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

Schoolhouse Day Nursery

Princess of Wales Hospital
Coity Road
Bridgend
Bridgend
CF31 1RQ

Date of inspection: November 2024

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Schoolhouse Day Nursery

Name of setting	Schoolhouse Day Nursery
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Amanda Bennett, Rachel Burley and Sarah Morales.
Person in charge	Cathryn Stinton
Number of places	50
Age range of children	Birth to 12 years old
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	Thirteen
Number of children who receive funding for early education	Two
Opening days / times	The setting is open five days a week, between 6.30 am and 7.00 pm
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 not making a significant effort to promote the use of Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	8 December 2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection	November 2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	05/11/2024

Schoolhouse Day Nursery is an English-medium setting that meets in the grounds of the Princess of Wales hospital, Bridgend. The setting is part of a wider collection of daycare settings under the legal entity of Schoolhouse Daycare Limited.

There are a few children with additional learning needs attending the setting currently.

There are a few children attending the setting who have English as a second language. These children's first languages are Welsh, Arabic, Polish and Lithuanian.

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)**	**Good**
Care and development	**Good**
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 Develop the effectiveness of interactions, observations and planning to support children's critical thinking and problem-solving skills

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

Nearly all children have excellent opportunities to make choices and decisions about how they spend their time at the nursery. Children of all ages choose where they want to play. Nearly all children express themselves confidently, as they know that their wants, needs and moods will be listened to. For example, younger children use physical gestures to indicate that they want a cuddle, which practitioners respond to warmly.

Nearly all children are very happy and relaxed, and enjoy their time at the nursery. They are extremely comfortable in their surroundings and are familiar with daily routines. Children develop positive, healthy relationships with their friends and practitioners, whom they frequently approach for support. Nearly all children enjoy spending time playing with the practitioners alongside their friends. For example, older children play in the outdoor mud kitchen and ask practitioners for help in scraping out pumpkin seeds to add to their mud soup. They show great delight when mixing all the ingredients together with a whisk. Nearly all children have a very strong sense of belonging. Children are greeted warmly by practitioners, who very sensitively support them to separate from their parents, ensuring that they feel happy to begin their day at the nursery. Older children arrive at the nursery and know exactly where to put their bag and personal items. Nearly all children behave very well and are very polite. Children say 'please' and 'thank you' to each other independently. They enjoy receiving praise from practitioners for good manners and being kind and helpful.

Nearly all children have exceptional opportunities to develop, learn and use their imagination. Children fully immerse themselves in their play. They experience a sense of excitement and empowerment when exploring their interests freely. For

instance, children skilfully use a hole puncher, with a little guidance from practitioners, to make holes in leaves. They thread string through the holes to make bunting. Children show great interest and support each other in their play. For example, they climb a tractor tyre skilfully walking up the ramp and ladder. They watch each other and smile as they reach the top together, sharing in their sense of achievement. Younger children become very excited and shout out when they spot their friends' photos during a circle time activity.

Nearly all children are beginning to develop a wide range of skills as they play and engage in routines. They benefit from carefully considered layouts, which provides many opportunities for them to become independent, enabling them to do things for themselves. Children wash their own hands, use the toilet independently and tidy up after play. At mealtimes older children, pour their own drinks, confidently serve themselves from bowls placed in the centre of the table with serving spoons and scrape any uneaten food off their plates after eating. Younger children are supported to feed themselves and use cups without lids when appropriate. This promotes children's self-help skills and builds their self-esteem**.**

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

There is no report on children's learning. This is because there were not enough three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection, who do not receive funded education elsewhere, to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners are successful in keeping children safe and healthy. The nursery has a range of policies and procedures in place, which effectively supports practitioners when undertaking their roles. Practitioners undertake comprehensive safeguarding training including regular training organised in the nursery. Practitioners have a good knowledge of safeguarding and the procedures to follow. They are aware of their duty to report any concerns and are confident in the steps to take should this be required. Practitioners follow and promote good hygiene practices. For example, tables are cleaned before mealtimes and practitioners consistently wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when undertaking key tasks, such as tooth brushing and changing of children's nappies. Children of all ages wash their hands before mealtimes and following using the toilet, embedding good hygiene routines. Children's health needs are fully considered. Practitioners effectively record, maintain and review a range of records, including accident, incident and medication logs.

