A report on

Hope Green Nursery

Wrexham Road
Penyffordd
Nr Chester
CH4 0HT

Date of inspection: April 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

About Hope Green Nursery

Name of setting	Hope Green Nursery
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Sally Johnstone
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Lauren Spicer, Hannah Orsler, Laura Parker, Jill Cronin, Sally Johnstone
Number of places	36
Age range of children	Birth to five years old
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	18
Number of children who receive funding for early education	5
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday – 7.30am to 6.00pm
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service is not making a significant effort to promote the use of Welsh language and culture
Date of previous CIW inspection	October 2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection	07/02/2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	01/04/2025

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Well-being	**Good**
Learning **(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	**Good**
Care and development	**Adequate**
Teaching and assessment **(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	**Good**
Environment	**Adequate**
Leadership and management	**Adequate**

Non-compliance

We notified the provider that the setting was not compliant with the Regulations, a notice was not issued, but these are identified as areas for improvement, and the RP/RI must address these.

Recommendations

R1 Develop practitioners' Welsh language skills

R2 Improve the Registered Person's understanding of their roles and responsibilities

R3 Strengthen policies, procedures and documentation to ensure that they include the most up to date guidance and reflect the practices at the setting

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Nearly all children make confident choices and decisions about how they spend their time at the setting. Children of all ages choose where and what they want to play with. They move freely between the many activities on offer to them in their individual play spaces, following their own interests. Nearly all children express themselves confidently and know that their wants, needs and moods will be listened to. For instance, babies use physical gestures to indicate to practitioners what they want, such as help to put on their bib, which practitioners respond to instantly and warmly.

Nearly all children are very happy and relaxed and enjoy their time at the nursery. They are comfortable in their surroundings and are familiar with the daily routines, which helps them feel settled and confident. Those who are quiet or a little upset during the day are well supported by practitioners and quickly join in the activities on offer to them. Nearly all children behave extremely well and are very polite. Children say 'please' and 'thank you' to each other and practitioners independently. They enjoy receiving praise from practitioners for good manners and being kind and helpful, which supports them to feel happy and valued.

Nearly all children develop positive and healthy relationships with their friends and practitioners, whom they approach for support. For example, they comfort each other and show genuine care and concern for each other's feelings. Children play collaboratively with practitioners, and their friends. For instance, while playing eye spy they take turns and share in the joy when they or their friends correctly guess the answer.

Nearly all children are thoroughly engaged in their play and learning. They benefit from a good variety of play opportunities, which helps them to develop, learn and use their imagination. Children are motivated to follow their own interests and engage in play suitable to their development. For example, babies and toddlers actively participate in outdoor chalking activities, imitating the practitioner when making marks on the ground.

Nearly all children are beginning to develop a wide range of skills as they play and engage in the routines of the setting. They have worthwhile opportunities to develop their independent skills, which enables them to complete tasks by themselves. Older children access the toilet and wash and dry their hands independently. At mealtimes, children of all ages competently feed themselves and older children pour their own milk.

Learning (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Good

Most children make good progress in their learning from the individual starting points.

Most children develop their oracy skills highly effectively and use a wide range of vocabulary in their play. They enjoy playing collaboratively alongside their friends, taking on roles such as making tea in the home role play area. Most children enjoy looking at books, they turn pages correctly. They enjoy stories that are read to them by practitioners and listen to them attentively. Most children are beginning to recognise their own names, and a minority recognise those of their friends, for example when collecting their named water bottles at snack time. Most children use a range of mark-making equipment with increasing dexterity and confidence. For example, they draw detailed pictures of fairies they have captured in their imaginative play. A few children count to 3 in Welsh and greet their friends when prompted. However, most children's Welsh language skills are underdeveloped.

Most children make good progress in their mathematical development. They enjoy joining in singing a range of number songs and rhymes. Many children use a range of mathematical vocabulary in their play and enjoy participating in practical activities where they explore shape, space and measure things they have built and found in the environment.

Most children develop their creative skills appropriately. For example, they carefully consider which collage materials to select when making pictures. Many children use their imagination creatively in their play. They show delight and joy at catching fairies which they create using a mirror to reflect lights across the ceiling.

Many children actively explore ways to solve problems and tasks. For example, they experiment with different ways of placing wooden planks when creating an obstacle course to walk along. Most children develop their physical skills well, in particular their fine motor skills. They handle small tools such as glue sticks, paintbrushes and scissors with increasing precision. Nearly all children develop their core strength and balance well which helps them

to develop sound and secure physical skills. They balance when walking along an obstacle course and use their outstretched arms to balance themselves effectively.

Most children develop their digital skills suitably through a wide range of resources available to them. They use digital devices to extend their play, such as talking on the telephone to place pizza orders and direct remote-control cars around obstacles skilfully.

