A

Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

report on

Estyn

Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

St David's Playgroup and Nursery Plus

St David's Catholic Primary School
St David's Lane
Mold
Flintshire
CH7 1LH

Date of inspection: March 2023

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About St David's Playgroup

Name of setting	St David’s Playgroup and Nursery Plus
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	N/A
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Simon Hughes
Person in charge	Lynn Whitby
Number of places	19
Age range of children	Under 12 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	8
Number of children who receive funding for early education	5
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 09:00 to 15:00 Term time only
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	11 January 2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection	09 July 2014
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	21/03/2023
Most children have English as a first language and no children speak Welsh at home.	

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)**	
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 Provide purposeful opportunities for children to use and experience the Welsh language

R2 Re-establish links with the community to further improve transition and children's learning and well being

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 children confidently communicate and express their thoughts and ideas. Children who do not have English first language are given the help and support needed to ensure they can effectively communicate. Nearly all children feel valued as their ideas and thoughts are appropriately listened and responded to by practitioners. Children make choices as they freely move around choosing where and what they want to play with and when deciding what they would like to eat for snack.

Nearly all children happily separate from their parents and settle well on their arrival. For example, children arriving from school excitedly joined in with the activities and routines. Nearly all children get to know the practitioners well and develop good relationships that support them to feel relaxed. They form friendships that mean a lot to them and enjoy playing and learning alongside others. For example, children gestured and shouted their friends to come and join them in the playhouse outside. Nearly all children are happy and confidently approach others to share in their play and learning experiences.

Nearly all children interact well. They are polite and well mannered. For example, saying please and thank you at appropriate times without being reminded. Nearly all children learn to respect each other and the resources. They use items correctly and return them when they have finished. Nearly all children share and understand the need to take turns. For example, children waited patiently for their go on the trampoline.

Nearly all children fully engage in a freely chosen activity that allows them to follow their interests. They show enjoyment as they play. For example, smiling as they make ice creams of different flavours from the magnetic shapes and then sharing them with practitioners. Nearly all children focus and persevere with their chosen activity, evidencing their engagement. For example, a child sat and made a collage picture from pieces of coloured paper. They preserved with the tape dispenser, wanting to use it independently and they sat until they had finished the task. Nearly all children gain a sense of pride in what they do as their achievements are celebrated. They proudly show off their work to others. For example, a child was very keen to share with us that they had written their name and names of their family without any help.

Nearly all children develop well and have opportunities to access a range of resources and activities to support their learning. For example, having access to bikes and trikes to develop their gross motor skills. Nearly all children are confident to be independent. They choose from the resources and access areas, facilities and their belongings independently. For example, when children completed a picture, they went and put it in their bags to take home.

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 the number of three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection that do not receive funded education elsewhere was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners implement the settings effective policies to ensure children are safe. For example, they complete appropriate records for the administration of medication. Practitioners have a good knowledge of safeguarding and know the procedure to follow if they have concerns about a child. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Practitioners practice regular fire drills, so they and the children are aware of the procedure to follow in an emergency. Practitioners provide beneficial daily opportunities for physical play both indoors and outside. They ensure there is healthy, nutritious food and drink offered to children, including a range of fruits and vegetables and milk or water to drink.

Practitioners are good role models for the children. They interact with them in a way that supports their speech and language and teaches them understanding and respect. For example, they talked with the children about their families when building a house in the construction area and sat with them during snack and lunchtime, making the routines a sociable experience. Practitioners engage effectively in children's play, supporting their learning and development. They sit at the child's level and intervene to extend their knowledge when it is appropriate to do so. For example, talking about the different shapes in the construction area and using language such as big, bigger and biggest. Practitioners manage behaviour well using consistent strategies and modelling expectations such as showing children how to use new resources when they are introduced so children are aware of how to use them appropriately. Praise is used effectively to celebrate children's achievements and motivate children to complete tasks.

Practitioners have a good knowledge of child development and get to know the children and their needs well. They use this knowledge effectively to plan appropriate activities and opportunities that support children to progress. Practitioners use observations successfully to identify next steps in children's learning. These are then considered when areas of learning and focus tasks are planned. For example, practitioners had identified some children needed support using scissors, so they made them more freely available in different areas, so children were able to get a range of different experiences. Practitioners are effective in providing a good range of activities and resources that help develop children's curiosity and skills. They become actively involved in children's play and extend their knowledge in a fun way that teaches children new skills and gives them opportunities to problem solve. For example, a child was trying to build a bridge for their cars to go across. The practitioner supported the child to think about how they could change the bridge to ensure it did not keep falling down.

