children chatted to each other and with staff along the way, pointing out items of interest and discussing signs they found. They listened well to staff and followed instructions carefully walking and stopping when instructed.

Children are becoming self-disciplined and are developing a comprehensive understanding of the rules of behaviour expected at the service.

### **1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?**

Children are curious and enthusiastic about the play, learning and development opportunities presented to them.

Children were fully immersed in an activity whereby they had to explore various ways of releasing trapped dinosaurs from frozen ice blocks. They worked co-operatively, sharing ideas and trying various tools, which they accessed independently from around the room, to release the dinosaurs. Children thoroughly enjoyed this activity, drawing comparisons between the ice and the snowy weather the week earlier and learning much about the world around them as a result.

Children moved freely between their chosen play activities showing a familiarity of what was available to them. Children knew where they could source resources independently to enhance their play and we saw they were concentrating on their chosen play for an appropriate length of time before finding a new play interest.

Children are provided with stimulating and interesting play activities which ignite the children's interest and which help them to learn and develop new skills through their play.

### **1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?**

Children show good reliance when faced with new challenges and know support is available as and when it is needed.

We found children to be confident, to personally direct their play and to apply their previous learning experiences to that day's play. Children are developing well linguistically with words such as 'dripping' 'sunk' and 'excess' heard whilst describing the ice and play-dough they were playing with. It was pleasing to see the children developing socially and emotionally, for example when asked 'would any one share their laminated current bun with me?' a child jumped up and enthusiastically offered it to the member of staff. We saw children zipping up their own lunch boxes following lunch time and opening their yoghurts independently. Children were encouraged to

pour their own drinks and make choices in relation to their snack confidently yet politely.

Children are offered age appropriate opportunities to learn new skills, develop resilience and accomplish things independently.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

Children are cared for by staff who manage their behaviour with a consistent approach which is in line with the service's policy. They know and apply good practice in order to keep children safe, and interact with children in ways which nurture a passion for learning. Staff explore ways in which they can meet children's individual needs.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

Staff have procedures in place to keep children safe however, attention to promoting healthy eating could be developed.

We found leaders had procedures in place for ensuring children and staff were well prepared and knew what to do in the event of a fire. Leaders had a mobile smoke detector which they set off at random intervals to help familiarise children with the noise of the alarm and the expected routine.

The service has a child protection policy in place, the details of which we found displayed on the playroom for everyone's reference. Staff knew the policy well and knew the procedure to follow to keep children safe.

Staff used appropriate hygienic procedures when preparing the playroom for snack and supported the children to wash their hands before eating.

Staff ensured children were safe whilst out on a walk in the local area, the children being asked to wear high-viz vests and to follow instructions carefully. Staff follow accurate procedures for recording and reporting accidents and incidents however, we have recommended that the current forms are updated to include a body map on which the location of the injury may be recorded for additional clarity. The person in charge was reminded of the retention timescale for these records.

Staff sat and ate lunch alongside the children which is positive, they told us sweets are not permitted and children are encouraged to eat their sandwiches before any desserts. Children's lunches were brought from home however, observations of the contents suggested that healthy choices were not always provided. We have recommended staff promote healthy eating with parents, providing examples of healthy lunch boxes. Food supplied by the service promotes healthy eating, is varied and nutritional.

Overall, staff ensure children's well-being is a priority and endeavour to keep children safe and healthy.

#### **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

Staff have a clear understanding of child development and how positive behaviour contributes to good outcomes for children.



A small staff team caring for the children ensured consistency of care. Staff were approachable, relaxed and modelled good behaviour. We found children were familiar with staff and were happy to approach them for support. They responded positively to instructions and were eager and happy to do what had been asked of them. For example one child was asked to put the torches back in the dark tent which the child happily did.

Staff were consistent in their approach; children knew their expectations and behaved well throughout the session.

Staff listen to children, encourage them to co-operate and share. Staff promote positive behaviour and outcomes for children.

### **2.3 How well do practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?**

Staff promote a caring and respectful environment for children to play, learn and develop. They have a sound understanding of children's individual needs and how to provide for these.

