Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

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

A report on

Faenol Playgroup CIC

Ysgol y Faenol
Johns Drive
Bodelwyddan
LL18 5TG

Date of inspection: June 2023

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Faenol Playgroup CIC

Name of setting	Y Faenol Playgroup CIC
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Rhian JonesFaenol Playgroup Community Interest Company
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Rhian Jones
Person in charge	Catherine Lloyd
Number of places	23
Age range of children	2 to 4 years of age
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	22
Number of children who receive funding for early education	5
Opening days / times	09:00 – 15.15 Monday to Friday
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	This is the first inspection since registration as a CIC.
Date of previous Estyn inspection	January 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	27/06/2023
N/A	

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 Develop practitioners' use of a range of questions to further develop children's learning and thinking skills

R2 Develop further opportunities for children to develop their problem-solving skills

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 have a strong voice. They make appropriate choices and decisions confidently about what affects them, for example when choosing activities and resources to play with or if they want to play inside or out. Nearly all children express themselves well through verbal communication and know that practitioners listen and respond to them. For example, when a child had not finished their snack, they can carry on eating whilst others go to play.

Nearly all children arrive happily at the setting and are eager to start playing. They settle quickly and cope well when leaving parents and carers at the beginning of the session. The children have warm, close relationships with practitioners and receive support and comfort if needed. They feel safe and valued at the setting. For example, they smile and have a strong sense of achievement when they are 'helpwr heddiw'. They willingly take on responsibilities such as choosing who can wash their hands ready for snack time.

Nearly all children make purposeful choices and move confidently between activities. They interact well by playing alongside or engaging with each other as is appropriate for stage of development. Many children work together confidently, for example when building an obstacle course. Nearly all children follow rules and respect each other. This is a strength of the setting.

Nearly all children are active and engaged in their play and learning. They show purpose and curiosity as they take part in activities, for example when exploring textures and consistency of mud when using a range of equipment such as spades, spoons, and spray bottles to mix mud in the outdoor kitchen. Overall, nearly all children listen and follow instructions well. For example, when practitioners remind them to use their manners, they respond by saying 'please' at mealtimes. Most speak to friends and practitioners confidently and enjoy talking about their favourite food whilst sitting at the table at lunch time or when describing hot and cold food.

Nearly all children develop skills and knowledge well by following their own interests. They have confidence in making choices and seek help when they need it, helping them to develop increasing independence and self-help skills. For example, children help to tidy up, access the bathroom independently and take responsibility for their own belongings. Practitioners provide children with support, as needed, for example when dressing in outdoor weather wear and when accessing drinks at snack time.

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

All practitioners are kind, caring and supportive, and interact with children in a warm and gentle manner. This creates a positive, happy and engaging atmosphere at the setting. Practitioners know their children very well and talk to them sensitively to ensure they feel safe and happy. The setting has an effective behaviour management policy in place and practitioners give praise for good behaviour and use positive techniques. For example, they engage at the children's developmental level, using signs, explanations, and distraction successfully. Practitioners meet the needs of children successfully, including those with English as an additional language and those with additional learning needs (ALN). They identify children who may need additional support quickly and use a range of support to meet their needs well.

The setting has close links with parents, the school and specialist services. This ensures that children, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), have appropriate provision. Children's individual learning plans show appropriate target setting and support children to make good progress towards their goals.

Practitioners observe what the children are doing and support them with their learning effectively. They know when to intervene and when to step back, allowing children to lead their play and learning. For example, when building an obstacle course, practitioners give children time to think about how they can use the tyres in different ways. All practitioners engage with the children and extend their play successfully. For example, during messy play activities, practitioners ask children what colour they made, how they made it, and link it to a book they have read earlier

in the day. However, practitioners do not always use open-ended questions well enough to develop children's independence and thinking skills effectively.

Practitioners work well together to keep children safe and healthy. They follow the setting's procedures in relation to hygiene, health and safety and review them regularly. Practitioners supervise children well and, overall, complete relevant records in relation to accidents, incidents and administering medication appropriately. They know what to do in an emergency as they practise and keep basic records of regular practices, such as fire evacuation drills. Leaders provide healthy snacks for children including milk or water to drink.

The setting has appropriate policies and procedures in place to help practitioners to keep children safe. Leaders and practitioners have a good understanding of how to protect children and know what to do if they have any concerns. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

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

Practitioners have a good understanding of how children learn and develop. The focus on developing positive attitudes to learning is a strong feature of the setting. They praise children sensitively for their efforts, for example when they use their imagination and concentration skills well when drawing pictures.

Practitioners have embraced the principles of the Curriculum for Wales well and provide a wide range of interesting and stimulating learning and play experiences for the children. They plan effectively and in response to the needs and interests of different groups of children. For example, practitioners planned a range of stimulating activities related to bees in response to children's interest in bees that they observed on a beech tree. As a result, the children are very engaged in their learning and learn new vocabulary such as pollen and hive successfully. A strength of practitioners' planning is how they use information from observations and the assessment to inform the next steps in children's learning and play. As a result, the planning process builds on the children's knowledge and skills successfully.

