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

Meithrinfa Pontnewydd

40 Station Road
Pontnewydd
Cwmbran
Torfaen
NP44 1NZ

Date of inspection: May 2024

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Meithrinfa Pontnewydd

Name of setting	Meithrinfa Pontnewydd
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	N/A
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Stephen Cross
Person in charge	Kaye Knox - manager
Number of places	86
Age range of children	0 – 5 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	22
Number of children who receive funding for early education	22
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday: 7.30 – 18.00
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bi-lingual service
Date of previous CIW inspection	25/07/23
Date of previous Estyn inspection	This is the setting's first inspection by Estyn
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	21/05/2024
The setting has changed from being a Welsh medium setting to English medium since September 2023. Very few children speak Welsh at home and a few have English as an additional language.	

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 provide children with suitable opportunities to learn about the diverse culture and heritage of Wales

R2 Ensure that targets for improvement focus on children's experiences, learning and progress

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

Nearly all older children are happy within the setting. They participate well in their learning and playing activities and make suitable choices and decisions. They enjoy the freedom to move around the indoor learning areas and choose activities that interest them. For example, they choose whether to play freely in the sand area and use stamps to create their own artwork in the creative area. At breakfast time, they choose what they want to eat from the different types of cereal on offer. Younger children also make their needs known and develop their own way of communicating using nonverbal signs.

Most children cope well as they separate from parents and carers. They are cheerful and comfortable as they arrive and are greeted by friendly practitioners. Nearly all children are familiar with daily routines such as washing their hands before eating and wiping their faces afterwards. Most children respond very positively when receiving praise from a practitioner. This has a positive effect on their well-being and self-esteem.

Most children interact positively with their friends and those caring for them. They enjoy sociable mealtimes, practice good manners, and sit nicely at the table. Many approach practitioners for support and often invite them into their play. Older children develop good organisation skills whilst playing with friends. They also learn to take turns and share from a young age. For example, older children take turns naturally to ask for snacks in the shop while younger children do so with adult support when building a tower using blocks.

Most children enjoy beneficial play activities and develop effective skills while experimenting and learning. For example, two children have great fun filling and emptying the containers in the water tray. Younger children enjoy the freedom to safely explore their environment. They have great fun making noises with the musical instruments on offer, squealing with excitement and smiling happily whilst shaking the bells. Many children concentrate for a suitable period that is in line with their stage of development.

Nearly all children develop their independent learning skills well. Younger children sit at low level tables and use spoons to feed themselves with adult support when required. Older children take responsibility for their own personal hygiene and respond well to opportunities to do things for themselves. For example, they use the toilet and wash their hands independently throughout the day, and learn to apply sun cream before going out to play. They react well to positive encouragement and support from practitioners. As a result, many children naturally try to do things independently before requiring help from an adult, for example when putting on their coats and hats.

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

During their time in the setting, most children make appropriate progress from their starting points. Most listen carefully to practitioners and respond appropriately to instructions as they play. The majority respond with confidence when talking about their activities. For example, they talk about the colour and number of beads when a practitioner suggests that they replicate a pattern by threading them on a lace. Most children show an interest in books, enjoy their content, and handle them appropriately and with respect in the reading area. Many understand the principle that reading is an activity to be enjoyed. They begin to develop early writing skills by experimenting with various materials such as crayons, paint, and chalk. They enjoy trying things for themselves and are very proud of their creations. In a few activities, many use Welsh words and simple phrases confidently such as when singing familiar Welsh rhymes during circle time and when choosing their snack in the setting's café.

Most children develop good mathematical, numeracy and problem-solving skills. Most sing a range of number songs and rhymes such as 'Un bys, dau fys, tri bys yn dawnsio…' confidently during circle time. Many use simple mathematical language in relevant contexts such as when comparing large and small bowls during the cooking session or when discussing whether there are more or fewer pieces of fruit in a basket during role play. Many count to ten without support and a few of the children with more developed skills count to twenty and beyond when counting objects in a picture book. Most recognise colours confidently, and match similar objects.

Many children develop good physical skills when running around on the grassed area outside. Many handle small tools such as syringes with dexterity to squirt water on to a Perspex sheet or use utensils such as a cutter to make Welsh Cakes in the cookery session.

Nearly all children make excellent progress in developing their creative skills. They produce an array of pleasant artwork such as pictures of flowers, a rainbow, and bees as they learn about different aspects of the Summer. Many take part

enthusiastically when singing familiar songs during circle time, and a few use percussion instruments appropriately to accompany the singing. Many display good imagination as they play in different role play areas such as the café and kitchen.

