Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Ysgol Feithrin Abertridwr

Ysgol Feithrin Abertridwr, King Street, Abertridwr, Caerphilly, CF83 4BE

02920831492

none

The inspection visit took place on 29/06/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Ysgol Feithrin Abertridwr
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	19
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	Good
Environment	Adequate
Leadership & Management	Adequate

Summary:

Children are confident, happy and actively involved in their play and learning. They make meaningful choices, express their views and follow their interests independently. Strong, nurturing relationships support their wellbeing, while effective opportunities promote social skills, independence, creativity and curiosity, enabling children to thrive throughout their experiences.

Staff are highly effective in creating a nurturing and engaging environment for children. They promote healthy lifestyles and provide meaningful learning experiences through warm, responsive interactions. Effective teamwork ensures children experience smooth transitions and high-quality care throughout the session. Staff promote Welsh language and culture naturally, helping children develop a strong sense of belonging while supporting their confidence, independence and overall development.

Leaders provide a safe, stimulating and child-centred environment where children can play, learn and develop confidently. Children access a wide range of purposeful resources and play opportunities. Leaders effectively manage the provision and are committed to ongoing improvements, particularly in developing the outdoor environment and maintaining safety.

Leaders are committed to supporting children's wellbeing and have established positive partnerships with families and other professionals. An experienced staff team contributes to the effective day-to-day running of the setting. However, inconsistencies in governance, record-keeping, policy review and recruitment practices mean leadership arrangements require further development in several areas.

Findings:

Well-being — Excellent

Children have a very strong voice at the setting. They make highly effective choices and decisions and independently choose what activities and resources they want to play with. Children enthusiastically choose which fruit they would like for snack and after choosing milk or water, they purposefully pour their own drinks into a cup. Children have consistent opportunities to make decisions about their play, such as choosing whether to paint or continue with their current activity. Children's opinions and interests are exceptionally well valued and acted upon. For example, we saw children enthusiastically exploring a spider's web using magnifying glasses and binoculars, supported by staff who shared their interest and excitement.

Children are extremely happy, settled and cope well with separation from their parents or carers. They have exceptionally strong relationships with each other and staff. Children know routines very well, allowing for effective transitions during the session. They laugh and smile frequently whilst engaging in activities. Children's work is displayed around the setting. This gives them a strong sense of pride, confidence and belonging. Children know their likes and dislikes will be acknowledged and valued. During the inspection we saw children naturally engage staff in their play.

Children interact well, expressing themselves with enthusiasm and enjoyment consistently. We saw children purposefully engage with staff, calling them by their names. They are developing their social skills effectively with support from adults. Children share and cooperate with one another admirably, for example when making play pizza in the home corner. They confidently explore the environment and engage purposely in a wide range of individual and group activities such as morning registration, playing cars on a track and reading together.

Children are very interested and highly motivated in their play and learning. They confidently follow their own interest and engage in extensive child led activities. Children sustain concentration for a period while building and balancing bricks outdoors. They sequence a story about a caterpillar, confidently asking staff for support when needed. They show exceptional curiosity when exploring minibeasts and use small world bugs to creatively inspire their drawings.

Children demonstrate very strong and age-appropriate independence skills. They wash their hands and access their own belongings unaided. They are supported by staff when needed, with encouragement to achieve their goal. For example, children put their lunch boxes away following clear, step by step instructions. We saw children creatively testing their own ideas by placing small cars in a tyre and rolling it to observe the outcome. Children experience plentiful opportunities that promote their all-round development and enable them to confidently follow their own interests. For example, we saw a child enthusiastically create a symmetrical butterfly exclaiming *"I want to do it!"*

Care & Development — Good

Staff have a firm understanding of their role in protecting children and answer questions relevant to safeguarding competently. All staff have completed mandatory training, including, safeguarding, first aid and food hygiene. Healthy snacks and drinks provided promote good nutrition at the setting. Children are encouraged to brush their teeth following snack, with an engaging Welsh and English song introduced by staff. There are effective cleaning and hygiene practices in place. Children competently and routinely wash their hands prior to meals. Nearly all staff undertake nappy changing in line with their policy. Staff provide gentle safety reminders and know when children need support to stay safe. For example, they support children to safely navigate the garden steps.

Staff are consistently responsive, interacting in a calm and nurturing manner. They praise children in an encouraging and caring manner. For example, we heard staff say, "*Look how pretty that is*", "*Yay*!" and "*Da iawn"* regularly. Staff engage, interact and communicate with children warmly. For example, we saw staff supporting children to take turns when sharing construction vehicles. Staff are good role models to children. They are patient, relaxed and kind. We saw them sit with children and hold discussions at snack time, promoting worthwhile social interactions.

Staff build strong, positive relationships with children by actively joining in their play and following their interests. For example, a staff member engaged with children as they played with vehicles on a track. Staff purposely instil confidence in children, for example, showing children's artwork to the whole setting with enthusiasm, receiving responses such as '*Wow, that's brilliant, high 5!"*

Staff support children who are learning to ride a bike, exclaiming "L*ook how good you are!*" There is a good balance of child led and adult directed activities that are exciting and interesting. Staff skilfully play alongside children, using effective questions and interactions to extend learning and develop thinking. For example, children saw a helicopter and staff asked, "*I wonder where they are going?"* Staff promote counting, language and physical development bilingually, through active play. There are embedded systems in place for observations and planning to successfully monitor children's development and support their continued learning.

Staff promote the Welsh language effectively. They naturally introduce words and phrases such as "S*ut mae'r tywydd heddi?"* (*How is the weather today?)* Welsh culture and heritage are promoted well at the setting. For example, staff incorporate a range of Welsh activities, events, and resources which develop a sense of 'cynefin' (belonging) at the setting.