Care and development: Adequate

Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. The setting has a range of policies and procedures in place to support them in their roles. However, some of these do not fully reflect the practices followed by practitioners. For example, the nappy changing policy specifies that children have their nappy changed by their assigned key worker. However, this practice was not followed. Practitioners complete a range of relevant records, for example accidents and incidents. There are suitable systems for the recording and administration of medication. However, practitioners do not always complete these records in full or ensure that all required records are suitably maintained and available to view in a timely manner. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action. Practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities, and are generally cautious when dealing with any safeguarding matters. They are confident in the steps to take if they have concerns and have a suitable understanding of the procedures to be followed. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners follow and promote suitable hygiene practices. For example, they consistently wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when undertaking key tasks, such as when changing children's nappies and use antibacterial gel following wiping individual children's noses, reducing the spread of infection. Children of all ages either use wet-wipes or wash their hands before mealtimes and when using the toilet, embedding good hygiene routines. Practitioners offer a range of healthy and well-balanced snacks and meals, which are freshly prepared on site. Additionally, children are given access to water throughout the day, which is provided in their individual bottles. Practitioners ensure that mealtimes are relaxed, social and enjoyable experiences, where opportunities for children to talk about their day are encouraged. There are suitable systems to manage allergies, intolerances and personal preferences.

Practitioners interact extremely well with children and build positive relationships with them. They act as good role models, speaking with each other and with the children respectfully. Practitioners are warm, kind and patient, and offer reassurance to children when needed. They are attuned to the children's needs and can identify when they are feeling unsettled or require additional comfort, implementing strategies to support them effectively. For example, practitioners skilfully distract and entertain younger children if they become upset, meaning that they calm down quickly and settle back to what they were doing seamlessly. Practitioners implement the behaviour policy well. They use a positive approach to guide children to behave as expected.

Practitioners know the children well. They carry out useful observations, which support their understanding of each child's individual needs. They use this information appropriately

when planning experiences and to support children's next steps in their development. Practitioners support children with additional learning needs suitably. They seek beneficial advice and guidance from professionals and implement to ensure that children's needs are appropriately met. However, the Additional Learning Needs policy does not incorporate the most current legislation and guidance, nor does it accurately reflect the available services.

Teaching and assessment (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Good

Practitioners plan a range of activities and experiences that meet children's needs appropriately. They ensure that there are suitable opportunities for children to make choices around where they play and who they play with. Practitioners know their children well and have a good understanding of child development and the importance of play. They offer children time to explore their environment and follow their interests both indoors and outdoors.

Practitioners are highly effective language and behaviour role models and develop children's communication skills successfully. They encourage children to speak kindly to others as they play. Practitioners talk to children about things that are important to them and are of mutual interest, for example discussing what they did at home to celebrate Mother's Day. They ask questions to prompt children's thinking well, such as how to use a spirit level to ensure that their wooden block structure is straight. They respond to children's interests skilfully and respond positively to their requests to engage in imaginative play. Practitioners use these experiences as beneficial opportunities to further extend children's play and learning.

Practitioners provide rich opportunities for children to look at books and photographs and talk about the activities they have experienced in the past. These experiences provide children with a language rich environment and is a strength of the setting. However, overall practitioners' Welsh language skills are underdeveloped. As a result, there is very little Welsh used during the session. This has a negative impact on the development of children's Welsh oracy skills.

Practitioners are beginning to take good notice of opportunities to extend children's learning as they play. For example, they model mathematical language as they play alongside children and introduce resources to extend this learning further, such as introducing the concept of more and less when playing with puppets in the reading corner.

Practitioners promote the cultural heritage of Wales suitably by celebrating National events such as St David's Day where they provide children with opportunities to make soup and dress in national costumes and take walks around their local landmarks. They plan suitable opportunities for children to learn about religious festivals and cultures of the children of the setting. However, practitioners do not plan well enough for children to gain a wider understanding of the diversity found within the Wales and the families who live there.

Practitioners are beginning to respond to children's interest in their planning well. They capture useful information around what children are interested in and use this as a springboard to plan future activities and learning experiences. For example, following children's fascinations in finding snails in the outdoor area, practitioners plan activities for

children to find out more about snails, what they eat and how they move. This helps children to be more involved and show a greater interest in their learning.

Practitioners complete useful observations and assessments of children's learning and skills. These help them to build a picture of a child and what is important to them. Practitioners use this information to inform their planning or identify children who may need additional support well. These observations are beginning to give practitioners valuable information that helps them to see the progress in learning and skills that children make over time at the setting. The setting shares this information alongside photographs of the daily activities with parents through the settings media platform.

The outdoor environment provides good opportunities for children to develop a sense of awe and wonder about nature. For example, practitioners provide children with valuable opportunities to learn about how their food grows with visits to the allotment, where children harvest vegetables for cooking and observe lambs and goats in nearby fields. Practitioners make good use of the outdoor space to develop children's physical skills and give the children the confidence to try new things and take managed risks as they play.

