

Deganwy Playgroup



Ysgol Deganwy
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Playgroup manager – Lisa Morgan
Registered Charity No. 1182908



Quality of care
annual report
2024/25.

Introduction

Deganwy Playgroup is a long established, ever developing playgroup. We are an English-speaking setting and provide a basic introduction to the Welsh language.

Through our fun and friendly environment, set in a spacious airy facility adjacent to Ysgol Deganwy, Deganwy Playgroup offers children the opportunity to learn new skills to ease the transition into Primary School.

Children can join us after they turn 2 years old until full time school age. Through our Playgroup & Playgroup Plus sessions, the children can develop and have fun with us, until they start full time school in the reception class of whichever primary school they attend.

As a Charitable Trust, we are run by a voluntary committee of trustees made up of elected parents and carers of children who currently or previously attended the Playgroup. The committee & manager employ a dedicated and qualified team of staff who between them, have decades of experience and have given years of service to Playgroup. Both the staff and the committee are proud of the provision that is provided by the organisation, and parents in the local area recognise the reputation that the group has developed over the years.

Our Playgroup setting provides the New Welsh Curriculum; we introduce this education from 3 years old to children below school nursery age. It also provides free education to children who turn three years old before Easter who, due to their date of birth, miss the cut-off for a school nursery place until the following September.

There are also “Playgroup Plus” sessions which offers 2 wrap around care sessions in conjunction with Dosbarth Meithrin/Nursery Class at Ysgol Deganwy.

Children can be dropped off from 8.45am where they will be in our care until 1pm when they will be collected by a teacher or teaching assistant if attending Ysgol Deganwy and taken up to their class and signed in by their teacher/teaching assistant. Alternatively, we will collect them at the door from a teacher or TA from school at 11am and care for them until 2.45pm when they are collected by a parent/guardian or signed over to Deganwy Out of School Club at 2.45pm

Playgroup

We started the year with a lower number of play group children averaging 5 per session with Playgroup Plus averaging 10 per Session. But numbers increased quite quickly during the end of the first term, beginning of the second term and by Easter we had a waiting list on some days. We ended the year being full with our maximum capacity of 30 over the lunch times and play group numbers averaging on 18 a morning.

We had our first full year as a Flying Start setting. We had monthly visits from Lauren or a Flying Start Liaison officer to observe Play and Development within the setting.

Each child who is signed up to Flying Start is assessed for speech and language through Flying Start's Wellcomm documents. These are collected termly by a liaison officer and returned with next steps. We also recorded observations and provided photo evidence of learning and play, these were fed into a Flying Start learning and development record which was shared with parents 2 to 3 times during the year depending on when the child started play group, and with school at the end of the academic year.

Due to the number of children (19) being under Flying Start the manager and leader decided that they would train staff on how to complete the Wellcomm speech and language assessments.

Also, due to each child having a learning and development record which we are also required to do for three-year funded children the total paperwork required had technically doubled from the previous year.

In Playgroup we deliver the New Welsh Curriculum for three-year funded qualifying children. All staff have notebooks and, all staff can observe children and their interactions with other children & staff members. These observation notebooks were collected by the manager approximately every month. The Manager/Playleader then transferred the information in the notebooks onto digital observation sheets in the children's files on the computer. With this information gathering done, the manager was able to then once a term, e-mail parents with copies of these observation sheets and photographs of their child at play.

All the Playgroup children also had a digital assessment booklet template provided by the Early Years team. This had two points of entry, an assessment done at the beginning of their funding and a further assessment done at the end of the academic year. We also used these observations and the assessment booklets for all the Playgroup children even those not three year funded as it was a good source of recording progress and 'wow' moments and feeding back to parents is the same for all! The response to the emails being sent home more periodically with information on their child's progress was a big hit with parents, we received lots of positive comments and feedback.

