Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Maendy First Steps Playgroup and Wraparound

Maendy Primary School
Northville
Cwmbran
NP44 1NH



Date Inspection Completed

10/07/2023

About Maendy First Steps Playgroup and Wraparound

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Annette Webb
Registered places	30
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	Manual Insert] 18 July 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Manual Insert] Yes
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

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Well-being	**Adequate**
Care and Development	**Adequate**
Environment	**Adequate**
Leadership and Management	**Adequate**

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children are settled and enjoy the play opportunities available. They are happy and confident in their surroundings and interact appropriately. Children have access to experiences that allow them to develop a range of skills and be independent.

Staff provide suitable care that keeps children safe. They promote a healthy lifestyle, ensuring children have opportunities to be active and get fresh air. Staff interact with the children in a way that supports their development and encourages social skills. Staff meet children's needs appropriately and they provide appropriate opportunities to support children's learning and development.

The environment is generally safe and secure. The management team ensure children have a suitable amount of room in which to play and learn. There is a sound outdoor play area for children to access. Although staff carry out daily checks, they should ensure that any unwanted objects are removed, and the area is litter free.

Leadership and management of the service is effective. Records and policies are organised and maintained to a sufficient standard. Quality assurance processes consider children and parents' views and the management team plan for improvements to move the service forward. Parents are appreciative of the service and receive regular updates on changes and events at the setting.

Well-being — Adequate

Children have opportunities to make choices about where and what they want to play with. They happily move around their base room choosing resources they want to play with. Children have timed outdoor play sessions where they can choose to play with wheeled toys, run around or engage in creative activities set out under the sheltered area. Children make their needs known through verbal or nonverbal forms of communication. For example, a younger child visiting the setting started pointing, showing, and indicating they wanted to get the dolls out from the basket and play. Staff understood the child and responded appropriately, offering different dolls and clothes they could change. This shows that children settle into the session with sound support.

Older children settle well. On arrival they confidently join in with their friends and choose an activity to do. Children are familiar with routines; staff help them to feel relaxed and happy in their surroundings. For example, staff welcome the children and show interest in what they had been doing in the morning. Children are reminded to wash their hands as they arrived at the setting before sitting down to have lunch.

Children learn to cooperate and respect each other and the resources. They play together, sharing the space and toys appropriately for their age and stage of development. For example, in the morning session, younger children enjoyed playing with larger bricks building a tower smiling at each other and occasionally passing bricks to each other. Older children help tidy up when asked to do so by staff.

Children have suitable opportunities to develop, learn and use their imagination to meet their individual developmental needs. For example, a small group of children chose to play cooperatively joining Lego bricks together. They worked well with each other to build towers and join what each child had made into one project. Staff supported them by sitting alongside them making suggestions and encouraging the group to work together. Most children are confident to move around the environment making independent choices as to what they want to play with. Children told us that they enjoy playing in the outside space and doing craft activities. They also said they enjoy coming to the service and they feel staff listen to them.

Nearly all children have opportunities to be independent and develop a range of skills. They access resources from those available and freely move around the environment. Children get their belongings themselves such as, their raincoats to put on before going outside. They were keen to open their own lunch boxes and choose what they would like to eat first, showing they were confident to be independent.

Care and Development — Adequate

Staff implement the settings policies and procedures appropriately to ensure children are safe. The safeguarding policy has been reviewed and most staff have updated their training to ensure they are aware of the procedure to follow should they have concerns about a child. Staff complete routines such as hand washing and wiping tables to help prevent cross contamination. Staff encourage and support children to have a healthy lifestyle. Fruit provided for snack time are varied and interesting.

Staff interact appropriately with children. They sit at their level and join in with their play and learning experiences. Staff make snack times a sociable experience, sitting at the table with them. This allows conversations to take place freely. Staff implement the behaviour management policy appropriately. They use strategies well to diffuse situations such as when two children want the same toy and staff distract them and get them interested in another activity. Staff encourage children to use please and thank you. Staff praise and reinforce positive behaviour.

