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Care Inspectorate Wales

A report on

Ysgol Feithrin Conwy

Ysgol Porth Y Felin
Ffordd Llanrwst
Conwy
Conwy
LL32 8FZ

Date of inspection: May 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Ysgol Feithrin Conwy

Name of setting	Ysgol Feithrin Conwy
Category of care provided	Full Daycare
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Sylvia Parker
Person in charge	April Switzer
Number of places	18
Age range of children	2 – 4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	25
Number of children who receive funding for early education	7
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 8.40am – 3.00pm
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service is making a significant effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	This is a post registration inspection.
Date of previous Estyn inspection	March 2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	13/05/2025

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. Strengthen adult-child interactions to more effectively support and extend children's learning

R2. Continue to develop purposeful planning and ensure that meaningful observations are used effectively to inform children's next steps in learning

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

Most children make appropriate choices and decisions about their play. They move freely around the areas, choosing where and what to play with confidently, for example moving between playing in the rice tray, painting or looking at books in the reading corner. Children who choose not to join their peers on the mat for circle time are not obliged to do so and happily observe from afar. Most children sustain interest for extended periods of time.

Most children express themselves well and communicate appropriately with practitioners and other adults around them, for example when asking for help with putting on an apron before painting. Children know that practitioners will listen to their views and respect their attempts at communication. Children smile with pride when they receive praise and compliments from practitioners.

Children settle quickly on arrival, heading immediately to play. Most children cope well with separating from their parents and carers and enjoy attending. The few who are upset receive reassurance and can stay close to familiar practitioners they trust. Children are very familiar with the routines of the day and feel safe and valued in the care of practitioners with whom they have positive relationships. They develop confidence through suitable opportunities to make their own decisions about toys and activities.

Most of the children communicate positively and confidently and behave very well. They enjoy joining in with group activities such water play, planting tomato seeds and listening to stories. Many are beginning to understand the needs of others, co-operate well in their play and share resources appropriately. For example, when both children want the same spade in the sand tray, they are supported in looking for another one, so they have one each. Children approach practitioners with ease and confidence for a cuddle when they want.

Most children explore their environment enthusiastically. They engage well in activities and express their enjoyment. For example, they shriek with excitement during circle time when they guess what bugs they may find in the garden. They eagerly share with everyone when they later discover the different bugs.

Children enjoy good opportunities to develop independence, enabling them to do things for themselves successfully and in their own time. For example, most children use the toilet independently, followed by washing and drying their hands. They choose their snack of fruit and toast and pour their own drinks from a jug into cups.

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

Nearly all children make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills during their time at the setting. They build trusting relationships with practitioners and peers and learn to express their wants and needs clearly. Many show empathy and care towards their peers. These positive interactions help children feel secure, valued and ready to learn.

Most children develop their communication skills effectively, listening attentively and responding with interest during story time. Nearly all show curiosity about the natural world and a few children ask thoughtful questions and share their ideas, which demonstrates their understanding and reasoning. For example, when one child suggests a fly might live in the nest, others confidently disagree and suggest it could be a bird or a seagull. Many children respond positively when asked to finish their play in the garden, showing good listening skills and sound awareness of daily routines.

Many children are making good progress in developing their understanding of Welsh words and phrases. They talk about the food items and numbers from a story and a few children join in singing Welsh songs. As a result of consistent exposure and gentle encouragement, they are becoming more confident in recognising and using Welsh words in songs, stories and conversation.

Many children show enjoyment when exploring familiar story books. They independently turn the pages and make comments about illustrations, while a few confidently retell parts of the story. Many begin to recognise that letters carry meaning, for instance when they choose their own names during self-registration. As a result, children are developing early literacy skills appropriately and a positive attitude towards reading and written language.

Many children are beginning to understand that number symbols have meaning. Most show good control and confidence when using technology, for example taking photos with an electronic device. Many children show enjoyment and curiosity when playing with the coding caterpillar, demonstrating an early understanding of how it can be programmed to move. As a result, they are developing important early numeracy and digital skills through play. Many children show perseverance when solving problems and use language such as “more” and “less” to describe the changes during play dough colour mixing. Many develop appropriate early reasoning, problem-solving, and mathematical language skills.

Most children are developing good control when mark making. They draw faces with features like eyes and mouths. Many develop their physical skills well outdoors, gaining confidence and co-ordination as they ride bikes and scooters, and walk across balance beams with increasing control. During free play in the garden, they confidently climb trees and take risks, showing good strength and stamina. This encourages less confident children to try smaller trees first before joining their friends on higher ones.

