Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Pobl Bach Early Learning Centre

Merlin Building
Llangunnor Road
Carmarthen
SA31 2BL

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



Date Inspection Completed

30/07/2024

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About Pobl Bach Early Learning Centre

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Pobl Bach Ltd
Registered places	49
Language of the service	Both
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	15 February 2022
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.

Well-being	**Excellent**
Care and Development	**Excellent**
Environment	**Excellent**
Leadership and Management	**Excellent**

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at this setting because they have a strong voice and express themselves extremely well. They communicate effectively; consistently making choices about what they do and how they want to spend their time at the setting. Children are independent and engage in purposeful play-based activities. They form positive friendships with their friends and with staff.

Staff offer a happy and stimulating child centred setting and understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. They have a very good understanding of children's individual needs and fully understand how best to support children in their interests, learning and development. Staff manage behaviours exceptionally well.

Leaders ensure the environment is safe, clean, and exceptionally well maintained indoors and outdoors. They ensure the premises is welcoming, inviting and extremely organised. Leaders provide an excellent range of engaging resources, which extend children's skills and interests.

Leaders have an excellent vision for their setting which promotes excellent outcomes for children. They communicate effectively with parents and work continuously to make improvements to the setting. Leaders support staff through induction and professional development. They build partnerships with schools and with other professionals to provide purposeful events and activities for children.

Well-being	**Excellent**

Children have an excellent voice at this setting. They are very confident to communicate their wishes, preferences and needs. Children have a wide range of exciting and innovative opportunities to make choices about what affects them. For instance, whilst chatting as part of a friendship group at the lunch table, the children talk about the week's activities and the choices they could make to participate in the setting's different activities such as swimming. Children's opinions and interests are highly valued. For example, children confidently ask if they can have a music and singing session with guitars, whilst others choose to rest and take some time out on the cushions in the quiet area.

Children arrive at the setting with enthusiasm and are extremely well settled. They express their delight as they see their friends and eagerly begin to plan the day ahead. They demonstrate they are familiar with their environment, their friends and staff and have a strong sense of belonging. Children know the setting's routine and excitedly express their choices and ideas around activities. For example, as they form a queue to go outdoors to meet a visitor, the children chat excitedly about the activity they are about to take part in.

Children's interactions amongst each other and with staff are caring and kind. They cooperate openly to make decisions, to problem solve and fulfil tasks. For example, during a pool game, older children explain the rules of the game to younger children and support each other to pot different coloured balls. Other children enjoy playing at a large dolls house and chat enthusiastically about moving furniture into different rooms.

Children really enjoy their play and learning experiences. They are highly motivated, animated and fully engage in the activities provided. Children also use their initiative and lead their play and learning. For example, during free play in the outdoors, the children request foam to experiment with as part of a messy play activity. Others enjoy the freedom to climb, roll through hoops and build with large wooden blocks. During a falconry session in the outdoor area as part of the planned series of weekly visitors and experiences, the children confidently decide whether they wish to hold the birds. Children listen carefully to the falconer as they learn about kestrels, falcons and eagle owls. They eagerly volunteer to wear the appropriate glove to hold the birds of prey, resulting in a great feeling of achievement.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop their independence skills. This enables them to be able to do things for themselves, to make greater choices, to plan their own learning and problem solve effectively. Children use the toilet and wash their hands independently and they help themselves, when they wish, to the water bottles from their bags. They independently choose from an excellent choice of resources, electronic equipment or games, returning these to designated storerooms or units when they are finished.

Care and Development — Excellent

Staff understand and consistently implement policies and procedures to promote healthy lifestyles, physical activities, personal safety and well-being. They know the children well

and are familiar with their environment, therefore they identify and manage daily risks effectively. Staff understand their responsibilities to safeguard children in line with the setting's policy and procedure. They practice robust hygiene procedures, for example they ensure they wipe surfaces consistently before and after mealtimes and activities. Staff promote the children's independence during toileting and hand washing routines but are always at hand to encourage and remind children why stringent handwashing is important. Staff at the setting provide a nutritious and varied menu and children enjoy trying new dishes. For example, children enjoy the opportunity to fill their own plates with sweet and sour chicken and rice and are praised when they ask for more. They implement safe and effective practices for children's allergies and keep clear information in the dining area which staff communicate clearly with each other during mealtimes. Staff record accidents, incidents and any administration of medication on an app, which parents have instant access to. Staff ensure they consider their environment and activities carefully when planning for children and they are knowledgeable regarding children's additional learning needs.