We found the daily routine was displayed on the playroom wall, shared with parents and was delivered accordingly. Staff ensured children were given the opportunity to be active and develop physically each day through the use of the large hall space, outdoor play areas or by walks in the local community. Areas of the early years foundation phase were laid out in a thoughtful way to ensure children could see, access and use the resources available to them with ease to support their learning and play ideas. Staff gave careful consideration to the planning of activities which would inspire the children's desire for self-exploration. They supported and encouraged development through carefully asked questions. Sitting alongside children who were exploring the ice, a failed attempt by a child to release the dinosaur was met by staff offering positive encouragement and further engagement for example, 'Good try! What idea have you got? What could we try next?' Staff monitored children's progress through observations, are well qualified in child development and leadership and management and know each child's next steps, planning for these accordingly.

Staff successfully plan for play opportunities which engage children and help them to learn and develop well.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

Leaders provide a safe, suitable and well maintained environment. They identify risks and promote good hygiene practices. Furniture and resources have been carefully sourced to meet the needs of the children using the service. Resources and equipment are regularly reviewed and any worn or broken toys removed and replenished.

#### **Our findings**

##### **3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?**

Leaders have procedures in place to ensure the environment is safe, fit for purpose and secure from unauthorised access.

As the service is in a building shared with other members of the public, the door to the playroom was closed after our arrival and a safety chain applied for added security. Toilets outside this room were used by the children and so, for their safety staff accompanied children to the toilet. There is a push bar to open the door from this room to enable ease of access in the event of an emergency.

The service has obtained a level 5 food hygiene grading and we evidenced daily fridge temperatures were being maintained. All areas of the premises used by the children were well kept and freshly decorated.

Leaders value maintaining a safe environment for the successful and safe delivery of their service.

##### **3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?**

Leaders ensure children are cared for in an environment which meets their needs and which enhances their play and learning opportunities.

Low level hexagonal tables with accompanying chairs provided children with space to play and socialise with their friends. There was ample space for the children to move around freely and play with their chosen activity, the variety of carpet and hard flooring providing variation and helping to define areas of play. Low level shelving was well organised and clutter free enabling the children to select the toys and equipment they wanted to use with ease. New display boards allowed staff to display the children's work creatively which further enhanced the environment. A low level discovery table provided children with an opportunity to explore leaves and natural items whilst reflecting the interest of the children in dinosaurs and their habitats.

Leaders ensured all aspects of the playroom were child centred and suitable for the children's use.

### **3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?**

Leaders purchase equipment which enhances resources the group already have, gives the children the opportunity to use technology and offers children a good variety and choice.

We saw resources were clean, well maintained and age appropriate for the children at the service. Children enjoyed using the digital cameras and were enthused to take these with them on their walk in the local community. Leaders told us that the children's self-taken photographs are downloaded each week and shared on the service's social media pages for parents to view. There were working batteries in all toys which required them, making them engaging and ready for the children's use. Leaders promoted recycling with the children having recycling boxes in the playroom.

Leaders regularly review the toys and resources available to ensure they meet safety standards and are effective in the delivery of the children's early education.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

Leaders strive to deliver positive outcomes for children. They have a clear vision for the service and a strong understanding of their regulatory requirements when delivering their service. They recognise the need for continuing professional development and the benefits of sharing good practice. The small staff team work efficiently together to provide care to children and to develop partnerships.

### **Our findings**

#### **4.1 How effective is leadership?**

Leaders have a clear vision for their service and communicate their vision well.

We found the service's Statement of Purpose detailed, compliant with regulations and to provide an accurate account of the service we observed being delivered during the inspection. Leaders maintain records and policies in a way which ensures overall they are compliant with regulations and the National Minimum Standards. We have recommended that some of the policies are updated to reflect recent changes to some contact details. Registers for children were kept accurately however; we found staff were not always signing in and out on the registers. This had previously been common practice. We have recommended this practice is resumed.

