



Quality of care report 2015-2016

Information

Overton Playcentre was first established in 1967 by a group of volunteers. It is a non-profit charitable organisation that is led by a committee of parents who employ qualified and experienced staff that run the playcentre. Staff are DBS checked and the Playcentre is regularly inspected and registered with ESTYN and CSSIW (Childcare social service inspectors for Wales). We offer sessional and full day care for children between 2 and 8 years old. We are open Mon to Fri 8am - 6pm. We welcome all children and have children attending playgroup from Overton and surrounding villages that go as far as Wrexham, Llangollen, Whitchurch and Ellesmere. We have a close links with St Mary's school in Overton.

Staffing

Margaret has a foundation degree in Early Childhood Studies. She has over twenty years experience working with children, and has worked at Overton playcentre as the manager for fifteen years.

Angela has a NNEB in nursery nursing, with over eighteen years' experience working with children. She began her career working in a full day care nurseries, then as a nanny and has been a valuable member of staff at Overton playcentre for 8 years.

After Nicky qualified with a diploma in childcare she joined our team as an extra member of staff which enabled us to offer wrap around care. Without Nicky's loyal dedication we could not have offered wrap around care which is a service that is well used and needed. Since working at Overton Playcentre Nicky has gained a QCF level 5 in childcare and has been working at the Playcentre for 7 years.

Charlotte began with us as a work experience student completing her Diploma in childcare level 2 and is now working towards gaining a QCF in childcare level 3. We will give her all the support she needs to help her complete her qualification She has been working at Overton Playcentre for the last three years as a 1-1 support and a member of staff.

Racheal Harris is our Deputy Manager and has an NVQ level 5 in childcare learning development. She joined the team in May 2016 making her our newest recruit. As a local childminder. Rachel provided day care for children within her home in Overton, she also ran a baby and toddler group on Mondays at the scout hut and she attended the PATIO (Parent and Toddlers in Overton) group on Wednesday at the Methodist Church. She regularly attended our own toddler group each Tuesday where she organised singing sessions with the children and parents. Rachel has been involved with the Playcentre committee for the last 8 years and we had a comprehensive transition process for children moving on from her care to Overton Playcentre. We are now lucky to have her as part of our team.

We were sorry to lose Angie Atkins who was a former chairperson at Overton Playcentre and became a valuable member of staff making an enormous impact on bringing the playcentre forward in all areas from planning, renewing forms and policies, assisting with wages, assisting staff, developing children's skills, fundraising and much more. She is sorely missed by staff, children, parents and committee but wish her and her family all the happiness in her move to Guernsey

Training

All qualifications are up to date and all the staff regularly attend workshops organised by Early Education Team which we all find interesting and useful towards developing the children's learning skills. Staff have an opportunity in their appraisals to highlight any strengths or weaknesses they may have and are given the opportunity to do any extra training if they wish to do so. Nicky has shown an interest in learning Makaton and requested to attend a course. We will support her in any way we can so she can attend Makaton training. All standard training and qualifications are up to date.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITES

Topic

All the children have shown steady progress in their development through the Foundation Phase, by joining in with musical activities, craft making, joining in group games, exploring, experimenting with materials and objects. Children gained new knowledge and developed their skills through free play and focus activities, indoors and outdoors and through topics such as Shops, Space, Story book characters, Farm and Mini beasts. The children also gained knowledge while participating in their own festivals such as St David's day, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and also celebrated other cultural events such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and Burns supper. At the end of the year children take home a keepsake book that shows developmental progress, photos on activities children have participated in and their art work.

Local amenities

Children are naturally curious and interested in the world around them, and enjoy exploring and investigating therefore as part of our topic shops children enjoyed visiting our local amenities in Overton which included the Post Office, Café, Hairdressers, Vets, Library, Butchers, Chemist, Doctors surgery and Church. The children discovered different buildings and going inside to discover what services they had to offer. They discussed their own experiences, one child as we went into the library said "books there" another said "I watch TV in there" but after discussion it was that he got DVDs from there and watches them at home on his TV. As we passed the Doctors surgery one child said "I play with toys there". It is important that children have an understanding of our local amenities and what role they have in our community as they then take those experiences into role play, create scenarios and problem solve.

Christmas show

Every year the staff, committee and children work hard to put on a Christmas show and this year our Christmas show was Follow the Star. The children joined in with dancing and singing songs. Songs, rhymes and music are an essential tool for young children to become involved in as it stimulates both sides of the brain. It develops communication skills as children learn how language is constructed and assists with the acquisition of language. The children also learn to balance and co-ordinate their bodies through dancing joining in with action songs. We hope that parents/carers will assist their children develop those skills at home through singing songs and rhymes. Moving forward next year our intention is to send home with your children words to songs we are learning so you as parents/carers can reinforce this learning at home.