Practitioners develop children's literacy and creative skills well. They provide them with time and space to explore mark making and early writing with a range of resources such as pens, crayons, chalks, and paint. They promote a love of books through reading stories with the children and reflect on how to increase children's engagement with reading. For example, practitioners have combined the role play area with a reading den and, as a result, more children are choosing to look at books when playing.

Practitioners enable children to develop their physical skills well. They promote children's ability to climb safely using a climbing frame and allow children to develop their jumping and movement skills when making an obstacle course out of planks and go kart tyres.

The practitioners' knowledge of how children learn different mathematical concepts is strong. Leaders reinforce practitioners' knowledge of this using wall displays that enable practitioners to support children to develop mathematical concepts successfully. As a result, children make strong progress in developing their numeracy skills. However, planning for the development of children's problem-solving skills, in general, is at an early stage of development.

All practitioners provide a good range of opportunities for children to use and understand the use of digital technology. For example, they model using computer software to create pie charts of the children's favourite foods and children use microphones to record their own ideas.

Practitioners develop children's knowledge of Welsh and Welsh cultures well and use familiar phrases and vocabulary well during whole group sessions. As a result, most children enjoy singing a range of Welsh songs such as songs about the weather.

The planning for the development of children's spiritual, moral, and cultural development is good. Practitioners show high levels of care and respect for everyone. They have a calm approach and, as a result, children treat each other and the natural world with care and respect. For example, practitioners allow children time to investigate how plants grow and the insects that live on them. As a result, children have a real sense of awe, wonder and excitement about growth and insects. Practitioners also plan worthwhile activities to develop children's knowledge about cultures and traditions, for example teaching children to make rangoli patterns from dough to celebrate Diwali.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure the indoor and outdoor environments are safe and secure. They complete written risk assessments, which reduce risks effectively. They ensure required safety checks are completed and follow procedures in relation to visitors accessing the setting. The premises are clean and well maintained. Practitioners follow procedures effectively, including daily checks of the environment and hygiene procedures such as sanitising tables prior to meals. They wear appropriate protective clothing, as and when needed. The toilet and nappy changing facilities are appropriate and practitioners follow guidelines to ensure children's privacy and dignity.

The environment is welcoming and provides a range of opportunities for children to play, learn and move freely between indoor and outdoor areas. Leaders provide a range of interesting equipment and resources and many reflect the natural environment and real-life objects that promote purposeful play. Most resources are at low level and furniture is appropriately sized, including a dark den converted from an unused storage space. As a result, children make choices about where they want to play and what resources they want to use independently.

Leaders provide designated areas for children to store their personal items. Displays show children's photographs, work, and achievements attractively. This supports a sense of belonging and promotes their self-esteem well. Leaders use a variety of

play and learning materials effectively to promote children's cultural awareness, including Welsh heritage and diversity. This promotes children's understanding of the world well.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders are totally committed to children's well-being, happiness, and development. They provide very calm and positive leadership where adults and children are respected and supported to achieve their best. The setting is located on the site of a primary school and the working relationship between staff and leaders of both settings is very strong. This close partnership is a strength of the setting. The alignment is strong and children flow between the playgroup and the school confidently and happily. This partnership extends to planning for the curriculum where the playgroups curriculum leads seamlessly into the work of the school. Leaders, teachers, and practitioners work well together to plan the curriculum, which ensures continuity for the children as they transfer from the setting to the school.

Leaders' self-evaluation procedures are effective. They use a wide range of evidence to evaluate the work of the setting and identify strengths and areas for development effectively. The setting's improvement plans include a sensible range of targets and priorities, which allows leaders to improve the work of the setting well through continuous improvement. The setting leader is a good role model and supports other practitioners in their professional development effectively. For example, leaders have supported practitioners in the development of the children's mathematics skills well through training and informative wall displays.

Leaders regularly seek the views of everyone involved with the setting. As a result, leaders ensure that they make useful changes to the provision to benefit the children and families. For example, after consultation with parents and carers, the setting introduced an online messaging system for communicating with parents that provides personalised information about what the children are doing and learning at the setting. This has strengthened the working relationships between the staff and the parents and carers as well as allowing practitioners and parents to share useful information. There is an up-to date statement of purpose that ensures parents can make an informed choice about using the setting.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of teamwork and shared responsibility across the setting. They support staff with their appropriate professional development that meet their needs well. Systems for appraisal and supervision encourage reflection and identify areas for improvement successfully. They ensure that they have access to training informally at the setting as well as through purposeful ongoing professional development. Weekly meetings provide opportunities for all staff to discuss what has been successful and plan learning experiences and improvements for the next week. As a result, staff feel valued and well supported. Leaders manage and allocate resources purposefully to make improvements.

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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