Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Flying Start Penllwyn

Penllwyn Community Centre, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood, NP12 2EQ

01495225235

The inspection visit took place on 10/07/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Caerphilly Flying Start
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	12
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	Yes
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
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	Excellent
Care & Development	Excellent
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Excellent

Summary:

Children are very happy, settled and enjoy attending the setting. They form very strong bonds with staff. Children are extremely enthusiastic in their play and learning. Their independence is consistently encouraged throughout their time at the setting.

Staff are professional, well qualified and very committed to their roles. They implement the setting's policies and procedures effectively. Staff are extremely patient, kind and caring towards each other and the children. They support children's learning and development through a wide range of activities led by the children's interests and developmental needs. Staff keep highly valuable records of children's progress.

The environment is secure and welcoming and generally very safe. However, systems for ensuring routine safety checks for the building are carried out on time require improvement. The indoor and outdoor areas are inviting, and children freely choose what they want to play with from a wide selection of resources and toys.

Leadership and management of the setting is excellent. Leaders and staff are absolutely dedicated to providing an outstanding service in the local area. They form exceptional partnerships with families and other agencies and professionals to ensure consistent care for the children.

Findings:

Well-being — Excellent

Children make many choices about how they spend their time at the setting. They move easily between the activities and areas both indoors and outdoors. Children express themselves very confidently, knowing staff listen to their needs and wishes and value what they say. For example, children immediately tell staff members when they need help or if they are worried about something. Children chat extremely happily to staff as they play and learn, eagerly inviting them into their play. Children's voices are very strong at the setting. Staff know their likes and dislikes and use this information to plan how areas within the environment and activities are developed.

Children are extremely settled, confident and enjoy attending the setting. They cope very well with separation from their parents and carers. Children form strong emotional attachments with their caregivers and feel secure and relaxed in their care, seeking out hugs from staff when needed. Children are very familiar with and evidently enjoy the routines of the setting and this gives them a sense of security and belonging. For example, children come eagerly to the tables ready for snack time.

Children are beginning to develop positive, healthy relationships with their friends and staff in line with their age and stage of development. They play happily alongside each other or together and are learning to co-operate and share together. For example, children play calmly together as they wash dollies in the water, giving each other enough space around the water table. They show respect for others and for the resources and toys.

Children are very enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. For example, children listen attentively, joining in excitedly with a story they are sharing and later delight in joining in singing and actions. Children eagerly engage with outdoor resources, for example they smile and laugh as they hide in the playhouse and concentrate as they happily experiment with pouring water.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop their independence skills. For example, children are very well supported to develop their independence in the toilet, and with washing their hands.

Care & Development — Excellent

Staff implement procedures to a very high standard to keep children safe and promote their development and well-being. They have an extremely clear understanding of the safeguarding procedures, their responsibilities to keep children safe and report any concerns, they keep excellent records. Staff have easy access to children's information and have excellent knowledge of children's allergies, dietary requirements, and medical needs. They are very confident in recording accidents, incidents and pre-existing injuries and share this information with parents. Leaders regularly monitor these to look for patterns and trends. Staff promote health and hygiene very effectively. They support children to wash their hands independently after using the toilet, and before their food is served. Staff ensure children have plenty of access to high quality daily outdoor play experiences, offering them the added benefits of physical exercise and fresh air.

Staff interact with children in a very kind, patient, and cheerful way. They model language highly effectively as they chat naturally with children to support their play and learning. We saw many examples of children and staff laughing, smiling and having fun together. Staff have a good understanding of child development, and its impact on children's behaviour. They practise positive behaviour management strategies and very sensitively support children, understanding and anticipating any situations where children may struggle to manage their behaviour. We heard staff regularly praising and encouraging children throughout the session. Staff act as excellent role models, treating each other and the children with dignity and respect. They have good supportive relationships and communicate well with each other. This ensures children are well supervised and supported throughout their time at the setting and enhances the positive atmosphere that children experience.

Staff have highly effective skills and knowledge to identify children's individual needs and plan appropriate play and learning opportunities. Consequently, they support children's learning and development very well. Staff regularly observe children's play and learning to track their progress. This helps staff identify children's next steps and plan exciting and worthwhile activities to skilfully promote their learning and development. Staff work well with outside agencies to support children with additional learning needs. An excellent variety of activities allow children to follow their own interests, which motivates them to learn. Staff promote the Welsh language well, using phrases, words, and songs with children.

