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

Little Sparks at Llangattock C in W School

Clos Ciliau,
Llangattock
Crickhowell
Powys
NP8 1PH

Date of inspection: October 2022

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Little Sparks at Llangattock C in W School

Name of setting	Little Sparks
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Kathryn Marshall
Person in charge	Kate Dykes
Number of places	16
Age range of children	3-4
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	3
Number of children who receive funding for early education	3
Opening days / times	Mon, Tues, Friday 9-13:00Weds, Thursday 9-15:00
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service that does not provide an ‘Active Offer’ of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify, or meet the Welsh language needs of the children who use, or intend to use their service. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government’s ‘More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care’.
Date of previous CIW inspection	17/01/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection	No previous inspection
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	12/10/2022

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Improve the provision to develop children's Welsh language skills

R2 Further develop the use of observations to promote children's learning and development

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:

Nearly all children feel completely at home at the setting and enjoy attending. They arrive happy and cope well when separated from their parents and carers. They go straight to the range of activities and resources available to them. As a result, they settle in, and form positive attachments with the other children and practitioners.

Children have a strong voice and contribute a great deal to the way practitioners develop the provision. Their interest and views are listened to and are incorporated into the activities that are planned. Most children express their feelings and make effective choices about how they spend their time and with whom they play. For example, children are confident when choosing to play in a role play area rather than joining others in a painting activity outside. Nearly all children show resilience and perseverance in their play and learning. Children have opportunities to express opinions about their day and how they spend their time. A notable example of this is during snack time when children choose when to eat their snack and freely access their water bottles.

Children form good relationships with practitioners and their peers. They welcome friends when they arrive, waiting for them to hang their belongings on pegs before joining them in a play activity. Most children play together successfully and develop good social skills. For example, when playing in the shop they decide on their roles and interact appropriately. They work together to organise the resources they need. Most of the children are confident to approach trusted adults for support and are developing their conversations with each other.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning. They are active and curious learners. For example, they recognise a photo of Cardiff Castle on the wall and want to know the name of other castles on the photographs. They work together to build a long trail with big blocks. They smile as they walk from one end to the other and squeal with excitement as they reach the end of the trail.

Nearly all children are highly independent. For example, they use the toilet and wash their hands independently throughout the day and take responsibility for their own personal hygiene. They are confident and move freely from the indoor and outdoor areas to access activities that interest them. They manage their own risks and know their limitations. An example of this is when children access the different levels on the climbing wall or choose from the various bikes available. Whilst watching each other use this equipment they are motivated to develop their own skills and try new things.

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

There is no report on children’s learning. This is because there were not enough three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection, who do not receive funded education elsewhere, to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development:

Practitioners follow rigorous and robust procedures to ensure children's health and safety. They keep appropriate records of accidents, and the relevant forms are available for medication, incidents, and pre-existing injuries. First aid kits are checked regularly to ensure the contents are suitable for use and practitioners have a valid first aid certificate. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Practitioners attend safeguarding training and as a result they are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection. They implement thorough hygiene control procedures and complete daily checks to identify and reduce risks. For example, they disinfect the tables before and after snack time and teach children the importance of hand washing. Practitioners promote good habits in terms of ensuring children stay healthy by promoting healthy foods at snack and lunch time. They provide regular physical activities for the children, such as climbing different apparatus and riding bikes.

Practitioners develop warm relationships with children and treat them with respect. They praise frequently, which has a positive effect on developing children's' self-confidence and understanding. Practitioners consistently use positive language which promotes positive behaviour and supports children to manage their choices effectively. For example, a practitioner praises a child for adapting the way they carry a block. Practitioners are skilled in allowing children the space to develop in their imaginative play and problem-solving skills, intervening to support when appropriate.

All practitioners know the children and their families very well and this helps them to plan in line with the children's interests. They ensure that children have input to the content of their play by following children's own ideas where appropriate.

Practitioners promote equality and diversity through discussions about home language and celebrating traditions from different cultures. For example, they include the home languages of the children in the setting at snack time when talking about names of fruit. They respect children's dignity and respect. For example, they allow children to use the toilet independently and respect their privacy. Practitioners promote opportunities for children of all abilities, including children who may have an additional learning need, to learn and develop effectively. Practitioners observe children's progress and annotate photos to record achievements. However, they do not always use these observations well enough to inform their questioning and support children's development.

Teaching and assessment (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):

Practitioners have a good understanding of how children learn through play. They provide children with a worthwhile range of authentic experiences that enable them to take their time to explore and investigate to develop their ideas and thinking. Practitioners take notice of children's interests and fascinations and respond to these suitably through providing resources to enhance their play. For example, they add paper to the outdoor area for the children to make prints from the patterns of the spilled paint.

The provision to develop children's literacy skills is appropriate. Practitioners are good language role models and encourage children to participate in conversation

skilfully. They respond well to children's invitations to play. They model appropriate vocabulary and use questions effectively to support children's thinking. They provide a range of opportunities for children to develop their mark making skills across all areas of provision.