Environment: Adequate

Leaders endeavour to provide children with a learning and play environment that is both safe and secure. They accurately record the arrival and departure times of visitors, children, and practitioners. However, they do not record when the registered person visits the children during the day. Leaders ensure that the environment both indoors and outdoors is clean and extremely well maintained. In general, leaders put appropriate measures in place to maintain the safety of the environment. This includes providing practitioners with a range of written risk assessments to guide them in their practices. In addition, they carry out regular fire drills, ensuring staff and children know what to do in the event of a fire. However, leaders do not ensure that required safety checks and mandatory records, for example the record keeping of fire and smoke alarm tests, are completed in a timely manner or maintained well enough. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

The environment offers beneficial facilities to care for children. All play spaces are equipped with high quality and suitably sized furniture for the varying ages of children. The layout of the play space supports children to move around freely in their designated areas. Older children access the bathroom independently, as it is situated in their designated play space. Nappy changing facilities are accessible and well equipped. Younger children rest during the day either in a cot, pram or on sleep mats and individual bed linen is provided for children. During dry and fine weather, babies are placed to sleep in prams outdoors in the fresh air. Staff closely monitor sleeping babies and children. Leaders have undertaken a range of alterations to enhance the facilities for children. For example, a large hut has been erected in the children's outdoor area to enable access to this space in all weathers.

Leaders provide a wide range of resources and toys that are of good quality, interesting, and promote curiosity. Natural, recycled and re-purposed items are used to enhance the environment. For example, plastic crates and wooden decking slats are used to create a low-level walking beam, enhancing children's play experiences. Opportunities for real life

experiences are created by using resources such as stainless-steel pots, pans and vegetables from the on-site allotment, which are placed in the mud kitchen. Various shells, leaves, sticks and pinecones are accessible to children and are included in activities, promoting creativity and curiosity. Resources are organised in concealed boxes and open baskets with pictorial signs, on low level shelving units, so that they are easily accessible to children. Practitioners create displays indoors, which capture children's experiences via photographs and celebrate their artwork, promoting a sense of belonging.

The extensive outdoor environment provides numerous enriching play opportunities and experiences for children to enhance their physical abilities and engage in imaginative play. Furthermore, it allows them to interact with nature, as the space is surrounded by captivating views of the adjacent fields. There is a suitable range of large equipment to develop children's gross-motor skills, such as ride along bikes, a low-level climbing frame and slide. A low-level secured fence and mature greenery, along with close supervision, ensure the safety of children when they play.

Leadership and management: Adequate

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting to provide a welcoming, engaging provision, where children feel happy and develop a strong sense of belonging. This is shared with staff, parents and carers well.

The setting makes good use of external advice from the local authority which has helped them to adjust their practice to better reflect the Curriculum for Wales. This is at an early stage of development. They use this advice alongside views from parents and carers to help them in self-evaluation processes. This helps leaders to better reflect on what is working well and what needs improving. Where leaders identify areas for improvement, they produce useful action plans to address these areas swiftly. However, generally, leaders do not have a good understanding of the strengths and areas of improvement across the whole setting. As a result, they are often too generous in their evaluations and do not identify important areas that need addressing.

Leaders offer practitioners appropriate opportunities for them to develop their skills and knowledge. This helps them to develop within their roles. Practitioners access suitable training on the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales, which has helped them to make changes to the environment and how they plan. However, leaders do not have a clear enough plan of how they will develop practitioners' Welsh language skills over time.

Leaders use grant funding well to improve the outdoor environment and resources. They use this to make valuable improvements to the outdoor environment to incorporate greater opportunities for children to develop their physical skills and provide space for small groups to focus on their language and digital skills.

There is a clear statement of purpose providing an accurate picture of the setting. The setting has a suitable range of policies and procedures. However, leaders do not ensure that these are reviewed regularly enough. As a result, policies do not always reflect current guidance, practices or frameworks. This results in practitioners not receiving the most up to date information to help them be effective in their roles.

Leaders follow effective recruitment processes and ensure that all practitioners have a helpful induction. Leaders carry out regular supervision and appraisal meetings with most staff. This leads to agreed targets for improvement, which link suitably to the settings priority areas. However, at times these are often too casual in nature and do not hold individuals well enough to account.

Leaders have established successful partnerships that contribute well to children's learning and development. The setting has effective links with the local school. Prior to starting leaders arrange visits to the school to help them become familiar with the building and for teachers visit the setting to introduce themselves. This helps children to transition to their next stage of education successfully. Practitioners build strong relationships with parents and carers. They keep them well informed about the activities they are doing and the progress they are making.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (http://careinspectorate.wales) (www.estyn.gov.wales)

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
Poor	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

© Crown Copyright 2025: This report may be re used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 09/06/2025

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

The table(s) below show the area(s) for priority action and/or those for improvement we have identified.

Summary of Areas for Improvement	Date identified
Children's health and safety may be at risk as the registered person does not maintain records appropriately or accurately.	01/04/25
Children's health and safety may be at risk as the registered person does not ensure all fire safety equipment is regularly tested to ensure the safety of the setting.	01/04/25

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2025.
You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.