Interactions between staff and children are warm and kind, demonstrating that they know the children well. They understand children's individual needs and recognise when they need to reinforce positive behaviour strategies such as when children become over excited. Staff consistently remind children about showing kindness and patience to others. They are very good role models and provide consistency and calm, reminding children they can take their time and that there are enough resources for everyone. Staff communicate clearly and explain to children what is happening next. They provide clear guidance before new activities begin. For instance, as the children wait for the falconry session to begin, staff explain the importance of showing care and respect to the birds. During such activities staff chat with children consistently offering praise and new vocabulary*, "Can you say Owl? Chi'n gallu dweud Gwdihŵ?"*

Staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development. They observe children and plan for stimulating activities according to their ages, skills and interests. They are responsive to children's needs and listen carefully to their views, ensuring they promote their rights within a respectful learning environment. During holiday club, we saw a full range of exciting activities and planned visits. Children are genuinely excited about the activities which are displayed for them in the foyer on a visual timetable. For example, a trip to the beach followed by making ocean collages and beach art, making jewellery, bird feeders and fruit kebabs, science afternoons and sports days. Staff and children chat enthusiastically as they recall their forest trip the previous week, which had ended with fond memories of hot chocolate in the café.

Environment — Excellent

Leaders have effective measures in place and ensure everyone fully understands their responsibilities to keep children safe. They provide access to the setting via an automatic door, with access to the indoor ground space only possible when opened by staff. Leaders ensure the environment is bright, well ventilated, and maintained to an extremely high

standard. They keep comprehensive risk assessments for the building, outdoors, activities and outings and review these annually or when required. Leaders ensure they carry out regular fire drills, keep a purposeful fire risk assessment, and ensure fire equipment is serviced annually. They keep a visitors' book and first aid boxes. They also ensure they sign staff and children in and out of the setting, recording this information on an app. Leaders ensure staff carry iPads to update registers, daily information and carry out observations.

Leaders ensure the indoor space is immaculate and inviting. They offer purposely designed areas to cater for out of school children. For instance, ground floor rooms provide different learning opportunities such as a games room, creative arts room and dining room for all mealtimes. Leaders use exciting, bilingual wall murals to stimulate children's learning and language skills. For instance, they display story characters, shapes, planets, a world map and a mural which celebrates the Welsh language and culture. Leaders organise the environment exceptionally well with an excellent range of play opportunities suitable for all the age ranges catered for. They ensure a child-friendly layout which enables children to choose activities and resources independently. Leaders provide storage rooms and toilet areas which are easily accessible to children. They offer additional indoor spaces on the setting's first floor which include: a purpose-built kitchen; secure office space; a large open space for activities such as cooking; a multi-purpose room where older children enjoy cinema sessions and where staff offer baby massage sessions. Leaders told us the main entrance's automatic door is locked when children use the upstairs space. They offer a safe outdoor learning environment with a large shelter. Children access the outdoor area via a gate at the side of the building and staff vigilantly supervise children as they access this outdoor space.

Leaders ensure resources are of a very high quality. They provide an extensive range of age-appropriate furniture, resources and equipment to stimulate children's interests and imagination. Leaders are committed to providing resources and opportunities for children to learn through curiosity and sensory learning experiences. They promote activities and events which celebrate languages, diversity and cultural awareness. Leaders told us they are still developing the outdoor area which offers a range of quality wooden resources. They also make excellent and exciting arrangements for children to enjoy outside experiences such as trips to local beaches and forests.

Leadership and Management — Excellent

Leaders are passionate about the provision they offer for children out of school. They have an innovative vision which they share with staff, parents and children and are committed to continue developing the setting. Leaders ensure their statement of purpose reflects the service provided and they understand their regulatory responsibilities. They are knowledgeable about the requirements of the national minimum standards. For instance, they keep up to date policies and procedures, and review these annually or when the need

arises. Leaders ensure records such as children's files are completed prior to registration and include evidence of parental or carer consents. They are registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and their insurance and car documents are valid.

Leaders monitor the quality of their setting and continually plan for improvements through grants and careful investment. They seek feedback from parents and staff and chat with the out of school children continuously to ensure they implement the children's ideas and interests. Leaders write an annual quality of care report which they use as a foundation to enhance the quality of their provision.

Leaders effectively choose a team of staff who are knowledgeable and passionate about their roles and responsibilities. They consistently support staff who are extremely enthusiastic and work hard to ensure they offer a kind and stimulating learning environment for every child. Leaders ensure they keep staff files up to date and provide regular opportunities for staff to reflect on individual targets which they review every three months. They ensure staff mandatory training is up to date. Staff are happy and enjoy the opportunities they have to develop their skills and continue on their professional development pathways.

Leaders have strong partnerships with schools across the year. They work effectively with their sister settings to ensure flexible childcare provision for out of school children. Leaders have established open and effective partnerships with parents and ensure they share as much information as possible via a daily messenger app. They are committed to working with parents and families to promote excellent outcomes for children's well-being, development and life skills. Children told us they really enjoy playing with their friends at the setting. Leaders work hard to offer an exciting and varied timetable. They plan events, visitors, activities and trips to ensure children gain exciting experiences to enhance their skills and develop their knowledge of their community and the world around them. For example, trips to museums, castles and farms, and visits from professionals such as Falconry, Fire and Safety and Football skills.

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.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this	N/A

	inspection	

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.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

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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