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 Lambs Emmanuel

Ysgol Emmanuel
Victoria Road
Rhyl
Denbighshire
LL18 2EG

Date of inspection: February 2024

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Little Lambs Emmanuel

Name of setting	Little Lambs Emmanuel
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Samantha Maitland-Price
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Rebecca Campion
Number of places	61
Age range of children	2 – 11 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	40
Number of children who receive funding for early education	20
Opening days / times	08.45-18.00 Monday to Friday term time only
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English with some Welsh used by practitioners
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service that is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service or demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	This is the first CIW inspection since registration
Date of previous Estyn inspection	This is the first Estyn inspection since registration
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	21/02/2024

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Well-being	**Excellent**
Learning **(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	**Good**
Care and development	**Excellent**
Teaching and assessment **(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	**Excellent**
Environment	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Excellent**

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Increase practitioners use of Welsh vocabulary with the children.

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

CIW and Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the impact of partnership working for dissemination on their websites.

Main findings

Well-being: Excellent

Children are happy and settle well. They arrive enthusiastic to start their day and cope well as they separate from parents and carers. Children have an extremely strong voice, and their well-being is prioritised by leaders and practitioners. They have excellent opportunities to make choices and decisions about what they do and how they spend their time. For example, they choose when to eat snack and whether they want to play inside or outside as the doors are open for most of each session. Children communicate very effectively through gestures and speech, and develop confidence in expressing their views as they know they will be listened to. Many contribute ideas for activities, such as suggesting using warm water to melt the ice encasing the dragons or asking for more bubbles to chase.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the setting and form very positive relationships with staff. They are comfortable and relaxe,d and know the routines of the day well, which helps them develop a sense of belonging. They feel safe and valued and readily approach practitioners if they need help or want something. This has a positive effect on their well-being and self-esteem.

Children behave exceptionally well. Nearly all enjoy playing near others and a few are beginning to interact with each other as is appropriate for their age and stage of development. Children are beginning, occasionally with support, to learn to share, take turns and manage their own behaviour.

Children explore their environment enthusiastically and with great interest. They move confidently between activities and nearly all enjoy adult-led activities such as singing and dancing as well as self-chosen play. Children choose how they engage with group activities as well as for how long, which supports their gradual increase in interest for this type of activity. Children show delight and active engagement as they explore how water and shaving foam mix or use spray bottles to paint Easter eggs outside. There was much excitement and amazement when children noticed the ‘dragon egg’ was cracking. Most children demonstrate concentration and build resilience as they engage for extended periods, for example to produce their interpretation of a daffodil or as they enjoy looking at books with a practitioner.

Most children make excellent progress through the wide range of opportunities, experiences and interactions available to them. Through following their own interests, they develop confidence in making choices and seeking help when they need it. They enjoy many opportunities to develop independence and self-help skills as they learn to manage their own belongings and personal needs, cut up fruit or help to tidy up or clear away.

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

The majority of children start at the setting with skills that are lower than would normally be expected for their age and stage of development. During their time at the

setting, nearly all, including those identified as having additional learning needs, make strong progress in their skills and confidence over time.

Most children listen well and respond appropriately. The majority speak with increasing confidence and express their interests, likes and dislikes. Children who are reluctant to speak when they arrive at the setting, develop their confidence quickly and express themselves well through gesture and sound. Many children understand familiar Welsh words and simple phrases appropriately. For example, they join in with simple Welsh nursery rhymes as part of their daily routines.

Most children's early literacy skills are developing well. They enjoy choosing a book from the book corner and sit happily with a practitioner to listen to a story. They love turning the pages and a minority ask questions about what may happen next. Most children enjoy singing and performing actions when listening to stories read to them, for example when singing along to 'Old MacDonald had a farm' when listening to a story about farm animals.

Many children develop strong fine motor skills and use a range of different equipment confidently when painting and drawing. They show good hand-eye co-ordination and control small utensils accurately. They enjoy using a range of large wooden construction equipment and fix the different parts together confidently. They also show strong balance when playing on the swing in the forest school. Many children show good perseverance, developing and acting out their ideas as they play. For example, they create colourful drawings using paint and pipets in the outdoor area.

Many children have good early numeracy skills. They are beginning to count and show a good understanding of corresponding digits to numbers of coloured objects. A few children use the different coloured two-dimensional shapes to make larger three dimensional shapes, and take great pride in their achievements.

Most children's digital skills are developing well. They use a range of digital equipment confidently, for example when making phone calls or using the till in the shop area. They love looking at the shape of the dinosaur bones on the lite box, and listening to practitioners' voices as they press the buttons that explain different activities.

Most children have good physical skills. They show good strength when playing with large apparatus such as tyres in the outdoor area and show good balance when dancing along to different tunes on the interactive whiteboard. They know how to develop low and high positions when dancing in time with familiar songs.

Care and development: Excellent

Leaders have developed a comprehensive and detailed range of policies and procedures to support practitioners to keep children safe and healthy. They ensure that they follow robust recruitment practice. Practitioners understand their responsibilities to protect children and know what to do if they have any concerns about children or colleagues. Leaders consider safeguarding as a priority and ensure they and practitioners have relevant up to date knowledge and training. Practitioners follow relevant policies and procedures in relation to recording accidents, incidents and administering medication. They supervise children extremely well and record

their own, children's and visitors' attendance accurately and consistently. Practitioners know what to do in an emergency as they practise and record regular fire evacuation drills. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners follow good hygiene procedures in relation to food preparation and nappy changing. They offer healthy food options for breakfast, snacks and tea and ensure children wash their hands before eating. This helps to develop children's personal hygiene practice well. Practitioners promote a healthy lifestyle through healthy eating and by providing many opportunities to be physically active both outside and inside, through activities such as music and movement.