The nursery offers a range of healthy and well-balanced meals and snacks which are freshly prepared on site by the nursery cook. Practitioners ensure that mealtimes are relaxed, social and enjoyable experiences, where opportunities for children to talk about their day are encouraged. There are strong procedures in place when dealing with children who have allergies, intolerances and preferences. Practitioners implement these procedures consistently. Children are offered water at mealtimes and older children have access to drinking water in areas where they play, to use independently. Practitioners promote children's physical development through access to the outdoor play environment daily.

Nearly all practitioners interact extremely well with children and build positive relationships with them. They are warm, kind and patient, and offer reassurance to children when needed. Practitioners respect children's emotional attachments to personal belongings, such as special soft toys from home. Practitioners recognise how these items bring children comfort and support their confidence when attending nursery. They are aware of the children's needs and recognise when they are unsettled, identifying ways to support them. 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 understand and consistently implement positive behaviour management strategies in line with the nursery's detailed policy. They use very gentle warm tones of affection in their voice when praising and reinforcing positive behaviour, alongside adopting a firm voice when needed. For instance, if a child runs indoors, practitioners gently remind them to walk. Practitioners provide children with verbal five-minute warnings when transitioning between different tasks, such as when free play comes to an end in readiness for lunch time.

Practitioners know the children very well. They carry out regular observations of the children to enable them to track their progress and identify their next steps. They celebrate children's successes, such as when they successfully wash their hands independently for the first time. Practitioners support children with additional learning needs well. They seek beneficial advice and guidance from professionals and implement and review individual targets regularly to ensure that children's needs are met. Practitioners are beginning to embed the Welsh language with children of all ages. They introduce singing songs and basic incidental Welsh during activities and routines with young children.

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

Practitioners provide a range of valuable or meaningful experiences. Most practitioners have a good understanding of how children learn through play. They use this to provide an excellent range of resources in a warm and inviting environment, which allows children to make choices and learn well through play.

Practitioners effectively support children to develop their mark-making and early writing skills. Children use a range of mark-making tools on a variety of surfaces both indoors and outdoors. For example, they use chalks to create firework pictures, and pencils for observational drawings of pumpkins. Practitioners respond well to children's interest in reading by sharing books and stories at group time and spontaneously in the indoor and outdoor provision allowing children to develop a love of books. Practitioners plan effective activities for children to develop their communication skills using digital resources. For example, practitioners ensure that children have access to digital cameras in order to photograph their friends and to discuss the images they've taken of one another.

Practitioners develop children's counting skills using fingers to count to ten. They provide illuminated whiteboards so that children learn to recognise and copy numbers successfully and use remote control vehicles to discuss positional language with children. Practitioners ensure that there is a wide variety of open-ended and

numeracy resources in areas of provision. They facilitate children to develop their mathematical skills regularly, but opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills independently through play are more limited.

Practitioners provide effective opportunities for children to develop their physical skills successfully. They encourage children to enjoy the outdoors through exciting experiences, including role-play cooking in the mud kitchen, filling squirty bottles, and participating in parachute games. Practitioners provide plenty of opportunities for children to use large apparatus, such as climbing frames, obstacle courses, balance bikes and scooters, supporting children to move, climb and balance with increasing confidence.

Practitioners are developing a responsive approach to planning using observations of children. For example, they support children in finding out about vehicles through images and imaginative play after being interested in a work van during a walk in the local area. Nearly all practitioners carry out suitable observations of children during the session. This information is used to write on-entry assessments and identify children's interests. However, it does not always influence planning for responsive and playful experiences that support children's progress and develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills effectively.

Practitioners provide valuable opportunities to support children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development. For example, the children learn about families and their culture, through celebrating the Diwali festival, sharing and discussing books, and using various resources including jigsaws, small world, multicultural dolls and authentic resources within role play. Practitioners provide children with valuable experiences to learn about the Welsh culture. For example, they take the children on seasonal walks in the local area and participate in St. David's Day celebrations, supporting their understanding of their locality and developing their sense of belonging. Leaders and practitioners work hard to develop Welsh during the session. They use Welsh to praise children during group times and children join in by singing simple songs. However, using Welsh throughout the daily routine is currently limited and underdeveloped. This is included as a priority in the setting's action plan.

