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

Bechan Bach

Ysgol Rhiw Bechan
Tregynon
Powys
SY16 3EH

Date of inspection: November 2023

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Bechan Bach

Name of setting	Bechan Bach
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Powys County Council Child Care and Play Services
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Allyson Whitticase
Person in charge	Carol Timms and Terri Owen
Number of places	24
Age range of children	3-4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	15
Number of children who receive funding for early education	15
Opening days / times	08:45 – 15:15 Monday – Friday term time only
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 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	May 2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	September 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	21/11/2023

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	**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 Ensure that practitioners organise group sessions well enough to engage children throughout the activity

R2 Strengthen children's experiences of the wider world through partnership arrangements within the local community

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

Children have a strong voice and have many opportunities to make purposeful choices and decisions about what they do. For example, they choose whether they play inside or outside, moving confidently between the two environments. Many children are confident communicators. Most express themselves clearly using words and phrases, for example when asking a practitioner if they can be the big sister or the dog during pretend play. They use the extensive range of interesting activities and resources to develop their own play and ideas. They enjoy selecting and cutting up resources such as herbs and fruit to put in their potions.

Children settle well. Nearly all arrive ready to start their day and cope well as they separate from parents and carers. A few who are a little reluctant to do so are supported sensitively by practitioners and are quickly playing happily. Children develop warm, close relationships with practitioners and each other, which has a beneficial impact on their well-being. They are learning to express how they feel, and many are eager to use the feelings board to tell others they are happy.

Children manage their behaviour well. Nearly all enjoy playing together and are learning to understand the needs of others. For example, they pass resources to each other when making dough cakes or hold the paint pot for someone else to dip their brush in. Children are very familiar with the routines of the day, coming readily

for group time or snack. They learn to be respectful and tidy things away carefully when asked. This helps them develop a sense of belonging and community.

All children actively explore their environment. They engage well in activities and express enjoyment, for example shrieking with laughter as the moving finger chooses the next child. Children learn to concentrate and persevere, and many spend extended periods engaged in self-chosen activities such as painting or making mosaic pictures. Children also benefit from worthwhile adult led group times, such as registration and story time, and nearly all join in with these enthusiastically.

Children develop and learn very well through the wide-ranging opportunities provided for them. They have good opportunities to develop independence, which enables them to do things for themselves. For example, most children can put on their own coat, manage their own personal needs, and retrieve their snack from their bag.

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

Nearly all children make good progress from their starting points. Nearly all are enthusiastic when talking about themselves or friends. For example, they talk about what they are making with dough and about how they feel every morning. Nearly all children use simple Welsh phrases confidently during carpet time, answer the register and talk about the weather. In addition, most children use Welsh for colours and numbers and say ‘diolch’ naturally during their play.

Nearly all children join in counting the number of children present. They show enjoyment when listening and carry out simple tasks in response to instructions, for example when dancing to music and meditating with a small toy.

Many children speak with confidence to adults and to their friends and have well-developed language skills and an extensive vocabulary. For example, they enjoy participating in conversations when talking about where the amber traffic light could be and what they would like for lunch. Many children are developing as readers when looking at books, choosing them independently and talking happily about illustrations and stories with their friends. They do this naturally in all areas, for example when reading in the outdoors play shed.

Many children develop their mark making skills appropriately in both the indoor and outdoor areas. They use a variety of writing tools, such as paints, pens, and pencils, to make meaningful marks. Most children write their names confidently and can recognise some letter sounds with ease. They enjoy mark making activities and many will write their names without being asked, for example when using the tabletop road map in the outdoors.

Nearly all children use mathematical language in their play successfully. They talk about big and small cakes when handling dough, numbers in their drawings and shapes in the environment. Nearly all children recognise numbers and shapes. For example, they discuss the square campfire on the carpet at snack time. Many children count reliably to ten in English and Welsh and join in enthusiastically with

counting activities. A few children naturally added two numbers together during their play with numerals and coloured counters.

Most children develop their co-ordination appropriately, for example they use scissors effectively to cut fruits to make potions and they manipulate stoppers on different shaped bottles well. They confidently use resources such as cars, trikes and prams, in their play which supports their physical development successfully.

