



## Blaenllechau Youth Project



The Welfare Hall, Rear Of 17-21 Long Row, Blaenllechau, Ferndale, CF43 4NP



01443 732715

**Date(s) of inspection visit(s):** The inspection visits for this service took place between 11/08/2025 and 20/08/2025

### Service Information:

Operated by:	The Committee of Blaenllechau Youth Project
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	30
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	No
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The service provider is not meeting the Welsh language and culture needs of people and this requires improvement.

## Ratings:



Well-being

**Excellent**



Care & Development

**Good**



Environment

**Good**



Leadership & Management

**Good**

## Summary:

Children are very settled and have fantastic fun playing with their friends at the setting. They have a wealth of choice and opportunities to develop different skills and become independent. Children develop positive, healthy relationships with their friends and staff. They can speak freely and are encouraged to share their ideas with staff who show genuine interest in their views and opinions.

This is an open access playscheme that operates during school holidays. All staff are very experienced, have worked at the playscheme for many years and know the children well. Staff understand the playscheme's policies and procedures and implement them consistently. They understand their responsibilities to report concerns about children and have appropriate knowledge of safeguarding procedures. Staff are patient, kind and caring. They provide a good range of planned activities based on the children's interests. They are positive role models and are committed to building the confidence and self-esteem of children in their care.

The environment is secure, clean, and welcoming. Staff follow procedures to ensure the environment is safe, completing risk assessments and updating maintenance checks consistently. Staff make sure there is a suitable selection of age-appropriate activities and resources available to keep children engaged in physical and imaginative play.

Leaders are enthusiastic and manage the service effectively. They complete a beneficial self-evaluation of their service and use this information to identify and make improvements. They ensure all staff have the necessary skills, and knowledge to provide good quality care to children. Staff work closely with parents in making decisions about their children's well-being and keep them up to date about their experiences at the setting.

## Findings:



### Well-being

Excellent

Children feel very safe, happy and valued at the setting. They are completely free to choose how they spend their time at the playscheme. Children are actively involved in making decisions for themselves and choosing freely, either independently or together as a group. For example, children create a 'bucket list' at the beginning of the holiday period of activities and fun they want to have during the playscheme. This is displayed in the setting and children were keen to show us all their plans for the holiday period. Children frequently approach staff and enjoy spending time playing with them alongside their friends. For example, children give staff a choice of face paint designs from books and happily chat as they use sponges to create patterns on the faces and arms of staff.

Children settle quickly and cope extremely well spending time away from their main care givers. They are supported very well by staff who offer them reassurance and a sense of belonging at the setting. Children have formed very close bonds with all staff. Children who are unsettled are given individual, patient care and attention. For example, one child who was a little upset, was cared for by a familiar staff member who offered kind words and distraction, supporting them to resolve the issue independently. Children feel safe and secure as they are familiar with the routines of the setting. They are given verbal and visual reminders about the running order of the day and what comes next. For example, children are reminded when the session will be ending in five minutes to help happily transition the children between play and tidy up time.

Children behave very well. They enjoy receiving praise for good manners and for being kind and helpful. Children learn the importance of sharing and taking turns from a wide range of relevant activities. For example, children are very patient as they wait their turn to look at the caterpillar they discovered in the garden. When a child asked for a turn on a popular interactive electronic game, a child responded kindly saying, *"Yes, I have been playing for a while, it's your turn now."*

Children have great fun with the activities on offer. For example, children swing on the hammock in the outdoor area as they watch their friends plait and dress the hair of the upturned mops. Other children play tug of war on the large soft mats as the room is filled with the sounds of children singing on the Karaoke machine. Children's self-help skills are developing extremely well. For example, they pour their own drinks of water in the setting when they get thirsty. Children access the toilet independently, wash their own hands, tidy up after play and collect their belonging at the end of the session.



## Care & Development

Good

Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and follow a useful set of procedures to ensure they meet health and safety needs. For example, staff practice good infection control through regular handwashing and wiping tables. Staff recognise the importance of updating their first aid training and a suitable number of qualified first aid staff are always on duty. They record allergies and health conditions and manage them through appropriate procedures. They maintain suitable records of accidents and incidents and contact parents directly for more significant accidents such as head bumps. Staff inform us that no medication has been administered at the setting. Due to the length of the short sessions, children normally go home for lunch. However, a light snack is available if required and water is always freely accessible at the setting. Staff members have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training. They demonstrate a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and the action they need to take should they have a concern about a child. The nominated child protection person has developed a safeguarding procedure and ensures she keeps the policy up to date, which staff understand.