Children’s creative skills are developing appropriately. They enjoy singing nursery rhymes and take on different roles in the home play area, which supports their communication, social and creative skills well. They use their imagination to compare objects, such as playfully assigning roles of mum and dad to different-sized wooden spoons.

Many children are developing important personal, social, and emotional skills as they interact with others and manage their feelings. They often wait their turn and ask politely to share resources, showing growing patience and respect. A few children are learning to manage feelings of frustration during shared play, and with adult support, they begin to express their emotions in positive ways. These experiences help them build empathy, self-regulation, and confidence in social situations.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners have suitable arrangements to keep children healthy. They offer healthy snacks, milk or water to drink and encourage children to wash their hands, helping to develop their personal hygiene practice well. Practitioners clean surfaces before and after use, following good infection control procedures. They encourage children to be active and to play outdoors in the fresh air daily and to drink water in hot weather and ensure that everyone has suncream on.

Practitioners keep children safe through implementing suitable procedures such as completing daily checks of the environment, accident logs and administering first aid. They conduct regular fire drills, which help children and practitioners to become familiar with the procedure to follow if they must evacuate the premises. Practitioners give safety messages when playing in the garden, for example when children run down a hill or climb trees. The setting's arrangements to safeguard children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Practitioners communicate with children in a warm, friendly manner and interact well with them during their play activities. They are positive role models for children. For example, when playing alongside children, practitioners model and explain the importance of sharing. They provide meaningful opportunities for children to develop their social and communication skills. For example, practitioners sit and chat with children during snack time and when appropriate they become actively involved in children's free play. Practitioners are sensitive to the needs of children and intervene effectively to prevent any disagreement. They give plenty of encouragement and ensure that praise is used meaningfully when children are kind, share resources and take turns. For example, when a child reaches out and shows empathy to another who is visibly upset, they give praise for being so kind and thinking of others. Practitioners encourage children to develop a sense of pride in their achievements.

Practitioners are caring and kind towards the children and help them to feel valued. They meet children's individual needs effectively, including those identified as having additional learning needs, with processes in place if needed. Practitioners know the children exceptionally well and discuss their likes, dislikes and any behaviours that may be out of character for a particular child. They share and celebrate children's achievements amongst each other with sheer pride. Practitioners identify activities that individual children have shown an interest in, to help them settle when upset.

Practitioners provide appropriate resources and free choice activities that promote children's all-round development. They use Welsh regularly throughout the day. For example, they sing Welsh songs, name colours, the weather and count up to ten in Welsh.

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

Practitioners have thoughtfully developed an effective indoor learning environment and a suitable outdoor environment that are safe, engaging and rich in opportunities for exploration. Many practitioners have a good understanding of children's development including the importance of acting as enabling adults who support learning through sensitive interactions and timely encouragement. They are beginning to use children's interests and ideas to plan purposeful experiences that meet the needs of the children. For example, when planning for a theme, they create learning areas built on ideas suggested by the children. This fosters a sense of ownership amongst the children and motivates them to explore and learn in an environment they helped shape.

Practitioners provide children with worthwhile opportunities to choose their play. During structured parts of the day, such as sharing a story, practitioners support small groups of children skilfully through modelling good language and behaviour. As a result, most children are engaged with story sessions and can respond appropriately. Practitioners sometimes encourage children to talk about their learning through asking them thoughtful questions such as 'what's happening now?' and 'what are you making now?'. This thoughtful approach helps reinforce the learning and supports children well to develop their reasoning and communication skills.

Practitioners actively encourage children to use Welsh words and phrases during the day through song and repetition. For example, during snack time, they encourage children to repeat the names of the snacks in Welsh and use words such as 'llefrith' and 'diolch'. This successfully helps children build familiarity and confidence with understanding the Welsh language. Practitioners provide worthwhile opportunities for children to develop a sense of belonging. They plan valuable experiences that help children learn about their local area. For example, they visit important landmarks such as Conwy Castle to learn about stories from the past.

Practitioners enrich children's experiences through planning appropriate opportunities to explore important cultural festivals and celebrations. For example, they help children develop their understanding of Diwali through weaving rangoli patterns. This helps improve their creative skills whilst learning about the world around them. Practitioners pay good attention to the children's moral development. For example, they encourage acts of kindness and celebrate these through wall displays and sharing information with parents. As a result, many of the children show empathy towards their peers.