Most children are accustomed to using digital resources in their play and everyday activities. For example, they use an electronic microphone confidently to record themselves speaking and singing, use phones to chat in the role play area and race remote control cars to see which one wins.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners keep children safe and healthy. They understand their roles and responsibilities well and adhere to the settings' daily practices. Practitioners have an up to date first aid certificate to ensure they are qualified to deal with accidents, and ensure that appropriate first aid resources are available at the setting and during visits. Practitioners have a good understanding of child protection procedures and know their responsibilities well. They keep records of accidents, incidents, and pre-existing injuries, which include signatures of practitioners and parents. Leaders review and analyse these procedures regularly and occasionally improve their systems when they identify more effective ways of working. As part of their wider safeguarding practises and to ensure that children are safe, practitioners record children's attendance and their own times of work. As a result, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners promote healthy lifestyles by providing children with a variety of foods, and options of milk and water for them to drink. They ensure that all children have daily access to fresh air in the outdoor areas. Practitioners encourage children to wash their hands and develop their own personal hygiene practise effectively. Nappy changing procedures are in line with current infection control guidance. Practitioners conduct regular fire drills, so that children know what to do in the event of an emergency.

Practitioners are warm, welcoming, and reassure and comfort children constantly. They use positive language with the children and follow the setting's behaviour policy well, setting a good example of positive behaviour. They take regular opportunities to praise the children when they are kind or behave well, or when they succeed in their tasks. Practitioners facilitate children's social development successfully by encouraging them to help with simple tasks. For example, during mealtimes, practitioners give children opportunities to learn to cut fruit and serve their own cereal. They encourage children to say thank you and praise them as they complete their tasks successfully. This has a positive effect on the development of children's self-confidence and understanding the importance of respecting each other.

Practitioners promote children's play, learning and development successfully. They provide children with purposeful areas of learning, many of which are often adult led but meet the interests of children. Practitioners engage well with children and question them effectively during their play. They are sensitive to children who choose not to undertake specific tasks, allowing them the freedom to choose their own activity. Indoors, practitioners provide children with the resources they need for specific tasks, but they are not always responsive enough in providing resources to

ensure that children remain engaged in their activities in the outdoor areas. The setting has identified the need to evaluate the activities they provide and to facilitate further the children's voice when planning activities.

Practitioners identify children with additional needs early and support them well. They work successfully with parents, carers, and outside agencies to ensure the best outcomes for 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 children with high-quality learning experiences that develop their literacy, numeracy, and other skills well. These are based on children's interests, encourage them to be creative and are generally matched successfully to their stage of development. Practitioners respond well to children's interests when planning play-based activities. They also provide a range of resources and activities which are familiar to the children and to which a child may return time-after-time, successfully developing skills as they play.

Practitioners make suitable use of the local area to support children's learning. For example, they visit the local post office and encourage each child to post a letter home. Children are excited when they receive their letter in the post. The setting also invites visitors to enhance learning opportunities for children. They recently arranged for a dog to visit. This enabled the children to learn about how animals can help humans.

Many practitioners use Welsh regularly for instructions, at circle time, snack time and incidentally throughout the session. This raises children's understanding of the language and encourages them to use it naturally where appropriate. Very occasionally, the setting celebrates Welsh culture and heritage by arranging visits to places in the community and singing Welsh songs and rhymes. For example, on St. David's Day, practitioners arranged a visit to a local café for children to learn about Welsh produce such as milk and cheese. They also provide opportunities for children to make their own Welsh cakes in the setting kitchen. However, the opportunities for children to learn about the diverse culture and heritage of Wales are limited.

The setting promotes children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development well. Practitioners encourage children to be honest and kind to each other. They encourage them to develop a sense of curiosity about nature, and particularly birds and animals in the local area. They provide children with books and dolls that represent diversity. The setting also celebrates different religions and cultures to demonstrate to children that people should be valued whatever their backgrounds. For example, a former parent at the setting visited to talk about her visit to Nigeria and to share Nigerian customs with the children. There is a regular focus on learning about the relationships between different generations. For example, children visit a local care home on a weekly basis to get to know the residents and to interact with them. Practitioners encourage children to learn about the importance of sustainability and re-cycling. They constantly re-cycle waste and encourage parents to support the local food bank. The setting has also started re-cycling children's books by setting up a lending library near the entrance.

Practitioners are good role models of behaviour and language. They use open ended questions that encourage children to communicate confidently with them and to take their learning forward. They often play alongside children to demonstrate a skill or start to play in an area on their own so that children join them without being prompted. This is effective in ensuring that nearly all children are engaged purposefully throughout the sessions.