Staff are kind and caring towards the children. They are responsive and nurturing, which means children approach them with ease. Staff are polite and friendly role models. Consequently, children behave very well and benefit from the consistent approach and mutual respect shown. We saw staff ask children about their day and chat about the children's family outside of school. Staff praise positive behaviour, which encourages children to make good choices when they are in the setting. For example, a child smiled and beamed with pride as a staff member acknowledged and praised their kind act of sharing saying, "you are always kind and helpful, we love having you here."

Staff plan a good range of indoor and outdoor activities that appeal to children's interests. Children are keen to tell us how much fun they had in the airport office desk the previous week and how they loved to roll on the large soft play resources. Staff working at the setting have up to date mandatory training. They have many years of experience and hold appropriate childcare and play qualifications. This ensures staff support and promote children's learning and development well through a range of interesting, open ended play opportunities. Staff members use a very good range of incidental Welsh. We heard staff regularly greet, praise and respond to children in Welsh.



## Environment

Good

Leaders ensure the environment is safe for children as appropriate policies and procedures are implemented. This is an open access playscheme and therefore children can come and go as they wish. The main gates to the setting are open during operational hours and the entrance door to the building is open. All visitors to the service are required to sign in on the playscheme's register. Staff explained they keep a record of all children in attendance and children are asked to inform the staff if they wish to leave. Staff will inform parents if children want to go home. Parents are then aware that the child will be leaving the setting and have the opportunity to come and meet with them if they wish. Staff check what route older children, who may want to walk home independently, are going to take and let the parents know. They explained that most children stay for the whole session, and many parents drop off and pick up from outside the setting or at a meeting point on a nearby street.

There are appropriate risk assessments in place for activities and resources. Staff told us they complete daily safety checks and visual risk assessments for all areas used by children. Staff ensure the hall area is clean and tidy when in use. Leaders ensure all routine safety checks are carried out for the building such as an electrical safety test, smoke alarm and fire safety equipment testing. Regular fire evacuation drills are also undertaken and recorded.

The indoor play areas provide suitable play space to meet the needs of the children. They have suitable spaces to relax, play and take part in a range of activities, which promote independence. For example, we saw children concentrating on craft activities and drawing on white boards for lengthy periods of time. There is a small outdoor space to the front of the setting which is very well resourced with an array of imaginative play equipment. Children enjoyed lots of play opportunities including making pottery, balancing on wheeled toys, using recycled materials as play equipment and watering the plants to name but a few.

The playscheme is based in the Mission Hall in Blaenllechau and they have sole use of the premises. Children's toilets are stocked with soap and individual drying facilities to promote an infection free environment. They are located next to the main play hall, and we saw children access these independently. The toilets areas are in need of redecoration. Leaders explained they have a continual plan for updating and redecorating the premises which included the recently painted ceiling in the main hall. Children use appropriately sized tables and chairs that provide a comfortable space for activities. The playscheme uses a display board to further children's sense of belonging and provide parents with valuable information about the service they provide.



## Leadership & Management

Good

Leaders have a good understanding of current best practice and show a commitment to continually improve the quality of the service provided to children and families. Leaders have developed a suitable range of policies and procedures and make sure all staff follow them. There is a clear statement of purpose, which provides an accurate picture of how the setting runs. When areas for improvement are brought to the manager's attention, she welcomes this advice and is proactive in her approach to improve the service. Leaders ensure all required information is kept for children and staff and is stored and managed suitably.

Leaders understand the importance of having a team of confident staff and ensure all their mandatory training is up to date. Feedback from staff demonstrated that they had an appropriate understanding of the core policies and procedures in place for the playscheme. Recruitment files examined demonstrate leaders understand their responsibility to ensure staff are recruited safely and have the relevant skills and experience required to care for the children. There is a clear system in place to ensure that staff's Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) are current. Staff members said they feel supported by management and are very happy working at the setting. Leaders ensure suitable ratios of staff to children are always maintained to care for the children.

Leaders carry out an annual quality of care review of the service provided. This review includes the views of parents, children and staff and sets targets for the forthcoming year. There is a suitable complaints policy available for parents. Leaders completed and submitted the Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) on time to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). They notify CIW of events and changes to their service as required. Leaders work in partnership with parents in order to plan for each child's individual needs and promote good outcomes for children. There are appropriate communication systems at the setting including verbal feedback, phone calls and emails. Parents were very happy to provide feedback about their experience of the setting. Comments included, *"The activities provided for the children are second to none, the children are learning while playing and having fun"* and *"My children are always excited to go. The staff are friendly and supportive of them. They are always happy to help with any queries I may have, and my children absolutely love it there!!"*

## 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.

**CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.**

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

## National Minimum Standards

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.

Standard	Recommendation(s)
Standard 22 - Environment	Continue with the programme of redecoration in the setting to include the toilet areas.

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