Through the New Welsh Curriculum, we have cut back on the number of focused based activities and concentrated on play to incorporate more learning opportunities through open-ended and uninterrupted play. We have been replenishing and adding to our stock of loose parts, adapted or repurposed equipment we already have to enhance this play and to encourage progress and development. We have been making a conscious effort to incorporate children's interests and following children's lead in play and requests for equipment and resources.

We found this year when we went to separate the group from Playgroup and Playgroup Plus children at registration periods that some of the younger children wanted to be with the older children and some of the quieter older children wanted to be with the younger children. We were able to facilitate this by splitting the group into two, not necessarily older and younger but as groups and emotions dictated. The children were in a smaller group and still did respond well at register.

With the support of Lisa Davis from Early Years Language and Development, Laura was nominated as our language pioneer. She prepared activities based around speech and language to share via e-mail and Facebook with parents to use at home and to use in group. She took a lot of inspiration from BBC's tiny happy people and each half term we had a language development skill, for example: bubble blowing activities to practise mouth shapes for Ps and Bs. For the older children during latter part of the year we did clapping syllables for their names. This helps children breakdown bigger words into smaller parts. Laura also put together language baskets to follow topics and themes: Diwali, farm, colours, Christmas and Easter.

We had SALT supporting two children within the setting one remotely by sharing documents and the other one having a member of their staff supporting the child once a week in our setting.

Playgroup Plus

This year Playgroup plus started well, with the mornings being busier than the afternoons, until some of the playgroup children were able extended to wrap around, that really boosted our numbers.

Generally, it is common for the child numbers in Playgroup Plus to build steadily throughout the year, due to parents wishing to familiarise their nursery-age children with 8.45am-2.45pm education as they get ready to begin school full-time the following year. In this respect we work in partnership with Ysgol Deganwy, whose teachers support our service.

We are also fortunate that the transfer of the children from Ysgol Deganwy's Nursery class into Playgroup Plus can happen seamlessly due to our location.

The continuation of the Welsh Governments 30-hour Childcare offer was a huge bonus to the group financially as parents who qualified increased the number of sessions their children attended, we also welcomed new children into Deganwy Playgroup on this scheme. As we have always kept our fees as low as possible to make us affordable to all, parents didn't have to pay any top up fees to us, their full fees were covered from the offer.

By the end of the year, we were averaging 12x PG+ AM children & 10x PG+ PM and 16x Playgroup children extending sessions During the week.

The Employed Staff and the Voluntary Committee of trustees

The Playgroup is fortunate to have a high level of commitment and dedication from its team of permanent staff, who work well as a team and care deeply about their place of work and the provision it provides. The staff continually develop themselves and are supported in their roles by committee members. Staff are appraised at least annually, and more regularly in staff review meetings.

The voluntary committee of trustees: With Chair re-standing from last year, new Treasurer appointed as other stepped down, secretary re-standing and 2 new members joining 1 remaining. All staff are trustees. We have 3 Trustee meetings a year and an Annual General Meeting.

During The final supervision in May, one member of staff informed manager that she wanted to step back from contracted hours but would like to stay on as bank staff. This would enable her to have more flexibility with her other job. Therefore, the procedure was followed for recruitment with an advert going on Indeed and candidates being assessed prior to the interview process.

Then later another member of staff informed the manager that she would not be returning to Playgroup in September, and this was due to family commitments. We were fortunate to already have had an advert placed so were looking for two new qualified members of staff to join our team rather than 1. The Manager went through process of reviewing candidates CV'S and cover letters, with 4 candidates standing out. The Manager then invited two candidates in for informal meeting prior to interview if deemed suitable. The two candidates invited in were both successful and continued to the interview process. One of these candidates was recruited with references and DBS check in place prior to their start in September. After a discussion with committee chair, administrator and leader regarding the 2nd candidate's unsuitability it was decided to re advertise for the second member of staff in the new academic year. Remaining staff kindly volunteered to cover hours for the second post on a temporary basis until a new member of staff was employed.

Grants

For the Small Capital Grant Playgroup applied for Interior of the Playgroup building to be repainted. This benefited not only playgroup, but all users of the building. DOSC successfully applied the previous year and used the grant money to complete ground works in the garden, to replace the worn away grass to improve storage with new sheds one for each group.