Practitioners have a developing understanding of child development. They observe children at their tasks and have recently adapted the way they record their notes. They now record their observations in the children's key file books using three steps – notice, analyse and response. These build a comprehensive picture of their learning and inform the next steps in their learning.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure that the environment is safe and in a suitable condition. They keep a record of visitors and have valid public liability insurance. Leaders complete checks to the building and vehicles in a timely manner. They ensure that risk assessments are in place for the setting, and for all activities and visits. These identify potential risks and there are suitable measures in place to manage these.

Leaders provide a welcoming and friendly environment for children. They ensure that there is plenty of space for children to move around the play areas freely. They provide suitable facilities for children to use the toilet and hand washing basins independently. There are nappy changing facilities on both floors and these, along with the toilets, provide children with respect and privacy.

Leaders ensure that children's independence is facilitated with appropriate low-level furniture and storage. For example, children sit at tables of suitable height to eat, and access resources such as books from suitable shelving. Downstairs, at the setting, is open plan and dividers are used to help reduce high noise levels so that practitioners can support children to listen and engage in their learning. Leaders provide younger children with areas for sleep, rest, and relaxation on both floors. For example, a section of the main upstairs playroom is set aside for children to sleep on floor mats as well as cots in the adjacent sleep area. Older children in the downstairs room have access to mats and cushions in the den areas, where they can rest and relax as well as undertake quiet activities such as reading.

Practitioners ensure that there is a friendly and comfortable atmosphere in the setting. They promote this by displaying photos of children with their families as well as photos of children during play at the setting. Practitioners display children's artwork and show that everyone's work is valued. This contributes to the children's sense of belonging and pride in their achievements.

Leaders provide ample resources that are suitable for the ages of children that attend. Practitioners encourage children's personal and social development well through access to toys and books. They organise the indoor learning areas well and provide interesting areas of learning for children to develop a variety of skills. For example, there are opportunities for children to play a role in the home corner and for younger ones to build towers using blocks. Although the outdoor learning area is quite small, practitioners make suitable use of the available space, and provide

opportunities for children to develop a range of skills as they play in the mud kitchen and order food at the café.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting which they communicate effectively to parents and carers. This is based on providing children with a safe, warm, friendly, and stimulating environment. Leaders set high expectations for practitioners and support them well to increase their knowledge, understanding and professional skills. They understand the importance of developing practitioners' Welsh language skills and provide appropriate opportunities for them to receive suitable training.

The responsible individual is supportive of the manager and generally deploys the leadership and day-to-day management of the setting to the her and the staff. Together, they promote safe practices and a beneficial culture of safety for the setting.

There is a positive ethos at the setting and children and practitioners are happy and feel appreciated. Leaders and practitioners discuss important issues relating to children's development regularly, and act upon them on an ongoing basis. The objectives of the setting are clear and focus well on the needs of the children. Practitioners understand and implement them conscientiously and they are available to parents as needed.

Leaders have suitable procedures to evaluate their work and include all practitioners in the process. Leaders also consider the views of parents and carers by sharing questionnaires with them and considering their feedback. Leaders identify accurately what the setting does well, and highlight a few areas that need improving. Improvement procedures are clear and leaders generally monitor progress against activities accurately. However, targets for improvement are often based on the completion of tasks or activities and do not focus clearly enough on the effect on children's experiences, learning and progress.

Leaders manage staff and resources prudently and effectively. They make suitable use of the Early Years Development Grant and other grants to purchase resources and to fund training for practitioners. The roles and responsibilities of practitioners are clear, there are good adult to child ratios, and there are suitable contingency plans in case of staff absence. Leaders ensure that the supervisory and appraisal procedure for practitioners is effective and results in the setting of appropriate agreed targets for them.

Leaders and practitioners work effectively with a range of partners to improve children's health, learning and well-being. These include the local authority support teacher and officers of Flying Start, amongst others. Practitioners also work closely with parents and carers to identify children's individual needs and preferences throughout their time at the setting. Leaders provide parents with important information about policies through its website and the use of safe social media. Practitioners also speak regularly to parents at the beginning and end of the session as needed.

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 (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. 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
30	The Responsible Individual must ensure that accurate daily registers for children and staff are completed for each room. The Responsible Individual must ensure that all staff, throughout each day, know which staff and children are on the premises and in which room at any given time of operating.	Achieved
31	The Responsible Individual must ensure all relevant notifications are submitted to Care Inspectorate Wales within the required timescales.	Achieved
29	The Responsible Individual must ensure the setting's disciplinary policy provides that the failure on the part of an employee to report an incident of abuse, or suspected abuse of a relevant child to an appropriate person is a ground on which disciplinary proceedings may be instituted.	Achieved
22	The Responsible Individual must ensure policies and procedures are fit for purpose and that all leaders and staff are confident in implementing them, to ensure children are safeguarded.	Achieved

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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