Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Estyn
Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Abersychan Under Fives

Brynteg Community Hall
Abersychan
NP4 7BG

Date of inspection: December 2023

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Abersychan Under Fives

Name of setting	Abersychan Under Fives
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Isobel Yacomen
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Andrew Yacomen
Number of places	19
Age range of children	2 years to 5 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	10
Number of children who receive funding for early education	4
Opening days / times	9.15am to 11.45am and 12.15pm to 2.30pm
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	17 October 2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection	March 2016
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	05/12/2023
There are no children with English as an additional language. There is 1 child with identified Additional Learning Needs. There are no children from Welsh speaking homes.	

Summary

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

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Review regularly the fire risk assessment

R2 Share information about children's experiences regularly with parents and carers

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: Excellent

All children have a strong voice and express their wishes, knowing that they will be understood by practitioners who know them well. They make meaningful choices in their play, as they move freely between easily accessible activities that interest them. Nearly all children regularly express their feelings, such as when they are cold and want to go inside or if they want extra fruit at snack time.

Children are well settled and form strong bonds with their peers and practitioners. Nearly all arrive and enter the setting exceptionally happy, smiling and greet practitioners excitedly as they say goodbye to their carer. Nearly all children know and follow the familiar routines of the setting. They show enjoyment in their play and learning, for example when singing songs and listening to Christmas stories.

They enjoy participating purposefully in activities with their peers and practitioners. For example, when playing in the role-play home corner, they play for extended periods of time with their friends, making tea and talking about their favourite cakes and food. Nearly all children naturally use good manners and show kindness to one another when playing with their peers. Nearly all children are developing their independent and personal skills well. They use toilets independently and persevere when putting on their outdoor clothing suits to play outside. All children serve themselves food and water at snack time and dispose of any leftovers in the recycling bin.

All children are developing a good understanding of the importance of good hygiene by washing their hands routinely at key times. Many children access tissues and wipe their nose themselves, disposing of the tissue in the pedal bin and going to wash their hands.

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

There is no report on children's learning. This is because the number of three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection that do not receive funded education elsewhere was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Excellent

Practitioners confidently follow the setting's policies and procedures that are designed to safeguard children and keep them healthy. They are clear regarding their responsibilities in relation to dealing with child protection concerns and any medical needs that children have. They ensure that they meet children's individual needs safely and attend beneficial training that to support them to do this. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners support children effectively during their play. They encourage them to move within the indoor and outdoor play areas freely. Practitioners implement good hygiene routines, such as wearing aprons and gloves when supporting children to use the toilet and to prepare food. They disinfect tables effectively in preparation for snack and are attentive to cleaning up areas after they get messy. Practitioners provide healthy snacks in line with children's individual food needs.

Practitioners manage children's interactions exceptionally well. They praise good behaviour at every opportunity and there is a positive ethos at the centre of what practitioners do. Practitioners implement the behaviour policy in a consistent, fair, and extremely calm manner. For example, they use good eye contact and a calm tone of voice to communicate simple reminders for children to follow the setting's rules. They explain the impact of unwanted behaviour in a clear way, so children understand the expectations of their behaviour. Practitioners implement strategies that support children's behaviour well. They work sensitively with children to find solutions to any issues, and they act promptly to distract children before any issues escalate.

Practitioners implement good systems to identify and support children with additional learning needs. They work with other professionals to effectively put into operation children's individual health care plans, risk assessments and play plans. Practitioners are knowledgeable about the children and provide useful support that helps them develop to the best of their ability. Practitioners maintain detailed records of observations and assessments and continue to develop these to monitor the progress children make in their learning. They use this information to set targets and to plan exciting and stimulating play-based experiences successfully.

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

Practitioners support children's literacy and numeracy skills effectively. For example, they develop children's knowledge of stories and positional language when they encourage them to join in saying familiar words and sentences in the story 'We're going on an elf hunt'. Practitioners ensure that there are suitable mathematical resources throughout the learning environment. For example, number lines for counting and different sizes of blocks for building and exploration help to support children's understanding of mathematical concepts and language.

Practitioners plan effectively for purposeful opportunities for children to make marks throughout the environments. As a result, children are beginning to form the letters of their name correctly. Practitioners provide a broad range of experiences, such as making playdough, planting flowers and vegetables. These activities develop children's physical and problem-solving skills successfully. Practitioners provide effective opportunities to develop children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills through their play such as a telephone in the home corner and torches in the discovery area. Practitioners take beneficial account of spontaneous experiences. For example, when it rains, they encourage children to talk about the weather and put up an umbrella to help them keep dry.

They provide children with access to a range of worthwhile resources in the indoor and outdoor environments and allow children to make choices about where and what they would like to play with. As a result, many children sustain interest in their learning and play for increasing periods of time.

Practitioners have a good understanding of how children learn through play and of the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales. As a result, the children are developing a range of skills successfully. They have developed a responsive planning approach based on observations of children's play, their needs and interests. A particular strength is the way practitioners use observations of repeated play to inform future experiences and changes to the environment. For example, practitioners observed a child exploring the size of envelopes and as a result they provided a post box to post cards and letters. Practitioners model activities well, playing alongside children in the different areas of provision. They support children's oracy development purposefully through asking probing questions and modelling vocabulary. For example, when playing with dough they introduce vocabulary that describes how it feels.