We also had 2 smaller grants one of which was spent on craft supplies and a new play kitchen. The other was a named grant to go towards staff retention.

Staffing qualifications and training

Current staffing as follows:

Manager: Lisa (level 4 + ILM level 5)

Playleader: Emily (level 3)

Supervisor/acting up Playleader: Nerys (level 3)
Laura: Playworker (level 3)
Jo B: Admin/Playworker (level 2)
Jo L: Playworker (level 2)
Angela: Playworker (level 2)
Rachael: Playworker (level 3)
Becky: Playworker (level 2)
Sara: Playworker (level 3)

Staff have also had ongoing support with Welsh language from Emily, who is able to share more Welsh language on topics we are following and support staffs' Welsh language development.

Following on from Laura's Elklan Language & Speech training course last year. Laura was named as our language ambassador for the setting and has been very proactive to support the children's language skills, as mentioned above.

Staff have completed any mandatory training that has arisen if due, for example: fire safety and manual handling, health and safety and risk assessment, food safety level 2, first aid and infection prevention.

Most staff have completed the new comprehensive Safeguarding training, with 2 waiting for dates to attend in the new academic year. 3 staff needed to update their DBS this year. And 1 new member of staff.

Funded Places & pricing

The group receives funding for eligible playgroup children under the 3-Year Funded Children scheme and the 30-Hour Childcare Offer. The setting has now completed its first full year as a Flying Start setting, providing funded places for qualifying children.

Following a budget review for the coming year(s) by the Chair, Administrator, and Manager — and in light of rising costs and an increase in rent — the Committee Chair and Trustees voted to increase the fees. This adjustment will bring them in line with the current funded rates

Education & Resources

Children are educated using the New Welsh Curriculum. We use the Early Years templates of Observation sheets, Assessment booklets & a baseline sheet for the new curriculum as guided by the early years. All Playgroup children, whether 3 Year Funded or Flying Start have received termly emails with observations and photographs of their child at play doing various activities. We also completed the Early Years Assessment Booklet and/or Flying Start Learning & Development as mentioned above. Which has two points of entry at the beginning of three-year funding and at the end of the academic year. As mentioned, the feedback for these emails parents received termly

has been very positive. All parents of PG+ children have received termly photos through What my child's been up to in Group and a termly review in 2024 to 2025.

Staff support each child's individual learning needs by adapting play and learning opportunities to suit their stage of development. Children are offered plenty of choice during group sessions, and this year we have observed that they particularly enjoy using open-ended loose parts creatively in art, role play, and outdoor free play.

Children are supported with their next steps to promote ongoing learning and development. We have also shared language development activities with parents through our Facebook page, and have received very positive feedback, with several parents engaging in these activities at home.

The playgroup regularly invests in new equipment and resources to ensure that children experience a broad and varied range of learning opportunities, and that staff have everything they need to support high-quality practice. We continue to incorporate natural materials into play, using items such as shells, pine cones, sheep wool packaging, herbs, fruit, and vegetables to enrich sensory and imaginative experiences.

This year, we received additional resources through the Flying Start programme following staff attendance at fairs and training events. These included large puppets, books, and wooden equipment to enhance our role-play kitchen and malleable play areas. We also received a selection of forest school resources to support learning and exploration in our outdoor area.

This year, we ran a woodwork project with our Committee Chair who is a volunteer playworker on most Mondays in group. He and staff supporting the children to make two bird boxes. During this activity, the children were introduced to simple woodworking skills through one-to-one support. They were very excited to complete their bird boxes and later see them displayed in the garden. Although we haven't had any birds nesting in them this year, the children took great pride in their work and enjoyed the process of creating something lasting for the outdoor area.

