

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

12th July 2021

REGISTERED CHILDCARE PROVISION – QUALITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this Report is to update members on the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) registered childcare settings overseen by the Community, Wellbeing and Resilience Service (CWRS).

2. CORONAVIRUS

The Coronavirus pandemic had a significant impact on the delivery of the childcare, to ensure that those most in need of childcare had access to it. From a Flying Start childcare perspective, this required settings to amend their operations to provide emergency childcare within 48 hours of lockdown being announced. These included providing childcare for:

- Children aged 0 – 5years (as opposed to 2-3 years under normal circumstances);
- Full days between 07:30 – 18:00 (rather than sessional care of 2.5 hours daily);
- Available to children of critical workers and the children of the most vulnerable families (not only Flying Start eligible children).

CIW, with the support of Welsh Government, eased their National Minimum Standards for the delivery of childcare, which allowed local authority childcare settings to increase capacity to deliver the three amendments noted above.

The need for, and complexity of, risk assessments have significantly increased over the pandemic period. This has had an impact on staffing duties and teams have been innovative in meeting these requirements to keep children, their families and staff safe at all times.

This emergency childcare commenced in March 2020 and continued until the end of August 2020. Eligible children attending the Flying Start nurseries reverted back to

normal from 29th June 2020, although many of the health and safety practices have had to remain in place to keep all individuals safe.

3. KEY CHANGES FROM LAST REPORT

Following the report presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in May 2019, significant service developments have taken place in respect of childcare provision across Rhondda Cynon Taf. During this period, a new purpose-built Flying Start childcare setting has been established on the Llwynypia campus of Coleg Y Cymoedd. This has replaced the historical Flying Start provision in the previous Ynscynon Primary School site.

Flying Start Tonyrefail was transferred to an external provider to deliver the service. Little Inspirations Day Nursery Ltd approached the Council at the beginning of 2019, and the transition of the provision and responsibility for the building on Tonyrefail School site was completed in August 2019 in time for the new academic year.

Historically, RCT'S Flying Start Childcare offer provided 42 weeks of sessional childcare to eligible children. In 2019, a consultation exercise was held with internal setting staff, commissioned setting staff and Flying Start families, regarding the 42 week offer, and whether it was favourable to reduce that to 39 weeks and introduce 15 family fun days during the school holiday periods. The overwhelming response was to reduce to 39 weeks as many families did not wish to take up the three weeks during the summer holiday period as they would rather spend the time together as a family. Therefore, a recommendation was taken to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee and subsequently Cabinet, to reduce the offer to 39 weeks per year in line with most other Welsh local authorities. This was agreed, and meetings were held with staff and Trade Unions. Staff were offered the opportunity to reduce their contracts to 39 weeks, or remain on 42 week contracts and use the additional three weeks to support the family fun days. The 39-week offer was introduced in September 2019 for academic year 2019/20.

4. QUALITY REPORTS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDCARE SETTINGS

Within Rhondda Cynon Taf, there are five CIW registered childcare settings that are run by the Local Authority. These are:

- Aman Flying Start Childcare;
- Penrhys Flying Start Childcare;
- Tylorstown Flying Start Childcare;
- Ynscynon Flying Start Childcare;
- Pontypridd Day Nursery and Flying Start Childcare.

Set out in the table below are descriptions of each provision with corresponding commentary concerning the latest inspection feedback, summary of strengths, recommendations and action plans for necessary improvements.

Provision/ Setting	Service Description	Date of Last CIW Inspection	Inspection Feedback/Actions
Aman Flying Start Childcare	This childcare setting is based in the Aman Early Years Centre and managed by the CWRS. It provides sessional care (not full day care) to Flying Start children from the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday. The service provides 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. Due to the numbers of children entitled to access Flying Start childcare in the area, there are two sessions delivered on a daily basis, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The setting is registered for a total of 30 children per session, therefore, up to 60 children	10 th January 2020	<p>Since the report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019 a Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection has taken place on the 10th January 2020.</p> <p>Summary of the findings from the CIW report:</p> <p>Children have excellent outcomes in terms of their well-being and learning. They are thriving and developing in a service that provides them with an excellent range of learning and play opportunities. Practitioners are very effective in supporting children's individual needs and attentive in identifying specific and additional learning requirements. The environment is welcoming, spacious and well designed with an extensive range of resources and equipment to support children's development. There are robust security systems in place to maintain a safe environment for children. There are strong partnerships with parents, other professionals, agencies and the wider community.</p>