Again, we supported our local sunflower group who raise money to support children with learning difficulties by encouraging all families to meet after the show at Overton Play Park to see Father Christmas arrive in a fire engine and join in with the fun activities organised by the sunflower committee. This was enjoyed by everyone who attended. Thank you to everyone who helped.

Sponsored Walk

As part of our farm topic we organised a sponsored walk to our local farm Home Farm. We risk assessed the route and the Farm before commencing the walk from Overton Playcentre to the Home Farm. The route planned avoided main roads and walking through countryside. It was a 2 mile walk which was a challenge for our Playgroup children but to break the walk and make it a more enjoyable the children were given a animal lotto card and had to find all the animals and tokens on the way. It was a very hot day but most of the route was shaded by trees and we had a water stop on the way. The children were rewarded with a medal and certificate for their great achievement at the finishing line. It didn't finish their as we had our pack lunches in a lovely area that Home Farm set up for us with shade from the sun. The children had a fantastic time looking at the enclosures to find real life animals this time. Parents had commented on Facebook what a fantastic day they had with their children. We raised approx. £650 in sponsor money. This outing was such a success for several reasons as well as being enjoyed by all, it fundraised, gave the children a sense of self achievement, developed children's stamina, co-operation, knowledge of farm animals and nature, counting and matching skills with lotto boards and much more. We hope to do this outing again next year as it was such a success and we would like to thank Tim Rosselli for letting us walk through his land and Alison and Alan for making us so welcome at Homes Farm.

Animals visit Playgroup

In February, we had a visit from Ryan a local farmer who brought two lambs in for the children to feed. The children sat on bales of straw and waited patiently for their turn to feed the lambs. Thank you to Charlotte for organizing this. Charlotte then further enhanced the children's learning experience by mimicking milking a cow using rubber gloves and coloured white water. An experience that the children really enjoyed and developed their manipulative skills and knowledge and understanding of where milk comes from. This was not the only animals the children had the opportunity to meet as in March, Anwen Davies and Kevin from a local animal rescue centre brought in a rabbit, tortoise, kitten and an owl for the children to feed and explore. Some children were anxious and unsure of the animals to begin with whereas others showed confidence from the onset but by the end of the session all the children gained confidence to get close to the animals and for those who were less confident they did eventually pat and feed the animals. This has given children the opportunity to get up close to the animals, gain confidence at their own pace and gave them knowledge on how to care for them, how to hold them and more. As a thank you the children donated animal food to the rescue. We continue to care for our own pet guinea pig Louie who the children love. Unfortunately, he lost his best friend Fudge in June. As with previous years we also had our chicks, that we incubate in our own incubator and eventually have the chicks hatch. The children observe and interact with each stage of this process and this year some children were lucky enough to actually see one of the chicks hatching which is an incredible experience for them. Nicky also candled the eggs so that the children could see the baby chicks whilst they were still in the eggs. As an extra bonus this year we also had duck eggs which we also incubated and we ended up with 4 ducklings. As the ducklings got a little older we would take them outside into our 'pond' and the children would get to interact with them, we'd also sing songs such as '4 little ducks went swimming one day'. Both were wonderful experiences for the children and thank you to Nicky for all her hard work organizing and caring for the babies!

Snacks

Snacks help stabilise energy levels until the next meal. Because children's eating habits are largely determined by age two, we play an important role in teaching good nutrition to young children. To drink children, have a choice between milk or water. To eat we offer a wide range of snacks per week that include breads, cereal, fruit and vegetables. We also think it is important for children to taste different foods that they may not be accustomed to therefore encourage children to try different foods from around the world. This year the children joined in with celebrations for Chinese New Year and tasted noodles for snack which all the children enjoyed and asked to have noodles for snack again which we did. We celebrated Diwali with the children sitting down and listening to the story of Rama and Sita through a shadow show. They then followed candles to an Indian banquet and tasted samosas, rice, korma curry, Tikka masala, onion bajejes and naan bread. The children enjoyed the shadow show, getting dressed up in tunics and saris but most children did not enjoy the Indian takeaway, however they all had the opportunity to try something different. Parents commented that it was nice for their children to try the food that they hadn't tried before as others said their children had tasted Indian food but disliked it but were only too happy to have their child try it again in the hope that they would eat it with their friends. We also celebrated Burns supper by having haggis neaps and tatties which again was liked by some and not others. As children grow their taste buds change therefore we will continue to give children opportunities to taste new foods as the more variety of foods they are exposed to the more accustomed their taste buds will become.