Practitioners provide suitable learning experiences that promote children's creative, moral, spiritual, and cultural development. They provide effective opportunities for children to learn and care about living things. For example, practitioners foster a sense of awe and wonder through encouraging children to look for signs of nature in the outside area and through visits such as to the local pumpkin patch.

Practitioners develop children's numeracy skills appropriately through opportunities that occur during their play. For example, they talk to children about how many blocks are needed to build their tower.

Practitioners provide worthwhile opportunities for children to learn about Wales and its culture. For example, on St David's Day they paint pictures of daffodils and attend the local school Eisteddfod. They display pictures of Welsh castles and local landmarks within the setting and talk about their importance and where they can be found. However, the provision to develop children's Welsh language skills is not developed well enough.

Practitioners develop positive relationships with children and know their children well. They gently encourage children to communicate with others and participate in joint play activities when appropriate. They support children to understand the routines and rules of the setting, such as the need to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle in the outdoor area.

The setting keeps parents suitably informed of their child's progress and how they can help support them through informal conversations at the daily drop off and pick up as well as parents' meetings throughout the year. The setting leader informs parents weekly of the activities that have taken place and shares photos and examples of children's work on the setting social media page.

The setting recently moved towards a more child led approach to learning in line with the principles of the Curriculum for Wales. Practitioners are at the very early stages of using observations to evaluate and respond to children's learning.

However, practitioners have not yet fully developed their approach to observation to ensure they respond to individual children's needs, and to deepen and extend their learning.

Environment:

Leaders ensure that the environment is safe and clean and as a result promote the safety and welfare of children. The setting has arrangements for receiving visitors and they follow effective safety procedures when the children enter and leave the premises. Detailed risk assessments are in place for the building and for specific activities. These inform the daily checklist which practitioners implement to minimize risks to children. Leaders undertake regular fire drills in line with the local school's procedures, with outcomes recorded and evaluated. Practitioners hold additional practise fire drills specifically for the children at the setting. As a result, children are familiar with the fire safety arrangements.

The environment is welcoming, stimulating and there are attractive displays using natural resources. For example, there is a large branch used to display the children's photographs on a family tree. Children approach and discuss the photos and as a result feel a strong sense of belonging at the setting. Furniture is of a good quality and appropriate for the age of the children. The environment is clean, well-organised and flexible which allows for movement of resources across the setting. This supports children's play successfully and ensures that their interests and needs are always the highest priority. Practitioners ensure an effective flow between the indoor and outdoor areas, which enables the children to develop their independence. The outdoor area also provides space for children to develop their physical and gross motor skills using larger equipment such as bikes and large painting screens.

There is a rich supply of good quality resources, appropriate for the children's age and stage of development. Children's personal and social development is encouraged through having access to a good range of multicultural books and toys. Where possible real-life materials and equipment are used. For example, children make tea in a teapot with teabags and use re-cycled materials to make a jam sandwich. Resources are multipurpose and are used creatively to enable children's imagination. For example, a large quantity of plain blocks in various sizes are available. Children develop their collaboration skills by using these to build new structures and support their role play scenarios. Practitioners keep resources at a low level to enable children to access items independently. As a result, many children are familiar with moving resources to use in their chosen activity.

Leadership and management:

Leaders create a clear vision for the setting where the well-being of children is of paramount importance and encourage them to have ownership of their learning. The setting works collaboratively with their local feeder school to create a joint vision to support children to feel the sense of belonging to one community. Leaders work together closely; the RI visits the setting regularly and is kept well informed. The setting has a clear statement of purpose that provides an accurate picture of the services and facilities provided.

Leaders have created a clear setting improvement plan that addresses their priorities and accurately identifies strengths and areas for development. They make appropriate use of grants and funding streams to purchase additional resources to develop children's independence, problem solving and physical skills, for example securing a good range of gardening supplies and woodwork tools. Leaders are keen to respond to professional learning opportunities for all practitioners. The recent training on responsive planning resulted in practitioners agreeing adaptions to the learning environment and as a result, children have greater access to resources and choice over how and what they learn.

Leaders develop strong relationships with parents and ask for their opinions on the setting through an annual questionnaire. Parents are comfortable to ask practitioners about how their child is progressing and discuss their wellbeing during their time at the setting. The setting works well with a range of partners to support children's health, learning and well-being. For example, they work effectively with their feeder primary schools to ensure children have a smooth transition into school. There is a strong relationship with the local authority early years advisory teacher and leaders respond positively to recommendations for improvement.

The setting has effective policies and procedures to ensure that it complies with regulations. Leaders safely recruit suitably qualified practitioners and provide useful opportunities for them to access professional development activities. They provide regular supervision and appraisal, which focuses on practitioner well-being, improving performance and identifying future training needs effectively.

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)

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