Staff ensure transitions are seamless throughout the setting. They are consistently calm, enthusiastic and engaging which creates a positive environment that encourages children to participate in play and learning opportunities.

Environment — Adequate

Leaders maintain a safe and secure environment for children. Outside gates are securely closed, and effective visitor procedures are in place. There are a range of risk assessments, including school collections, trips and individual activities, however, it is not always clear how regularly these are reviewed. Daily checklists are completed for environmental risk assessments. Staff complete daily checks of the environment. However, during the inspection we identified a potential risk in the outdoor area which had not been identified through these checks. Staff responded immediately when this was brought to their attention and removed the hazard. Regular fire drills are completed at different times of day. Appropriate electrical, gas and fire extinguisher safety checks are up to date. Suitable toilet and nappy changing facilities are accessible to the children. A designated kitchen area, for lunch and snack time preparations are located within the main play area, which has recently been refurbished.

The indoor play areas provide children with space to move freely within zoned areas of play. The indoor play spaces include a carpeted registration area, reading den, table-top activities, a role-play home corner, a kitchen area, a painting station and a sand tray. The indoor area is light and welcoming and supports children to feel comfortable and settled. Leaders provide a range of developmentally appropriate resources and learning opportunities that support children's play and development.

Display boards are developmentally appropriate and enhance the learning environment. Resources are stored so that children can independently access what they choose to play with. Many resources reflect natural materials and every day, real objects. For example, there are pots and pans in the role play kitchen. Leaders ensure purposeful resources are available to promote creativity and problem-solving skills. For example, we saw children using wooden ramps to construct car tracks.

Leaders have identified opportunities to improve the physical environment and told us they are planning building enhancements to create a more sustainable setting.

The outdoor play space is spread across three levels. The lower level allows a free flow access between the indoor and outdoor environments and includes a water tray, drawing station and car track. The middle level is typically used for planting activities; however, it was out of use during the inspection due to on-going improvement works. The upper level provides opportunities for children to develop their physical skills through activities such as riding bikes, constructing with foam bricks and throwing bean bags. The provider is committed to further enhancing the outdoor environment through community support and grant funding opportunities.

Leadership & Management — Adequate

Leaders are dedicated to ensuring positive outcomes for children. However, leadership and management of the setting is inconsistent in several areas. They employ a consistent and long-standing staff team who bring valuable experience and commitment to the setting. Staff access a range of training opportunities that support their knowledge and professional development. Regular supervisions and appraisals are held and staff told us they feel supported. There is a newly appointed committee in place which staff feel is having a positive impact.

Leaders ensure that most of the required records are kept. However, there are several inconsistencies which need attention. For example, parent/guardian permissions are not always sought for relevant purposes, such as social media consent, the safeguarding policy does not reflect current procedures, and the disciplinary policy is insufficient. Whilst daily registers accurately reflect which children are in attendance, arrangements for recording staff attendance at the setting are not in place. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

Leaders show an awareness and understanding of the regulations and National Minimum Standards, however there are inconsistencies in achieving these effectively in their documentation. There is a statement of purpose in place. However, this is not fully reflective of current practice within the setting. Staff record medical information, but the previous dose of medication is not noted, as required. Leaders monitor accidents and incidents but there are some inconsistencies in the record keeping which hinder effective oversight.

Leaders engage positively with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). However, they do not consistently keep us up to date with changes at the setting. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

Leaders have a basic operational plan in place however, detail is limited and out of date. Leaders have suitable arrangements in place to support the operation of the service. This includes ensuring children's registration details are retained. The setting has a range of policies and procedures in place, however, currently there is no sleep policy in place. Policies are also not consistently reviewed to ensure they remain current. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

Leaders have self-evaluation systems in place, recently completing their Self-Assessment of Service Statement. They consider the views of parents which are referenced within their quality of care report. There is appropriate public liability insurance in place, relevant car documentation and they are registered with the Information Commissioners Office.

Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks are in place for the majority of staff. However, during the inspection we saw that there was no DBS in place for the person in charge. We also saw

that the responsible individual had not presented their DBS to CIW as required. Therefore, CIW cannot be assured that children are always appropriately safeguarded. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

There are effective partnerships in place. Leaders have developed good links with external professionals, local schools, Early Years Wales, the local authority's Flying Start service and the community. Communications with parents are positive. Parents we spoke with during the inspection told us that they are updated verbally and by telephone calls. They also told us how well staff work with their children.

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 are at potential risk of harm because not all staff hold an up-to-date DBS check, so the provider is unable to make an informed decision about their suitability.	29/06/26
Children are at potential risk of harm because the responsible individual does not keep CIW up to date with notifications in line with regulations.	29/06/26
Children's outcomes may be affected because the responsible individual cannot consistently demonstrate that arrangements are in place to support children's safety, welfare and well-being.	29/06/26

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 1 - Information	Update Statement Of Purpose to reflect current practices and submit to CIW.
Standard 24 - Safety	Consistently review all risk assessments and strengthen the effectiveness of daily checks.
Standard 5 - Records	Implement effective monitoring systems to ensure accident and incident records are separately completed, signed, and reviewed consistently.
Standard 11 - Medication	Record the previous dose of medication administered on medication records.
Standard 14 - Organisation	Update the operational plan to include relevant and current information.
Standard 16 - Equal opportunities	Update the equal opportunities policy, to be consistent with current additional learning needs legislation and guidance and review regularly.
Standard 24 - Safety	Develop a sleep policy to provide guidance on safe sleep.

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