ESTYN

Due to receiving an excellent ESTYN report in July 2014 we are recognised as being a leading sector practice in promoting an excellent learning environment for 3-4-year olds which led to teachers from around the Wrexham area visiting our setting to gain ideas on how to create an excellent learning environment. We had excellent feedback from teachers who visited and so impressed that they have taken our ideas back to their own classrooms and some teachers revisited with their early years education supervisors. However we continue to remain a good setting with some level of excellence and one area as satisfactory which is Welsh. Reasons for this are lack of confidence by staff to speak welsh. Next steps are staff to take on more Welsh training and to enhance the use of welsh language in the setting by introducing a new phrase or word for an appropriate time in order to learn new Welsh words.

Self-Evaluation Booklet

A new Self-Evaluation booklet has been structured to evaluate how children settle, how much they learn in settings and how the setting can be improved. All non-maintained settings are required to complete this booklet. The prime purpose of self-evaluation is to improve outcomes for children. Self-evaluation is an established part of the improvement planning cycle and is a key management tool for development at all levels. As an annual process, self-evaluation informs strategic and improvement plans, helping settings to focus on their priorities for development.

Self-evaluation is a process, not an event. It is the first, essential step in a cyclical process of bringing about change and improvement. It is based on professional reflection, challenge and support among practitioners. Effective self-evaluation involves taking wide-ranging decisions about actions which result in clear benefits for all children. Most of all, it is about striving for excellence.

At the heart of self-evaluation are three questions:

- > How well are we doing?
- > How do we know?
- > How can we improve things further?

IN THE LAST YEAR WE MADE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

Questionnaire

We devised a questionnaire to gain feedback from parents, carers, children and staff on how we can work together as a team to improve our service and ensure that for all children who attend Overton Playcentre it is a pleasurable, educating and safe secure environment for them to learn and develop happily. All questionnaires returned were happy with Overton Playcentre, Early Education Provision, Child benefited from Early Education, range of activities, communication and visits to local amenities. Only one unhappy with communication and visits to local amenities but never gave a reason however questionnaire did not provide comments box or encouragement for feedback. Questionnaire to be revised for space to write positive or negative feedback comments. With regards to communication staff along with a dedicated committee member intend to make better use of technology in the next year, particularly using a closed group on facebook to regularly communicate with parents backed up with emailed newsletters. Out of 18 questionnaires handed out only half came back. Questions and results from questionnaires; -

How happy are you with Overton Playcentre?



EE only- How happy are you with the Early Education Provision?



3 N/A

EE only- How much has your child (or you) benefitted from accessing Early Entitlement?



3 N/A

How happy are you with the range of activities your child takes part in?



How happy are you with the communication between Home and Playgroup?



1

How happy are you with the variety of outdoor areas visited- park, trips, village amenities?



1

Lots of positive comments received from Thank You cards. Below are two examples;-

Thank you so very much for looking after both my grandchildren so well over the past year. You have such a lovely playgroup and the children have been so happy with you. We will miss you love Elaine,

Thank you for taking so much care of me love Tristan

Child's Interests

We also need to take the children interests into consideration Even very young children have interests. For example, last year the girls in particular would ask to listen and dance to Frozen 'let it go' Through this without realising it the children developed skills such as listed below: -

- Developed co-operate skills by dancing together
- To jump up and down
- To co-ordinate their bodies
- Develop language skills singing along.

For those girls who had not yet developed these skills at the beginning of term, they began to show great interest, such as jumping while dancing to music this resulted in them being able to jump confidently by the end of term and showed developmental improvements in all skills mentioned above. It was not only the girls that took an interest in dancing as some of the boys observed the girls having fun so they also joined in with enthusiasm and also developed those skills. Staff have supported the children's interests and have given them the necessary support, encouragement and praise they needed to continue engaging them in activities of their interest.

Displays

Even though we provide an excellent learning environment taking children's interest into consideration the staff have continued to develop their knowledge to prepare and develop displays that have a purpose and are meaningful to the children's learning. All staff understand the importance of displays and what impact they have on children's learning. Therefore we collectively ensure that they plan displays so that they are interactive with the children in a way that will have an impact on their development, for example the children developed independent skills and a sense of belonging collecting their handprint from the display board outdoors on arrival and placed them on our attendance tree indoors in the little room. The children also learned to count one-to-one correspondence at register time counting how many handprints on the tree.