	can access the provision per day.		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1012 178 1518 248">Theme</th> <th data-bbox="1518 178 2018 248">Rating awarded by CIW</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1012 248 1518 319">Well-being</td> <td data-bbox="1518 248 2018 319">Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1012 319 1518 389">Care and Development</td> <td data-bbox="1518 319 2018 389">Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1012 389 1518 459">Environment</td> <td data-bbox="1518 389 2018 459">Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1012 459 1518 529">Leadership and Management</td> <td data-bbox="1518 459 2018 529">Excellent</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="1012 608 1592 639"><u>Requirements and Recommendations</u></p> <p data-bbox="1012 647 2063 719">There were no areas of non-compliance or recommendations for improvement made by CIW during their inspection.</p>	Theme	Rating awarded by CIW	Well-being	Excellent	Care and Development	Excellent	Environment	Excellent	Leadership and Management	Excellent
Theme	Rating awarded by CIW												
Well-being	Excellent												
Care and Development	Excellent												
Environment	Excellent												
Leadership and Management	Excellent												
Penrhys Flying Start Childcare	This childcare setting is based in the Penrhys Flying Start Centre and managed within the CWRS. It provides sessional care (not full day care) to Flying Start children from the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday. The service provides 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. Due to the numbers of children entitled to access Flying Start childcare in the Penrhys and Ystrad area, there is one	13 th February 2020	<p data-bbox="1012 759 2063 879">Since the report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019 a Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection has taken place on the 13th February 2020.</p> <p data-bbox="1012 911 1711 943">Summary of the findings from the CIW report:</p> <p data-bbox="1012 983 2056 1358">Outcomes for children are excellent in terms of their wellbeing. They have very positive relationships with staff and have extensive opportunities to develop new skills and independence. They benefit from a wide range of developmentally, age appropriate play experiences and have a strong voice in the service. Staff are professional, well qualified and support children in a positive and warm manner, allowing children to thrive and grow in a nurturing environment. The premises is extremely well maintained and spacious with a broad selection of play resources and a stimulating and challenging outdoor area for physical play. Leadership of</p>										

	<p>session delivered each day in the afternoon. The setting is registered for 12 children per session, therefore, up to 12 children access the provision per day.</p>		<p>the service is effective in all areas, and there are robust quality assurance processes and good record keeping systems.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1016 290 2013 643"> <thead> <tr> <th>Theme</th> <th>Rating awarded by CIW</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Well-being</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Care and Development</td> <td>Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leadership and Management</td> <td>Good</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><u>Requirements and Recommendations</u> There were no areas of non-compliance. There was one recommendation made during the CIW inspection.</p> <p>Leadership and Management theme: To review the current system for recording children’s times of arrival and departure - ACTIONED and COMPLETE.</p>	Theme	Rating awarded by CIW	Well-being	Excellent	Care and Development	Good	Environment	Excellent	Leadership and Management	Good
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Well-being	Excellent												
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<p>Tylorstown Flying Start Childcare</p>	<p>This childcare setting is based next door to the Contact Centre facility in Tylorstown (the former library). It provides sessional care (not full day care) to Flying Start children from the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday. The service</p>	<p>31st July 2018</p>	<p>No CIW Inspection has occurred since report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019.</p> <p>The below is a summary of strengths and areas for development which were identified following an internal quality assurance monitoring assessment being undertaken in December 2020.</p> <p><u>Overview</u></p> <p>The setting received a score of 71% achieving an overall rating of GOOD.</p>										

	<p>provides 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. Due to the numbers of children entitled to access Flying Start childcare in the area, there are two sessions delivered on a daily basis, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The setting is registered for 26 children per session, therefore, up to 52 children can access the provision per day.</p>	<p><u>Areas of strength</u></p> <p>It is evident that staff demonstrate very strong, sustained practice when supporting children to develop their skills in areas such as:</p> <p>Building trust, confidence and independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation and social development • Encouraging choices and independent play • Planning for small group and individual interactions <p>Supporting and extending language and communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging children to talk with others • Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen • Staff support children’s language use • Staff are sensitive and responsive <p>Staff demonstrate many strengths and no important areas require significant improvement when supporting children to develop skills such as:</p> <p>Assessing learning and language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using assessment to support and extend learning and critical thinking • Assessing language development. <p><u>Areas for development</u></p>
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			<p>Staff demonstrate the need for development in the below areas, however, strengths outweigh weakness and improvements are required to support children to develop skills such as:</p> <p>Social and emotional well-being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting socio-emotional well-being <p>Supporting learning and critical thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting curiosity and problem solving • Encouraging sustained shared thinking through storytelling etc. • Encouraging sustained shared thinking in investigation and exploration • Supporting concept development and higher order thinking <p><u>Areas for training identified:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and emotional well-being • Supporting learning and critical thinking • Assessing learning to support and extend learning and critical thinking
<p>Pontypridd Day Nursery and Flying Start Childcare</p>	<p>This childcare setting is based in the Graig Flying Start building and managed by the CWRS. The setting offers full day care from 7.30am to 6pm. The setting is registered for 19 children in total, offering 12 Flying Start</p>	<p>22nd June 2018</p>	<p>No CIW Inspection has occurred since report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019.</p> <p>The below is a summary of strengths and areas for development which were identified following an internal quality assurance monitoring assessment being undertaken in December 2020.</p> <p><u>Overview</u></p>