Snack is provided solely by the setting, with full consideration given to any allergies or dietary requirements. We operate a rolling snack time, allowing children to choose when to have their snack so that their play is not interrupted. Snack menus are regularly updated to reflect children's preferences, seasonal produce, and current topics. All snacks are balanced and follow healthy eating guidelines, and every child is offered a drink during this time.

For children staying for lunch, meals are served on plates, and children sit at tables with a member of staff who eats with them and helps when needed. We actively encourage recycling after lunch, and staff on kitchen duty return any uneaten food to lunch bags or boxes so that parents can see what their child has eaten.

Parents have been reminded that we are a **nut-free setting**, as both staff and children have nut allergies. We take care to ensure that children with allergies or intolerances are not seated next to others who may have food items that could cause cross-contamination.

Developing the setting

Target 1: Welsh Language content.

We continued using resources from Early Years such as signage for the setting.

Camau Training: two members of staff on Level 3 and then another finishing off level 1.

Twinkl: using resources to support activities and experiences.

Utilising Emily our play leader and Jack committee chair and volunteer who are both experienced Welsh speakers to use Welsh in the group and encourage staff and children.

To reintroduce language flowers.

The language flowers were very useful for staff in group following topics and themes of interest with simple key words and phrases to use with the children. We have found that because these topics aren't running all the time that retention of the language for staff isn't as expected, this is something to work on in the future.

Target 2: In house training with staff adding a refresh of a policy and procedures.

During staff meetings, manager revisited one of our policies to talk through and possibly review.

We covered Health and Safety policy, Medication policy with us wanting to add the provision to provide liquid paracetamol for temperatures following the guidance given by CIW.

The Fire and Evacuation policy and procedure was also reviewed with the provision to add a safe room to our current reverse/emergency drill in the next academic year.

We found this beneficial to revisit policies as a good refresher of knowledge for staff who've been in the setting for a while. As new members of staff are asked to read our policies as part of their induction process. We will be continuing to review policies as part of our staff meetings.

Target 3: Recording children's voice.

As a setting we feel that we provide the children with lots of choice with resources and play while in the setting. We also take children's views into account with our timing of activities and topics. We also engage in lots of dynamic planning in the moment following children's lead on their interests. Our target with this was to document shared ideas and planning in the moment onto the planning sheets.

This was partially successful as we have managed to document some shared ideas in staff meetings. Some notes were made on the planning sheet but due to time constraint this wasn't always practical. This was mentioned to our flying start tutor who visits the setting each month. She gave feedback saying that she believes and observes the children having lots of choice, that we do take their interests into account. We will continue to add dynamic planning moments and continue to incorporate the children's likes and preferences and suggestions into our planning meetings in the future.

Target 4: Outdoor Playhouse repaint and refresh.

We wanted to repaint the Playhouse and the old mud kitchen and refresh the Playhouse interior with either carpet or vinyl flooring. We also wanted to install better storage system in the shed as we have done in the storeroom so we could free up space in the Playhouse as this is also used for storing. We were expecting to use grant money for this.

However, this target wasn't reached this year due to funding being applied for replacing the soft surface outside which had shrunk away from edges due to the hot summer months. This took preference due to health and safety. This will be completed in the new academic year following acceptance of grant from early years education.

Provision of information sharing and policies and procedures.

Parents/carers receive regular 'What's On' Newsletters to keep them informed of current themes, upcoming events etc which have all been emailed to the parents along with any other relevant information. As mentioned above, regular emails have been sent with child observations, photographs and assessment booklet and the new Flying Start Wellcomm score sheets and Learning & Development booklet for play group or termly reviews for play group plus children.

The web site is regularly updated to act as the "formal" face of the group, with a link to the Playgroups Parent Information Pack, Policies and procedures and links to 3-year funding & 30-hour childcare offer & Flying Start scheme. The Playgroup Manager also regularly updates parents via Deganwy Playgroup's Facebook feed which has a good parent following.

A full review and update of all our Policies & Procedures is a task handled by the Playgroup manager with assistance from the admin assistant, who will introduce new policies where required and keep updating those existing policies that require amending. Copies of any Policy or Procedure are available to parents on request if they are not already on the website.