Most children develop their creative skills well. When using dough children roll, squash, squeeze, and mould to create cakes that they decorate with glitter and candles. Many children use a range of interesting resources to create pictures that they talk about with enthusiasm. Most use information and communication technology (ICT) skills appropriately. For example, they use drawing boards, lap top computers and controllable cars to develop their skills well.

Nearly all children enjoy beneficial opportunities to learn about other cultures and beliefs, through discussions, stories and activities. For example, they celebrate Diwali and Easter which promotes the children's cultural awareness well. Nearly all children are confident within their environment. They use musical instruments and enjoy listening to a range of music styles when enjoying dance and meditation.

Care and development: Good

Leaders have developed a good range of effective policies and procedures to support practitioners to keep children safe and healthy. They and practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities to protect children and update their safeguarding training annually. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners implement the nursery's policies and procedures in relation to hygiene, health, and safety effectively. They keep children safe through completing daily checks of the environment and following procedures in relation to accidents, incidents, and the administration of medication. All practitioners have suitable paediatric first aid training. They take part in regular evacuation drills with the school so that children know what to do in an emergency. Practitioners supervise children well and maintain an accurate record of the times children attend and who is looking after them. They promote healthy lifestyles for children. Practitioners encourage parents to provide healthy snacks and lunches, for those not having school lunch, and offer milk or water to drink. They encourage children to wash their hands at appropriate times, thereby helping to develop good personal hygiene habits. Practitioners ensure that children have access to outdoor play for lengthy periods so that they benefit from fresh air and physical exercise.

Practitioners are kind, caring and supportive. They communicate with children in a warm, friendly manner creating a calm and relaxed atmosphere. Practitioners are positive role models, interacting respectfully with children and each other. They offer lots of praise and encouragement and celebrate with children when they achieve things or keep trying. As a result, practitioners create an environment where children

feel valued, which promotes their self-esteem and helps them learn to manage their own behaviour and interactions.

Practitioners plan and provide interesting activities and experiences that promote children's all-round learning and development. They are responsive to children's ideas and join in with their play to support learning well, for example when joining in a pretend play game that helped children learn about road safety. Practitioners observe and assess children well and use the information in their planning. They know the children extremely well. Practitioners are alert to children who may have additional learning needs and have appropriate systems in place to work effectively with outside agencies should they need to.

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

Practitioners have a secure understanding of how children learn through play and exploration. They provide children with a wide range of purposeful and stimulating experiences in the indoor and outdoor areas, for example making mosaic pictures and large-scale painting. Practitioners ensure that the provision is exciting and interesting. They support children to follow their interests well. Learning opportunities enable the children to develop their literacy and communication skills well, such as daily writing opportunities and enjoying books and stories. Practitioners encourage children to develop effective numeracy skills through a range of purposeful opportunities, such as making a pretend campfire, and counting during a mediation session.

Practitioners promote children's communication and problem-solving skills well. They encourage children to ask and answer questions and provide thought provoking comments about what they are doing. For example, they discuss their dreams after they have been relaxing during meditation time. Practitioners provide children with plenty of opportunities to look at books. They read stories with enthusiasm and warmth, allowing the children to develop a love of books and stories.

Practitioners intervene sensibly during activities, motivating children to make decisions for themselves, which supports children in their thinking skills. They use effective questioning and discussions that allow children to make good progress from their starting points, especially in developing their creative skills.

Practitioners provide useful opportunities for children to develop their physical skills successfully. They encourage children to enjoy the outdoors through a range of exciting experiences, for example when making a large outdoor map, which stimulates discussion about the world around them as they add familiar features such as traffic lights. They support the children to pedal, run and paint in the outdoors. This ensures that children are challenged to develop their physical skills and to enjoy the world around them.

Practitioners work hard to promote Welsh during sessions. They praise the children and talk about feelings using appropriate vocabulary, which encourages the children to develop their Welsh language skills well. Practitioners encourage children to use

the language in their play, for example when naming colours, or using numbers and simple greetings.