Nearly all practitioners are good language role models during interactions with the children. They listen carefully and speak clearly to the children using intonation and body language well. The highly positive interactions nurture children's well-being and perseverance well.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure that practitioners follow effective procedures to maintain an environment which is safe, clean, and secure. Visitors, staff and children are accurately recorded on arrival and when leaving the building. Regular fire evacuation drills are carried out at different times to include all children. Maintenance and safety checks are completed promptly. Leaders have developed a good range of risk assessments and supporting check lists to maintain a safe environment.

The environment offers beneficial facilities to care for children. All playrooms are equipped with high quality and suitably sized furniture for the varying ages of children. The layout of the playrooms supports children to move around freely. Older

children can access the bathroom independently, which is situated in their playroom. Nappy changing facilities are accessible in all rooms and are well equipped. Children can rest during the day within their playrooms. Sleep mats and individual bed linen are provided for children of all ages and the space is calm with the lights turned off and soft music playing. Staff closely monitor sleeping babies and children. Leaders have undertaken a range of alterations to enhance the facilities for children. For example, a large canopy has been erected in the older children's outdoor area to enable access to this space in all weathers and the children's toilets have also undergone adjustments to improve them for all ages of children attending the setting.

Leaders provide a wide range of authentic resources and toys that are of good quality and interesting, and promote curiosity. They offer a wide range of play experiences that celebrate various cultures and languages, including the Welsh language. Real-life, natural, and recycled items are used to enhance all areas of the environment and support children of all ages, enhancing their play experiences. For example, dressing up clothes include items such as bags, shoes and cultural dressing up outfits such as Chinese traditional dress. Real life experiences are created by using resources such as stainless-steel pots, pans and hair dryers, alongside recycled food packages such as empty yogurt pots and teabag boxes in the role play areas. The display of various shells, leaves, pinecones, pumpkin seeds and wood slices are freely accessible to children and are included in activities, promoting creativity and curiosity. Resources are organised and displayed attractively on low level shelving units, so that they are easily accessible and extremely inviting to children.

The outdoor play space is accessible directly from all playrooms and is of a suitable size. Younger children have a separate area, enabling them to move freely and safely in the space. In the older children's play area, low-level fencing defines key areas, which offers a range of experiences. For example, an extensive mud kitchen and mark making station support creativity and imaginative play. Low level climbing frames and a slide provide physical challenges for children to take appropriate risks in their play. A space with soft matting and road markings enables children to whiz around the space freely and safely on the range of ride along toys available.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders at the setting prioritise the well-being of all practitioners, the children and their families. The strong, supportive relationship between leaders and practitioners has created a team that enthusiastically and collaboratively work together towards a shared vision with children and families at the heart. There is a fun and warm atmosphere in the setting.

Leaders work well with the local authority advisory teacher, to accurately identify strengths and areas for improvement, effectively informing the self-evaluation and action plan. However, this is at an early stage of development, and evaluations of improvement plans do not yet show the impact on children's learning and development. The statement of purpose is clear and provides an accurate picture of the setting, allowing parents to make informed decisions about the suitability of the setting for their child.

There are useful professional development opportunities for staff. Leaders effectively use robust appraisal and supervision processes to identify areas of development and professional development priorities. For example, practitioners attended professional development on digital skills, and consequently developed provision and use digital skills well to support children's learning across the curriculum. Nearly all practitioners hold or are currently working towards the required childcare qualifications.

Practitioners communicate daily with children's families during drop off and pick up. Practitioners have strong relationships with families that contribute positively to children's learning and development. The setting provides meaningful meetings with parents and shares useful information throughout the year to ensure that they are well-informed about their children's well-being, learning and development. Parent partnership events including a pancake and pottery day help to build a welcoming ethos and effective relationships between families and the setting.

Leaders have established good transition arrangements. They share important and useful information with the child's new teacher. This ensures that children move on to the next step in their education smoothly. Additionally, leaders have developed beneficial partnerships with stakeholders and constructively use advice and guidance from partners, including the local authority advisory teacher and health professionals. For example, the advisory teacher supports them to improve the learning environment.

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/Prysg (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.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this	N/A

	inspection	

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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