This year a fees policy was drawn up by our chairman in regard to overdue payments and what procedure to follow. This was shared with parents after being passed by our committee of trustees.

Feedback

Towards the end of each school year, questionnaires are distributed to parents to allow for parents to feed back their thoughts in a manner that can be standardised and measured. At around the same time and during a normal session, staff will ask simple questions to the children about what they think about Playgroup.

Below are some of the comments we received from the children:

“I like running in the garden” -Ernie

“I like playing with my friend” – Erin

“I like auntie Nerys's stories” – Oscar

Parent survey results 2024 2025.

56 surveys sent. 17 received.

Q1) How Satisfied are you with care?

Very satisfied	16
Satisfied	1
Neither	0
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0

Q2) Is your child happy at group?

Always	13
Most of the time	4
Sometimes	0
Rarely	0
Never	0

Q3) Are staff approachable and responsive?

Always	17
Most of the time	0
Sometimes	0
Rarely	0
Never	0

Q4) How satisfied are you with educational activities?

Very satisfied	17
Satisfied	0
Neither	0
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0

Q5) Is your child making progress?

Yes	16
To some extent	1
Not sure	0
No	0

Q6) Are activities appropriate?

Yes	17
Some what	0
No	0

Q7) How well does Deganwy Playgroup support children's personal, social and emotional development?

Very well	17
not very well	0
Poorly	0

Q8) How well informed are you about your child's progress?

Very well	13
Satisfactory	4
Not well	0
Not at all	0

Q9) How do you receive updates? Mark all that apply.

Verbally at collection or drop off	16
What's on newsletters	4
Parent meetings	4
Emails	6
Written including WhatsApp and Facebook	8

Parents comments from survey and other feedback form meetings, emails and cards:

What do you think PG does well

- Very friendly staff, always happy
 - Friendly and approachable staff, good social interactions
 - Thank you for looking after her so well
 - Warm and loving care, feel very confident and happy leaving her with you.
 - Treats daughter as an individual
 - Good at communicating if there is an incident. Supporting parents with any behaviour of child.
 - Provides a safe environment with good structure whilst still allowing the children to lead their own play.
 - Very friendly, enthusiastic staff. Very helpful and supportive. Lots of feedback regarding session at pick up.
- Everything. He loves playgroup and has never had an issue going in.
- Does well in fostering inclusion, offering support not only for the children but also to the families and offer support to each child based on their needs.
- Structure, siarad cymraeg, communication. I have been impressed with the detail of reporting. Catering for his needs and offering support during a difficult time of investigation and diagnosis
- Welcomes every child in the morning with a big smile. lots of crafts and activities, outdoor play and variety of activities. Oscars been very happy and has learnt a lot.
- Staff are friendly and clearly have a genuine approach with how they work and support the children. Staff are professional and responsive, I'm very happy.

Areas to improve:

- Smaller pieced jigsaws
- None
- More pictures sent through
- I don't believe anything from what I've seen
- I can't think of anything they haven't done well.

Additional comments or Suggestions:

- Maybe more tips for parents to try at home to ensure educational progress
- Consider using seesaw like school.
- No suggestions just Thank you for looking after Oscar so well, he really does love attending playgroup.
- Thank you so much for helping and teaching our son over the last 2 years. As a family we appreciate everything you all do!
- Thank you for everything and thanks for your dedication and the positive impact you've had on Mihnea's well being and for us all as a family.
- Nancy loves playgroup and she will miss all the aunties!! and loved whilst in your care. I can't believe we're done for playgroup now. I can't thank you all enough for making me feel that my children are safe

-He's happy when he comes home from playgroup, he has so much fun he's a little naughty as he wants longer. His words and speaking improved a lot and has become more confident mixing with other children.

-I have always been confident that my children are well cared for in pg. They have been amazing over the years! We will miss you all in September.

-He has thoroughly enjoyed his time at PG and will miss all the aunties when he goes to school in Sept.