	<p>places. Flying Start children can access the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday, providing 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. The setting operates one session which is delivered on a daily basis, in the morning. The day Nursery element offers 4 Day Nursery places in the morning and 4 Day Nursery places in the afternoon for children under the age of 8 years old.</p>		<p>The setting received a score of 65% achieving an overall rating of GOOD.</p> <p><u>Areas of strength</u></p> <p>It is evident that staff demonstrate very strong, sustained practice when supporting children to develop their skills in areas such as:</p> <p>Supporting and extending language and communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging children to talk with others • Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen • Staff support children’s language use • Staff are sensitive and responsive <p>Staff demonstrate many strengths and no important areas require significant improvement when supporting children to develop skills such as:</p> <p>Building trust, confidence and independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation and social development • Encouraging choices and independent play • Planning for small group and individual interactions <p>Assessing learning and language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using assessment to support and extend learning and critical thinking • Assessing language development. <p><u>Areas for development</u></p>
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Ynyscynon Day Nursery and Flying	This childcare setting is based on the Llwynypaid Campus of Coleg Y Cymoedd and managed by the CWRS. It provides sessional care (not	3rd April 2017	No CIW Inspection has occurred since report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019.

<p>Start Childcare</p>	<p>full day care) to Flying Start children from the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday. The service provides 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. Due to the numbers of children entitled to access Flying Start childcare in the area, there are two sessions delivered on a daily basis, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The setting is registered for 26 children per session, therefore, up to 52 children can access the provision per day.</p>	<p>The below is a summary of strengths and areas for development which were identified following an internal quality assurance monitoring assessment being undertaken in December 2020.</p> <p><u>Overview</u></p> <p>The setting received a score of 65% achieving an overall rating of GOOD.</p> <p><u>Areas of strength</u></p> <p>It is evident that staff demonstrate very strong, sustained practice when supporting children to develop their skills in areas such as:</p> <p>Supporting and extending language and communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging children to talk with others • Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen • Staff support children’s language use • Staff are sensitive and responsive <p>Staff demonstrate many strengths and no important areas require significant improvement when supporting children to develop skills such as:</p> <p>Building trust, confidence and independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation and social development • Encouraging choices and independent play • Planning for small group and individual interactions <p>Assessing learning and language:</p>
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4. **THEMES:**

Where CIW inspections have been undertaken since the last report presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in May 2019 childcare settings have received ratings of excellent and good across all four themes.

There are common themes that have emerged across all five Local Authority childcare settings during both CIW inspections and internal quality assurance processes. These include the following identified strengths and areas for development:

Areas of Strengths:

- The practitioners at the setting support and encourage children to build on their language and communication skills. They provide a language rich environment, where children are supported well by practitioners who scaffold and model language. Staff are warm and responsive to all children and ensure that all children have individual time given to them on a one on one basis.
- The practitioners at the setting support children well to build trusting relationships with staff and their peers. Children are celebrated for their contribution which supports them to build confidence and promotes their independence skills to flourish.
- The practitioners demonstrate skills when supporting children's language skills to grow. They are confident when using strategies to extend children's language skills and plan effectively for this. Guidance is also provided when supporting parents/carers to extend this learning into the home environment.

Areas for development:

- Practitioners need support to develop their understanding and practices when enabling children to become fully active participants in their own play experiences. This approach requires practitioners to embrace opportunities for children to plan, evaluate and problem solve during their play, therefore, promoting opportunities for children to develop their critical thinking processes.
- Practitioners need support to strengthen and extend their practices when supporting children to understand their own emotions and needs and recognising them in others.

Moving forward:

- Embedding of practices to support the promotion of developing emotional literacy within the learning environment.
- Training undertaken to support the understanding and practices of how to promote critical thinking in young children.
- Continue to work creatively within the challenges faced when maintaining a 'COVID secure' environment to provide a high-quality experience to benefit the children and families who access the settings.
- Continue to develop strategies to proactively support the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and staff as a result of the pandemic.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equality and Diversity Assessment is not required as part of this information report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

There are no financial implications.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

The National Minimum Standards, as stipulated by the Care Inspectorate Wales, is the main legal framework underpinning the operation of the childcare settings. As stated above, these were relaxed during the Coronavirus pandemic, but will be fully reinstated from 1st July 2021.

However, other legislation is also considered in achieving a high-quality service, namely, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Children Act 2004 and the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010. In support of the legal framework are the Welsh Government Flying Start guidance, which, albeit not legally binding, are followed as a means of discharging the Council's duties under the Flying Start grant terms and conditions.

8. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP

The childcare settings complement the Council's corporate priorities and Cwm Taf's Wellbeing Plan to promote independence and positive lives for everyone by ensuring Rhondda Cynon Taf's children and young people will receive a great start in life.

9. **CONCLUSION:**

The Coronavirus pandemic has significantly impacted on the type of provision the local authority's childcare settings have delivered over the past 15 months. The range of support provided has broadened, offering childcare support to additional families that would not have normally been eligible. This experience has helped staff to develop their professional practice as they have had to take on additional responsibilities, whilst new opportunities have expanded the team's knowledge and skill set. As a result, the service has created a legacy plan, where it incorporates the learning from the Covid-19 situation and takes the proven developments forward for a more effective post-Covid service.