Environment — Good

The environment is secure and provides enough space for children to play and learn. Staff lock external doors and gates. They ensure only authorised entry to the setting and maintain a visitor's log. Staff complete safety checks of the environment to identify and where possible eliminate any risks to children's safety. Highly effective risk assessments are in place for all activities and areas of the setting that staff implement robustly. Routine safety checks and certificates for the building and appliances are in place; however, the Gas Safety Certificate had been allowed to lapse for six weeks before the most recent check, and the Electrical Safety Certificate had been allowed to lapse for over six months before being renewed. Lapses like this put children at potential risk and we expect the provider to make improvements.

The environment is very welcoming and child friendly and provides an inviting space for children to learn and have fun. The main playroom is bright, spacious, and organised effectively to provide different areas of learning and inviting activities that stimulate children's curiosity, exploration, and development. The children's toilet and sink area can be easily accessed from the main room. This provides dignity, privacy, and the opportunity for children to be independent, whilst also allowing staff to easily supervise and support children. There is also a well-equipped nappy changing area. The outdoor space has been developed to provide strong opportunities for children to play and learn in the fresh air. Staff have made efforts to incorporate plants and natural world learning opportunities for children.

The setting contains high-quality furniture to support children's independence. For example, child sized tables, chairs, craft trays, low level toy storage units and coat pegs for children's belongings. There is a wealth of superb, high quality, developmentally appropriate resources both indoors and outdoors. These contain a mix of natural and man-made materials with many attractive wooden resources. Real life and multicultural items promote children's awareness of equal opportunities and cultural diversity. Resources are clean and in good condition.

Leadership & Management — Excellent

Leaders have a very strong sense of purpose seeking to promote and sustain excellent outcomes for children. This dedication is shared amongst the staff, creating a highly motivated and positive team. Leaders are organised and very conscientious, and we saw how they create systems that ensure high standards are maintained across the setting. For example; they keep records consistently and store them securely and have very strong regular systems in place to monitor quality and record keeping at the setting. There is an extensive range of policies and procedures, which are regularly reviewed. However, there are no policies to describe how the setting manages sleep and eating safely. There is a clear Statement of Purpose which gives information about the setting and is regularly reviewed and updated. Leaders have a good understanding of their regulatory requirements.

Leaders promote a positive culture of openness, encouraging communication between the various levels of management team and staff. They continually look for ways to improve the service and outcomes for children. They consult with staff, parents, children and outside agencies to seek suggestions when they carry out their annual quality of care review. The review highlights their strengths and areas they would like to build on. However, leaders had not considered matters highlighted in the previous Care Inspectorate Wales report in their recent Quality of Care Reviews.

Leaders follow robust recruitment processes to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. There is a clear system in place to ensure that staff's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are current and there are a suitable proportion of qualified staff at the setting. All staff receive regular, high-quality supervisions and annual appraisals. These enable staff to celebrate their strengths and identify areas for development. The Person in charge (PIC) and Responsible Individual (RI) have a strong working relationship and communicate effectively together.

Leaders and staff who work there have established very strong relationships with parents. Parents spoke extremely highly of the setting and the care their children receive. They receive feedback on their child's progress and feel confident to approach staff to discuss any difficulties or issues relating to their children. Leaders have strong working relationships with a range of professionals, ensuring that when there are concerns about children's progress or development, they share information and work with parents and professionals to support children. Leaders and staff plan well to support children's onward transitions to school nursery classes. They collate excellent handover information, and provide opportunities for discussion, offering education providers very valuable insights to support children well as they move on.

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.

The table(s) below show the area(s) for priority action and/or those for improvement we have identified.

Summary of Areas for Improvement	Date identified
Children could be exposed to unnecessary risks if safety certificates are allowed to lapse.	15/07/22

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 18 - Quality assurance	Ensure the annual Quality of Care Review considers any recommendations or areas of non-compliance highlighted by Care inspectorate Wales.

Best Practice

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.

Recommendation(s)
Create policies which support the management of safe sleep at the setting and safety at times when children are eating.

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