Staff meet children's needs appropriately. They understand and implement procedures that ensure children receive appropriate care. For example, some of the children wanted to play with small world toys at lunch time were assured that once they had finished eating, they could play with their chosen activity. Staff provide suitable resources and activities to support their play and learning experiences. They know the children well and therefore set out activities they know the group are likely to enjoy playing with. Generally, staff plan activities around a theme. We were told that staff are transitioning their paperwork into a new curriculum to help support this and they track children's development using a developmental record. Staff use some incidental Welsh and sing Welsh songs to help children become familiar with the Welsh language.

Environment	Adequate

The premises are secure and well maintained. Visitors are required to sign in at the school reception on arrival at the setting. There is an organised and suitably managed risk assessment file, and hazards are identified and where possible eliminated. The setting is situated with the primary school grounds and the site is awaiting a purpose built environment. There is timely completion of key health and safety checks. Although Maendy Primary School regularly carry out the annual safety checks, copies of the records were made available during the inspection. Fire drills are conducted regularly. However, the evacuation log does not include specific information such as the total number of children and adults who were present and involved in the evacuation. Both children and staff attendance are recorded appropriately so it can be referred to if needed. However, they do not record the total number of children and adults in each session. The person in charge had developed a new improved format which was sent to CIW before the inspection was completed.

The environment is suitable, child friendly and the layout in the main is conducive for play and learning activities. Staff follow procedures to ensure the environment is safe and suitable, completing risk assessments and daily checks. The outdoor play area is secure and suitably resourced, providing opportunities for children to be physically active. However, during inclement weather the play area was littered.

Staff plan the layout of the playroom suitably with zoned areas offering quieter activities and other areas for more energetic play. There is a reasonable standard of décor with areas that look tired. The register person (RP) told us that they are waiting for a new purpose build project to start as soon as possible to replace the current building. Resources are suitably organised and accessible to children giving them autonomy when choosing toys. However, most of the toys and activities were man-made (plastic) with fewer natural resources. Children’s artwork is displayed well, utilising the walls to make their environment more welcoming this allows children to develop a sense of belonging and ownership.

Leadership and Management — Adequate

The management team have an appropriate statement of purpose. It reflects the current service offered and provides parents with details needed to make an informed decision if it is the right care for them and their child. Policies and procedures are up to date and reviewed regularly. Daily records contain relevant information on the children. There is a comprehensive policy file. Managers have listened to advice given from the previous inspections. They have implemented positive changes that have benefitted the children.

The management team manage staff appropriately. There are opportunities for staff to discuss issues during formal team meetings. Individually, staff can feedback their views on their roles, responsibilities, and training needs via formal one to one supervision and annual appraisal meetings. Feedback from staff during the inspection, indicate they are happy with the level of support they receive, and the training matrix shows this is being monitored suitably. Managers are responsible for ensuring DBS checks are maintained for all staff.

Managers and staff keep parents informed about their child's day through conversations at the end of the child's day at the setting. They work with outside agencies when needed to help support children with additional needs. The Flying Start team work closely with the staff, advising them on how to improve children's experiences. Leaders consult with children, parents, staff, and stakeholders, obtaining their views before producing an annual review of quality-of-care report. There are positive partnerships in place. Parent told us that they feel supported and that their wishes are respected. Children with learning needs are supported and parents feel that they are included in decision-making. Parental feedback recently taken shows that they are happy with the service and their children are settled at the setting. They confirm that the service notifies them of changes and that there is very good communication from staff and management.

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

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
Standard 22 - Environment	Improve fire drill logs to include details of total numbers of children and adults involved in the evacuation and include comments on how the evacuation had been conducted.
Standard 5 - Records	Improve daily registers to include total numbers of children in each session.
Standard 22 - Environment	Ensure that the outdoor play are is assessed at the start of each session so that it is tidy and free from any litter.

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Best Practice
Recommendation(s)
Introduce more natural resources throughout the playgroup.

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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