Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Little Stars Pre-School

Hay-on-wye Cp School, Oxford Road Hay-on-wye, Hereford, HR3 5BT

07532257971

The inspection visit took place on 22/01/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Letitia Jones
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	39
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	No
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	Yes
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:

Well-being	Good
Care & Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Good

Summary:

Children are happy, relaxed, and confident in the setting. They communicate well, engage positively with peers and staff, and benefit from a wide range of play and learning opportunities. Children are developing appropriate levels of independence for their age and stage of development.

Staff implement policies and procedures effectively and serve as positive role models. They understand how to maintain children's safety and wellbeing. Minor improvements are needed in hygiene practices at mealtimes. Staff are responsive to children's individual needs and abilities, supporting their progress and development.

The setting is welcoming, well-organised, and engaging. The indoor and outdoor areas are safe, stimulating, and equipped with high-quality resources. Staff conduct regular risk assessments and follow procedures to ensure the environment is suitable and secure for children.
Leaders are committed to providing high-quality childcare and manage the setting effectively. They foster strong partnerships with parents, carers, the school, and the wider community, benefiting

children’s learning and development.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children are happy, settled and engaged in the setting. Their needs and preferences are considered and respected. There are a wide range of interesting resources and activities available to children and they freely decide which activities they would like to play with. Children feel confident approaching staff and their voice is heard. For example, one child who was upset was comforted and reassured by staff who stayed with them until they settled.

Children are confident expressing their wants and needs. They feel valued by staff and are praised. They cope well with separation from their parents and carers and have positive relationships with each other and staff. We saw children laughing and smiling whilst playing and when asked, children said they felt happy and had fun at the setting. Children interact well for their ages and stages of development. They are learning to share and take turns when playing with toys. We saw children taking turns playing with the trains and building a track. Interactions between children and their peers and staff are positive. Children confidently explore the environment and engage in child led activities.

Children are interested and enjoy their play and learning activities. There are a variety of resources on offer which promotes their development. We saw children improving their fine and gross motor skills completing craft activities, playing in tuff trays and making tracks for their trains. Children follow their own interests and staff follow the children's lead and ask questions, responding to imaginative play.

Children are learning to develop their independence skills. They wash their hands and put on their coats independently or with support. During snack time, children are encouraged to complete tasks themselves. When they have finished, children are encouraged to clear their plates away.

Care & Development — Good

Staff understand the importance of ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the children attending the setting. Staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and of their role in protecting children. Staff appropriately answer safeguarding questions. Most staff have completed nearly all mandatory training, including, safeguarding, first aid and food hygiene.

Accident, incident and medication records are completed by staff, and parents are informed via the interactive app. A nutritious menu is in place for snacks, and children who attend all day have the option to bring a packed lunch or have a hot meal provided from the school canteen. There are on the whole appropriate cleaning and hygiene practices in place. Staff did not always sanitise table areas before snack and lunch time. Children were prompted to wash their hands. Staff after being advised wore appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE) when preparing and serving food. During nappy changes, staff wear PPE, ensure changing mats are sanitised, and follow their nappy changing policy.

Interactions between staff and children are warm and friendly. Staff consistently praise children and use positive phrases such as, *'well done'* and *'da iawn'*. Staff and children have strong bonds, and the children feel comfortable asking for help and reassurance when they need it. For example, children asking staff to open their food packet. Staff interactions demonstrate warmth and kindness, and they are great role models to children. They promote the use of good manners such as, *'please'* and *'thank you'* during mealtimes.

Children are supported to follow their own interests and ideas by staff. They spent quality time with a child settling in to the setting, encouraging them to play, sing~~ing~~ songs and ensuring they were comforted and relaxed. Staff observe children's progress and track their development and next steps. Staff are aware of children's additional learning needs and understand how to support them effectively. They are committed to providing a variety of play and learning opportunities and are focusing on child led learning.

Children's language and development is supported as staff ask them questions and promote their language skills in both English and Welsh.

Environment — Good

Leaders have established robust systems to ensure the environment is safe and secure. The main entrance to the foyer remains locked, and access to the children's play areas is controlled. A visitor log is maintained for all external visitors. Staff and children's registers are accurately completed, recording arrival and departure times to support safeguarding procedures in the event of an emergency.

Leaders carry out thorough maintenance checks on the building and equipment to ensure compliance and safety. Fire drills are conducted regularly, with detailed records kept to confirm that staff and children are able to evacuate the premises safely. Daily premises checks are undertaken, and comprehensive risk assessments are reviewed annually. Appropriate risk assessments are also in place for outings and school runs. Staff provide effective supervision across all areas of the setting to promote children's safety and wellbeing.

The environment is clean, bright, welcoming, and well maintained. The layout is thoughtfully organised to meet children's needs and enables easy access to resources, supporting independence. Toilet and kitchen areas are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness. Nappy changing facilities uphold children's privacy, dignity, and respect. Clearly defined indoor and outdoor areas provide engaging opportunities for children to learn, explore, and develop imaginative play. Displays featuring children's photographs and artwork foster a strong sense of belonging and celebrate their achievements.

Resources are plentiful and readily accessible, effectively supporting children's independence and choice. Items are stored at low level in clearly organised boxes and on shelves, enabling children to select resources independently. The home corner includes real-life items such as cooking utensils, a kettle, a lamp, and a telephone, enriching role-play experiences. Which include resources which promote society, equality, and cultural diversity.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders are dedicated, committed and enthusiastic in driving continuous improvement to achieve positive outcomes for children. They maintain a constructive relationship with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and manage the setting efficiently. Leaders ensure that CIW is notified of any staff changes or significant events that may impact children's welfare. The statement of purpose accurately reflects the service provided and includes all information required by regulations and the National Minimum Standards. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures is in place, which leaders review and update regularly. Detailed and relevant information is gathered about each child, including personal details, medical information, permissions, and any additional needs.

Leaders have established an effective system for self-evaluation and reflection. They actively seek feedback from staff, parents, carers, children, and other professionals, and responses are overwhelmingly positive. The quality of care report clearly identifies strengths and areas for development. Planned improvements include further enhancements to use of the Welsh language.

Staff are managed effectively and the leaders go above and beyond to ensure the staff well being i~~d~~s given high regard. Personnel files contain all required documentation and are well organised. Staff hold appropriate qualifications and receive strong support from the management team. Leaders provide relevant training opportunities, including first aid and safeguarding, to ensure staff are fully equipped to fulfil their roles. Regular supervision meetings and appraisals promote ongoing professional development. A strong team ethos is evident, and staff report high levels of job satisfaction, valuing both their colleagues and the management team.

Leaders and staff foster strong partnerships with parents, keeping them well informed about their child's experiences within the setting. Opportunities for informal discussions are available at drop-off and collection times. In addition, a digital communication app is used to maintain regular contact, enabling parents to message staff directly. For example, if a child arrives feeling unsettled, parents can request an update and receive reassurance, often accompanied by a photograph of their child engaged happily in activities. Partnerships with other professionals are equally positive and contribute to improved outcomes for children, along with strong links in the community. Leaders have worked collaboratively with the local children's safeguarding board to ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures remain robust and effective.

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 8 - Nurture and well-being	Ensure that all staff follow appropriate hygiene practices during meal times.

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