Behaviour

Good behaviour and discipline are essential to ensure the smooth running of the Playcentre. The foundation is provided for the development of morals and values, whilst advocating acceptable behaviour in children. We recognise that building self-esteem and confidence will encourage positive behaviour as well as encouraging mutual respect, sharing and tolerance. We encourage this through rewarding with praise, stickers and award certificates but most of all we discuss with the children what they are been rewarded for and that they understand what they are rewarded for. Each child is valued as an individual and their feelings and viewpoints will always be considered when planning and running sessions. However, there are times that we need to encourage children to behave appropriately and an example of this is at quiet group times in the little room. Staff discussed rules with the children on how they think they should behave at storytime. Children gave their views and staff displayed a visual reminder on rules on how the children said they should behave at quiet time in the little room.

Free flow from indoors to outdoors

One area in which we lapsed in is the children having a choice to play indoors or outdoors throughout morning sessions The Foundation Phase Framework suggest more free flow outdoors can impact children's development for examples it :-

- Allows children to experiment with their play in natural surroundings

- Gives the children more freedom, variety and choice to develop and learn
- Encourages children to live a healthy, active lifestyle and gain a positive attitude that will last long into their future.

To ensure the children benefit from playing outdoors we have restructured our staff supervision to sustain free flow between indoors and outdoor play. We have devised a staff rota with daily routines that specify who, when, where and what job roles staff will undertake each day. The rota is devised in a way that all staff can support children's learning throughout the daily routine and in all areas but also gives the children opportunities to learn and develop skills in a secure safe environment outdoors as well as indoors.

Staff roles and responsibilities

It is important for staff to take on different roles and responsibilities as each member of staff have their own strengths and weakness but working together as a team in this way balances the knowledge and learning opportunities that the children gain from staff role modelling and scaffolding the children's learning.

It also gives staff opportunities to observe children while they are involved in activities within the continuous provision, indoors, outdoors and within the daily routines. Staff will find out how the children's skills are developing and what they can or not do. Staff give children time for reflection and engage in discussions with them as they allow them to develop their natural curiosity and creativity. They will also be able to gather information on what the children know and understand, as well as their personal preferences. It is important that information gained through the observations are used by staff to understand how the individual child or a group of children learn and that they use the information to plan the next step. As a team, we have worked hard this year to collect information about children's stages of development using a selection of different observational methods and technics. As highlighted in their appraisals as an objective, this year staff have worked hard to develop observation skills that involved looking, seeing, listening and interpreting what the children are doing, learning, practising, sharing, enjoying and many more attributes that have an influence on what level and how the children are learning and developing. Examples of these are shown through photographs, written observations and tick lists. Parents receive a keepsake book at the end of the year showing craft, mark making, discussions and photo's that illustrate the skills their child has learned and developed. We also had positive feedback from Early Years Education Team and our Link teacher Mrs Jo Richards from St Mary's school on how we had gathered a good selection of supporting evidence that impacted on our judgement to assess children at appropriate level. They were so good that Mrs Jo Richards took them to an Early Years Education Teacher training day to share with other link teachers.

We have made tremendous improvements on gathering information on children's interests and stages of development however we need to feed this information into our planning so that expectations are specific for each child. We also need to arrange a more formal meeting with parents so they can give their view on their child's development even although we have an open door policy and regularly discuss with parents verbally about their child's development.

PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT AND MATERIAKLS TO IMPROVE PROVISION

New Fridge

Shelves on existing fridge door had all broken off given little room to store milk, children's lunchboxes and staff snacks therefore it was decided to replace the fridge. It was also decided that fridge was too small and a larger fridge was purchased instead. Unfortunately, we had to dismantle the fridge cupboard in the kitchen to accommodate the new fridge that is free standing now. The new fridge also has a box at the bottom in which we can store more fruit and vegetables now that we are offering more of a variety of snack in afterschool club. This has also had a positive impact on staff time who are now able to purchase fresh snack items in bulk for the week having room to store it to keep fresh. However, when purchasing snack items for the week dates are always checked.

Maintenance

Other maintenance work undertaken at the playcentre in the last year have been the usual risk assessments, fire safety check, electrical part testing, drains unblocked and plumbing to replace two new flexible pipes under sink in children toilet and a new cistern filter in one of the children's toilet and a float cup mechanism in another toilet.