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

The setting is beginning to take account of the principles of the Curriculum for Wales and plan a range of rich experiences to develop the all-round skills of the children. The planning is responsive to children's needs and practitioners develop activities based on children's interests. For example, a child who was interested in measuring was provided with measuring tapes and a range of objects to measure in the outdoor construction area.

Practitioners have high expectations of all children and, as a result, children learn how to relate to others and take responsibility for their actions. They encourage children to form positive attitudes towards each other and to start to develop self-discipline. For example, children negotiated with each other to share the baking resources offered at the play dough table. Practitioners interact very well with children and know when to intervene appropriately in their play and when to stand back and observe. Practitioners have an up-to-date knowledge of child development and respond to pupils in a supportive manner, challenging when necessary and scaffolding learning. Practitioners are well aware of the developmental stage of each individual child and plan with their next steps in mind. Children with additional learning needs and English as an additional language were supported appropriately, and more able children were extended. For example, one child was working on counting and recognising the numbers 10-15. Learning is documented accurately in individual learning journeys and on an online platform for recording children's progress.

Planning in the setting ensures children develop skills, including communication and literacy. Practitioners are excellent language models and extend children's vocabulary through the course of their play. ICT skills are developed through the provision of a range of digital resources including programmable toys and cameras. For example, children programmed a remote-control toy to move from one place to another whilst another child photographed the activity. The practitioners value process over the end outcome and the children produce imaginative pictures in the cut and stick area using a range of art resources. Practitioners introduce some simple Welsh phrases and songs when sitting together on the carpet but purposeful opportunities for children to use and experience the Welsh language during their play are limited.

A 'family tree' wall display is used to create a sense of belonging and spark a sense of curiosity about their own lives and the lives of others. The setting is inclusive and has an excellent range of resources to offer positive images of culture and disability.

Environment: Good

Practitioners provide a safe environment where the needs and safety of the children come first. They have robust arrangements for receiving visitors to the building, and practitioners follow effective safety procedures for children's arrival and departure. Policies and procedures are implemented effectively to ensure routines are embedded in practice and the environment is free from hazards and secure. For example, daily checks are conducted on the environment to ensure no new hazards have arisen. Leaders are aware of safety issues and the requirements to conduct regular fire drills.

The environment is warm and welcoming and helps children to feel relaxed to support their play and learning. The well-maintained environment is organised well, giving children the space to move around freely and safely. Suitable facilities such as toilets and kitchen areas are available to support the children to be independent and allow the day to run smoothly. The rich environment gives children a good variety of play experiences and opportunities. For example, the free flow access to the outdoors and planned opportunities to visit the forest school to learn more about the world around them. Leaders organise the play and learning environment to support children's independence effectively. Resources are stored at an appropriate height so children can choose items they want, and children's belongings are accessible.

Practitioners ensure there is a range of excellent and age-appropriate resources available to children. The environment is equipped with stimulating resources that interest and facilitate children's learning indoors and outdoors. For example, practitioners make sure children have access to recycled materials such as boxes and tubes in the craft area. Practitioners provide exciting and inviting areas of learning that are equipped with items to support children's curiosity. For example, the home corner had real items such as sauce bottles and cutlery to make the children's play more authentic.

All resources are clean, well maintained and practitioners check items before and after use to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Leadership and management: Good

The setting has a clear statement of purpose to inform parents and carers of what it has to offer. The setting leader has a clear vision and communicates this effectively to stakeholders. She ensures that the vision informs the setting's actions and improvements. She leads the team well and carries out regular supervisions and performance reviews so that staff understand and implement the aims of the setting. All practitioners have relevant and appropriate qualifications and experience of working with young children. All show a commitment to continuing professional development. They attend regular training and readily act on advice from the advisory teacher. The training is having a positive impact on provision. In particular, the recent training on the learning environment has brought about improvements. As a result, children are nurtured well in an inclusive and welcoming environment.

The setting has robust processes to evaluate its practice and leaders show a good awareness of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. The self-evaluation document is used in an ongoing way and regularly updated according to the needs of the children and staff and to respond to curriculum developments. All staff are aware of the priorities for improvement. Excellent use has been made of the EYDG grant to improve the outdoor provision and this has enhanced children's well-being and learning.

Practitioners use an online platform effectively to keep parents informed of what their children are learning. The setting is based within the local primary school and leaders take advantage of this by facilitating communication between staff to support transition effectively. This helps children to move onto the next stage of their education smoothly. However, links with the local community and partnerships beyond the school are limited. The setting has recently extended their opening hours and offer wrap around care which has helped meet the needs of families.

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

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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

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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