Practitioners are familiar with the Curriculum for Wales, and they use effective questioning to challenge the children during their play. They have a good understanding of child development and set high expectations for all. This enables them to support children effectively at various stages of their learning. Practitioners use regular assessments to ensure that children are making overall progress in all areas and their interests are followed. They encourage children to make purposeful choices about their play. Practitioners note useful comments and discuss what the children have made and said in their play, which supports the planning process well.

Daily routines support children's learning well, for example by learning about the days of the week, the weather and writing their names as part of their signing in process. However, practitioners do not always organise group activities well enough to fully engage children throughout.

Practitioners develop children's spiritual, moral and social skills effectively. They celebrate cultural diversity by learning about festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali and listening to music from different cultures. Practitioners regularly share information with parents, which ensures that parents understand what their children have been learning about during their time in the setting.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure that the environment is safe and secure. Effective safety systems are in place, which include written risk assessments and daily environment checks. These reduce or eliminate potential hazards and help to keep children safe. Practitioners manage children's access to the setting well and visitors access the setting through the main school. The setting is clean and well maintained. For example, the setting is based in a school, which carries out all appropriate safety checks, including fire and electrical tests. Practitioners follow effective routines for cleaning resources and equipment. There are suitable toilet and changing facilities that enable practitioners to promote children's privacy and dignity.

The playroom is welcoming and bright providing sufficient space for children to move about and play as well as to gather as a group and a comfortable quiet corner should children need it. Walls are decorated with displays celebrating children's artwork, which they have labelled themselves. This helps children develop a sense of belonging and pride in what they have done.

Leaders provide children with direct access to their outdoor play area. This is a large and very well-resourced courtyard. Children have opportunities to play and learn across all areas of development as well as having space to run around and be physically active. Children also have access to the wider school grounds and the Foundation Phase Garden.

Leaders and practitioners provide children with good quality furniture, equipment and resources, which support their needs well. Practitioners encourage active learning through a wide range of resources that encourage children to experiment and use

their imagination. The developing use of natural and open-ended resources stimulates children's interest and there is a suitable range of resources that promote cultural awareness and diversity. Practitioners store resources safely and children can access them independently to choose what they want to play with.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders are enthusiastic and passionate about the work of the setting. They work effectively to create a strong ethos of being a happy and caring learning community. There is an effective commitment to work collaboratively, which has a positive impact on outcomes for children. For example, practitioners discuss regularly their plans for learning and play experiences and share the learning environment and resources effectively. They know their children well and interact effectively with each other to support the children's learning and development successfully. Leaders share a strong vision and have a clear Statement of Purpose, which provides an accurate picture of the setting. They have a good range of policies and procedures in place, which contribute successfully to the smooth running of the setting.

Leaders have effective arrangements in place for identifying strengths, areas for development, and planning for improvement. All practitioners are committed to improving the quality of provision and outcomes for children and most recognise what the setting does well and what they need to do to improve. For example, they have recognised and implemented strategies to improve incidental Welsh throughout the setting.

Overall, leaders make good use of practitioners and resources to support children's well-being, play and learning well. They follow suitable safe recruitment procedures. Systems for appraisal encourage reflection and identify areas for improvement successfully. Leaders support practitioners to continually improve their skills and to progress in their qualifications through a range of useful professional development opportunities. This is having a positive impact on their development, such as by improving practitioners' confidence in providing exciting learning opportunities in line with the curriculum. Practitioners feel valued and supported and there is a positive atmosphere of teamwork throughout the setting, which effectively supports the children.

Practitioners keep parents and carers informed about what their children are learning and how well they are progressing through a digital communication app, regular informal updates, and reporting systems.

Leaders and practitioners work effectively with the local authority to improve the provision and outcomes for children. They act quickly on any advice and training offered, which ensures that the setting maintains its care and development for practitioners and children. However, leaders and practitioners do not always take advantage of opportunities in the local community to develop children's knowledge and understanding of their wider world. They have strong links with the school, which support children in their next stage of education well.

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

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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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