Using Technology

We also purchased two new tablets for staff to take photos of children showing how they have developed new skills. The staff have also created some fantastic photo displays using the picollage app on the tablet of what the children have done at playgroup today or in that week. They are then displayed in the entrance hall so parents/carers can see what their children are learning and how they are developing at their time spent at playcentre. A list of routines, topic with links to foundation phase is also found at the entrance for parent

Technology is becoming an important tool used by Overton Playcentre to keep parents up to date on what is happening or going on at Overton Playcentre. Parents are informed through e-mail and facebook and our new website. Unfortunately we choose the wrong company 1&1 to host our website. Although reviews where good when we choose to run with 1&1 the reviews a year later had become very negative with many other experiencing similar problems such as not been able to log in to manage sight, web page not found on internet, overcharging, one problem occurring and been fixed but they would create another problem in the process. We had no choice but to terminate our contract with 1&1 which has also proven to be difficult but the contract has come to an end. Only when we changed sight we became aware of how little support we had form 1&1 and the fantastic honest support and easy transition we have experienced through swapping over to TSO. Although in the end we had to build the website back up from scratch TSO support cannot be faulted as they have been excellent and good value for money £12.99 a year.

HOW WE CAN IMPROVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Communication

To improve communication between management and staff committee have organised regular meetings with staff to give staff opportunities to raise any concerns they have and to view their opinions on what is needed to improve their job roles and provision. We also intend to buy a large white board to assist communication between staff.

CSSIW Inspection Report

We were inspected by (Care standard Inspectors for Wales (CSSIW) on 7th November 2014 who carried out a baseline inspection on the childcare service we provide and again we have gained an excellent CSSIW inspection report with no recommendations. Full inspection report is on hand for anyone who wishes to read it.

Wrap Around Care

Breakfast club and afterschool club is thriving and continuing to get busier, therefore we are continuing to offer wrap around care to give working parents the opportunity to send their children to Overton Playcentre. Without this service there would be children who would not have the opportunity to attend Overton Playcentre. In July the register shows 48 children who regularly attended wrap around care which 10 of that number attended only holiday clubs, because we are so busy we have had to have more staff working in wrap around care sessions. We have two members of staff until 8:30 am and one more member of staff come in at 8:30 and another at 8:45 to take children over to school. As we have so many children going over to school we have two members of staff go over to school and two member of staff stay behind to look after playgroup children.

Settling in

Again this year children settled quickly into playgroup. Some parents started their children in the summer holidays. This has had an impact on making it easier to settle children in. Reasons for this are children are able to start playgroup with the support of their siblings and also holiday club is not as regimented as our normal playgroup sessions. July showed 47 children on the register.

Children with learning difficulties

We had a child this year with facial palsy that affected his balance and co-ordination. We took advice from hospital notes and planned activities to develop his balance and co-ordination as much as we could. His hearing was also affected by continual fluid in his ear which made hearing more difficult however he did give good eye contact so his communication skills were good considering his difficulties. Staff ensured that he was included checking that we had eye contact before speaking to ensure he understood what was happening or requested from him. He got on well with his peers and showed appropriate development for his age. We will continue to support any child who has learning difficulties and seek out professional advice.

What did you do?

What did you do at Playgroup today?

Well, I sat at the dough table and rolled the dough in my hands.

Lucy said hers was a snake but mine, mine was a worm.

The lady talked about long ones and short ones, and medium sized ones,
and Sarah roiled her dough so long it went right over the edge of the table.
(And nobody said "what are you going to make - a cake would be nice")

Yes, but then what did you do?

I played on the climbing frame and do you know
I can jump off the very top step.

Yes, but did you do anything today ?

Sarah and me went to the paint table.

It was lovely, all gooey and slippery on our hands.

We made lots of pattern with our fingers and elbows.

Sarah had yellow paint and I had red and Mummy, do you know what,
if you mix red paint and yellow paint together it goes ORANGE!

'(And nobody said "what a mess you've made")

Yes, but what else have you done ?

At milk time a big boy pushed me over
and I bumped my head. The lady picked me up and loved me better,
and the boy said "sorry"

And then did you do anything?

The lady sang a new song and I can remember it,
it was about our fingers, thumbs and toes.

But, did you do anything today?

I made lovely trail patterns in the sand
and then Sarah and me had a race to see
who could put the sand in the sand-wheel quickest.

So, what did you do at Playgroup today ?

We sang 'Happy Birthday' to Nicholas
and then the lady read us a story.

But, did you do anything today?

Yes, when the lady said "It's time to tidy up"
I quickly painted you a picture
'cos I knew you'd say.....

"What did you do at playgroup today?"