Practitioners model and use a wide range of songs and instructions in Welsh well. For example, they consistently use familiar phrases to gain children's attention. They provide children with valuable opportunities to learn about their Welsh heritage. For example, they celebrate St David's Day, where they dress in national costume, taste Welsh cakes and make leek soup and decorate hearts to send to people they care about on St Dwynwen's Day.

Practitioners make beneficial use of visits beyond the setting to enhance children's learning experiences. For example, they visit the local shop to buy ingredients to make dough to play with in the setting. Practitioners plan purposeful learning

experiences that promote children's moral, spiritual and cultural development well. For example, they celebrate festivals from a range of cultures where children listen to stories, taste foods and make crafts. Practitioners provide useful opportunities for children to learn about the natural world around them and foster a sense of awe and wonder. For example, they visit the pumpkin farm and go on seasonal walks to observe changes in nature.

The setting has a range of successful assessment procedures. Practitioners observe and identify what children can already do during their first few weeks at the setting. Practitioners provide parents and carers with useful information about the children's achievements and progress through social media, face-to-face meetings and verbal discussions at the setting. This ensures that they are fully informed of the progress their child is making.

Environment: Good

Leaders provide a safe and secure environment. They have clear policies and procedures in place to ensure that practitioners understand health and safety matters, in the building and outside. Practitioners implement robust security procedures, ensuring that doors to the setting are locked and visitors are recorded. Leaders draw up detailed risk assessments covering many aspects of the setting and activities. However, the fire risk assessment requires reviewing to ensure that faulty equipment is repaired promptly. Practitioners ensure that all resources and areas used by the children have suitable cleaning schedules drawn up. They undertake regular fire evacuation drills with the children and are confident with the procedure.

Leaders ensure that the environment is welcoming and suitable for the care of children. Practitioners organise the environment well, with children's needs at the forefront of the design. They ensure that children have independent access to the toilets and the outside area, which is accessed directly from the playroom. Practitioners have access to kitchen facilities to prepare food.

Practitioners make good use of the wall space to provide children with a sense of belonging through the use of photographs of children that are displayed at their eye level. Leaders ensure that there is a range of high-quality resources to stimulate the children's interest and imagination, and to support them to succeed in all aspects of their development. Practitioners set up play resources well both inside and outside, to encourage children to be curious and to experiment with in their play. For example, in the construction area, they display photographs of local buildings and castles, to inspire children to try and construct them. Practitioners set up resources, so children can easily access them. They adapt learning areas regularly to maintain children's interest and extend their skills. For example, they add Christmas trees and decorations to the role-play kitchen, book and outdoor areas following children's interest in decorating trees. Children access appropriate resources that depict the world around us, different cultures and diversity. Practitioners use authentic resources and natural materials, as well as developmentally appropriate toys, providing children with rich opportunities to play and learn.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting to provide an environment for children to learn through play, share and make friends. The setting's statement of purpose provides an accurate picture of the setting and there is a range of useful policies, procedures, and risk assessments, which are appropriately applied in practice. The leaders follow safe, robust, and timely recruitment processes and provide good support for the induction of new practitioners. They have effective processes for supervising and evaluating practitioners work, which focuses on practitioner well-being, improving performance and identifying future training needs effectively and lead to appropriate agreed targets. No breach of regulations or National Minimum Standards was identified during the inspection.

The leaders have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities and support practitioners effectively to offer a consistently good service. Overall, the setting makes effective use of practitioners and resources to support children's well-being, learning and play. All practitioners are well qualified, and they have appropriate job descriptions, ensuring that they have a good understanding of their role in the setting. There is a strong commitment to teamwork. All practitioners feel valued and work together successfully and support each other well.

The setting's self-evaluation processes are effective. They engage all stakeholders in the process, such as the local authority advisory teacher and parents to identify strengths and useful areas to develop, for example improving children's and practitioners' knowledge and use of the Welsh language. There are valuable development plans, which are successfully implemented by leaders and practitioners. As a result, the provision for the Welsh language is strong and children make good progress from their starting point.

All leaders and practitioners have engaged in a wide range of worthwhile training opportunities, such as implementing the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act and improving practitioners' Welsh language skills. Practitioners value the support from the local authority advisory teacher, for example implementing the new assessment arrangements and the purposeful use of the outdoors. Effective use is made of available grants. For example, leaders prioritise expenditure to support children with additional learning needs through purchasing resources and, as a result, children are happy and make good progress.

Practitioners build beneficial links with parents and carers, such as parent workshops to raise awareness of reading for enjoyment. However, the setting does not share information of children's experiences at the setting regularly enough to ensure that parents and carers can further support their child at home. The setting provides purposeful visits to the nearby park and makes good use of visitors such as a yoga instructor to enhance the children's health and well-being and give them a better understanding of their local community. There are appropriate links with the local schools, which support children's transition to the next stage in their education.

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

This document has been translated by Trosol (English to Welsh).

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Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	**What each means**
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status

N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being.
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

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