The service website is kept up to date and provides a platform for leaders to share their vision to parents and others. We found the insurance certificate displayed on the playroom was out of date. Leaders provided us with a copy of the renewed insurance to evidence it was in place. We have recommended that displayed information made available to parents is the most recent which is available.

Leaders are effective in delivering a well organised service which promotes good outcomes for children.

#### **4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?**

Leaders have systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the service.

Leaders are reflective and are open to feedback in order to further improve their practice. Leaders encourage staff to visit other local provisions, observe alternative practice and consider what may work well in their service. They work closely with the Local Authority early years' education team and apply their guidance and recommendations, recognising the value of these recommendations for children.

An annual self-assessment of service had been completed and submitted to us. This gave detail of areas of improvement and priority for the future and was an accurate reflection of the areas being developed at the time of the inspection.

Leaders are open minded, driven and plan well for future improvements.

### **4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?**

Leaders manage staff and resources appropriately to provide good outcomes for children.

Leaders have high expectations of themselves and their staff. Leaders encourage staff to attend training to keep their knowledge of child development up to date and relevant for the children they care for. Additional to the mandatory training, staff had attended training in supporting children with Autism and fire awareness.

Staff files evidenced that leaders had applied robust recruitment procedures as all information required by regulation in relation to staff was available to us for inspection. Staff received annual appraisals and termly supervision in order to review their performance and to discuss any concerns they may have.

Children's records evidenced leaders knew what was required of them by regulation and that they had actively sought this information before the child started at the service. Leaders understood the need for confidentiality and the secure storage of personal data.

Leaders manage the service effectively to ensure there is sufficient, suitable and qualified staff caring for the number of children attending the service each day.

### **4.4 How effective are partnerships?**

Leaders encourage good links with the community and positive relationships with parents and other partners.

We spoke to two parents who were pleased with the service their children received; one commenting how they had been so pleased with how settled their child was and how much progress he had made, they had decided he should continue at the service rather than starting part time nursery school. We received three parent responses three children's responses and three staff responses to our questionnaires in relation to the service. All were positive with praise given from parents in relation to their child's Welsh language development, social development and the care they receive.

Leaders work effectively with local authority advisors, welcome the feedback they receive from them and implement their recommendations in to the service.

We found communication with parents to be effective. Leaders send home letters each half term, host open days to enable parents to see the children at play and use social media as a means of communicating with parents.

Parent appreciation was evident through the thoughtful gifts around the playroom which they had creatively made or commissioned on behalf of the children. For example, a window box of paper flowers with each child's photograph displayed on each one and a wooden tree containing each child and member of staff's name.

Leaders value the contribution parents and other professionals make in ensuring children experience a smooth transition between the service and home.

## **5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection**

### **5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections**

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

We recommended that the registered providers should;

- continue to record staff attendance in the registers alongside the children's,
- review policies and amend wording as discussed during feedback,
- ensure policies and the Statement of Purpose contain the correct contact details for CIW,
- enhance the accident reporting documentation to include a body map to show the location of any injuries,
- promote healthy eating and healthy lunch choices with children and their parents and;
- ensure that information displayed in relation to the service is the most recent.

## **6. How we undertook this inspection**

This was a full unannounced inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector visited the service on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 between the hours of 12:03 and 16:00.

We:

- inspected a sample of documentation and policies;
- observed practice and completed observations to evidence the children's engagement and the care being provided by staff;
- spoke to the four children, two parents and two staff present and
- considered the safety and suitability of the environment for the children.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website [www.cssiw.org.uk](http://www.cssiw.org.uk)

## 7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Sessional Day Care
Registered Person	Deborah Roberts Rhiannon Rowbottom
Registered maximum number of places	30
Age range of children	2 years 3 months to 4 years
Opening hours	Monday 09:15 – 11:45 Tuesday 11:20 – 14:40 Wednesday 09:15 – 11:45 Thursday – Closed for Playgroup Friday – 09:15 – 11:45
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	23 February 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	06 March 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	Yes
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language.
<b>Additional Information:</b>	
None	