The setting supports children's numeracy skills well. They provide valuable opportunities for children to count and develop their understanding of mathematical concepts through play. For example, they provide strings for creating patterns with beads and a collection of different weighing scales for measuring in the kitchen.

Practitioners plan worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. They provide valuable resources for children to develop their gross motor skills in the outdoor environment. For example, children choose various wheeled vehicles to ride and arrange

bowls in sequence for them to be rolled down. These enriching experiences promote children's spatial awareness, co-ordination and balance well.

Practitioners model play appropriately when playing alongside children, before encouraging them to have a go. For example, at the water tray they show children how to fill a watering can with a beaker, using vocabulary such as *full* and *pour*. As a result, children are supported to develop their critical thinking and language skills. Many practitioners encourage children to 'give it a go'. However, they do not always intervene at appropriate times to support children when they encounter challenges. This can unintentionally hinder children's development and problem-solving skills.

Practitioners are beginning to make relevant observations about children's play and learning and make useful observations on children's progress. However, they do not always provide enough information to plan children's next steps in learning.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. They have established effective systems, including written risk assessments and daily room checks, which reduce or eliminate potential hazards. There is a secure system to manage access to the setting and they record details of visitors consistently. The setting is well maintained and clean, with effective routines to help prevent cross contamination, for example cleaning and sanitising of resources and equipment.

Leaders provide children with an attractive, well-decorated environment. They ensure that regular opportunities for children to be active and independent indoors. The premises are welcoming and friendly, providing suitable space and facilities to meet the needs of children. Leaders decorate the environment with displays, which celebrate the children's current art and craft work as well as photographs of children's family members. The kindness board celebrates acts of kind-heartedness observed by practitioners, such as a child helping another to open their lunchbox. This gives children a sense of belonging and helps them feel proud of what they have achieved. Leaders provide outside access for all age groups, and practitioners use it appropriately, giving children the choice to play outdoors so they can be active. They ensure that the outdoor environment provides children with a wide range of exciting opportunities that support them to learn about the world around them. This includes a large garden and full use of the school yard and equipment, when not in use by older children.

Leaders ensure that the indoor environment provides children with resources of a good quality, which supports their needs and stage of development well. Leaders provide a suitable array of resources that help children to develop a range of skills. For example, children enjoy making their own playdough, and develop their artwork in the painting area.

Children benefit from a large selection of books, in Welsh and English. Role play areas such as the home corner offer real crockery and cutlery. Practitioners store toys and resources safely and everything is accessible for the children. This enables children to choose independently and return items when they have finished playing with them and helps to keep resources in good condition.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have established a nurturing environment where practitioners work well together. They actively support and invest in practitioners, fostering a positive team ethos and uniting everyone around a shared sense of purpose. Leaders provide a caring and welcoming place for children to explore and feel safe and valued as they learn through play. This has a positive impact on children by helping them feel secure, confident and emotionally supported. Leaders have developed a clear statement of purpose, which accurately reflects the service offered.

Leaders make effective use of evaluation processes and improvement planning to accurately identify the setting's strengths and areas for development. They work closely with partners, including the local authority, to evaluate progress against improvement targets and assess impact on children's learning and development. They set these targets using first-hand evidence, drawing on parent feedback, partner reports, and practitioners' own evaluations of the provision. This enables leaders to adapt strategies to better meet children's needs. Leaders allocate funding appropriately to address areas for improvement.

Leaders have developed suitable arrangements for professional learning amongst practitioners. They arrange beneficial support and training, which focuses on individual needs and the setting's priorities. For example, they work closely with the local authority to support practitioners with planning the provision and make useful observations to better support children's learning. This helps to ensure that all practitioners have valuable opportunities to enhance their knowledge and understanding of child development. Leaders implement safe and appropriate processes for recruitment. They support practitioners through regular supervisions and annual appraisals, which ensure that everyone develops in their roles appropriately.

Leaders develop close relationships with parents, allowing them to share information regularly about the setting and children's progress through conversations and the use of a digital platform. Leaders and practitioners listen to parents and take their views into consideration when planning the service. As a result, parents feel valued, and leaders and practitioners provide a more personalised learning experience for each child. Leaders have developed suitable transition arrangements with the school in which it is based. This supports children and their families to familiarise themselves with the school and ease the children into the next stage of their learning. These successful partnerships have a positive impact on the smooth running of the setting.

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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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.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

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