Practitioners are kind and caring. They interact with children in a way that creates an extremely supportive and calm environment where children can flourish, and their self-esteem is nurtured. Practitioners promote warm, positive relationships effectively and are highly skilled at helping children to develop language skills and begin to learn to manage their own behaviour. For example, they encourage children to eat what they have rather than cut up more fruit and support them to share different equipment for drawing. Practitioners speak respectfully to each other and children and are excellent role models.

Practitioners use their careful observations of children to ensure they plan exciting and stimulating opportunities and experiences that interest children and promote their all-round development. They support children extremely well to explore resources and determine the course of their own play as well as to develop independence and self-help skills. Practitioners meet the needs of all children, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) successfully. The provision for children with ALN is a strength of the setting and children make excellent progress. They use innovative and celebratory systems to support their work with children with ALN. Practitioners support all children's learning, and social and communication development needs, highly effectively.

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

The setting's planning processes are highly effective and respond successfully to the expectations and ethos of the Curriculum for Wales. Practitioners have a thorough understanding of child development and respond to individual children's needs skilfully. They plan purposefully for the different developmental pathways, concentrating on developing children's confidence and perseverance as they play. They plan well for the development of children's skills, whilst also showing the flexibility for staff to respond to children's interests as they evolve. They strike an excellent balance between developing specific skills and facilitating extended periods for children to play. A strong feature of the setting's provision is the way in which practitioners constantly adapt their curriculum so that it is accessible and engaging for all children, regardless of their stage of development.

Leaders and practitioners have established a highly engaging, language rich environment. Practitioners encourage children to develop their oracy skills effectively by asking well-considered questions, which promote children's language and thinking skills. For example, they ask the children to think about how high the bubbles will fly

into the sky as they come out of the bubble machine in the outdoor area. Practitioners provide highly effective opportunities for children to engage in small circle time together for brief periods. This ‘family time,’ provides valuable opportunities for practitioners to be with the children for whom they are the key worker, and encourage the child to develop confidence. During these periods, staff adapt their approaches well depending upon the developmental stage of the children in their group. For example, they engage in more complex language with children who have more well developed skills, building effectively on a child’s past experiences.

Practitioners encourage the children to develop a real delight in stories. They display books around the different areas and bring stories alive for the children. Children love accessing books and bring them to practitioners to talk about the story and enjoy the colourful pictures. The setting’s approach to promoting the joy of books is a particular strength.

Practitioners promote children’s numeracy skills effectively through ensuring an engaging range of stimulating resources across all areas of the provision. Numbers, shapes and letters are all freely accessible, and children enjoy learning to count and play confidently with different two-dimensional shapes of different colours and see how they will fit together.

Leaders have established a ‘light touch’ approach to developing children’s digital skills. However, they provide rich opportunities for children to use an effective range of resources during their play. Children take digital photos of their friends as they play in the forest school area.

Practitioners record detailed observations during the week, sharing significant developments in children’s skills with their colleagues. As a result, practitioners support children’s needs very effectively, based firmly on the child’s stage of development. They also understand the importance of allowing children who demonstrate repetitive behaviours to follow these behaviours in a calm and nurturing environment.

Practitioners use an increasing range of Welsh vocabulary with the children, especially during whole group sessions. As a result, children are confident when using a few familiar Welsh words and when singing Welsh songs with enthusiasm. However, practitioners do not always make good use of opportunities to extend children’s understanding of the language during their play.

Practitioners provide meaningful opportunities for children to develop their awareness of Welsh culture through celebrating events such as Santes Dwynwen day. Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to understand the importance of showing kindness towards others. They learn about people from different cultural backgrounds through celebrating festivals such as Diwali and creating their own Rangoli designs.

Practitioners share information with parents through a useful online application, which enables parents to enjoy their child’s experiences at the setting. Leaders also share valuable activities, which parents can enjoy with their child at home. This approach reinforces excellent relationships with children’s families.

Environment: Good

Leaders and practitioners provide children with a good, safe and secure environment that supports their learning and development effectively. They have robust safety systems in place, including comprehensive risk assessments, that cover all aspects of their provision and help to reduce or eliminate potential hazards. Additionally, leaders carry out risk/benefit assessments that highlight, and weigh up, the benefits of some play activities against the risks. Practitioners manage access to and from the setting well. They demonstrate a good understanding of relevant safety matters through their practice and consistent daily checks of the environment. Leaders work closely with school staff to assure themselves that relevant building safety checks are carried out regularly. All areas of the premises are extremely clean and well maintained.

The playroom is bright and welcoming, and leaders have made good use of the attached corridor area leading to the external entrance to provide additional play space. Leaders and practitioners have developed the indoor learning environment to provide attractive and distinct learning areas that invite children to explore, experiment and play. The layout enables children to independently access and choose resources and equipment, and there is plenty of space for children to move about and play freely. Children have supervised access to a sensory room which provides a quiet, peaceful space for children who benefit from a little time away from the main play area.

Children access the outdoor play area directly from the corridor. Leaders and practitioners ensure they set this area up daily with a good range of resources and activities. These provide children with further challenging, interesting learning experiences and development opportunities. For example, they use this area to provide tyres and crates for children to create jumping platforms, or to splash about in puddles coloured with paint. The Forest School area of the school grounds provides further outdoor space where children can explore a more natural environment. Practitioners ensure children access this area regularly.

Leaders provide good quality, age-appropriate furniture and a good range of equipment and resources. They provide natural materials and authentic resources, for example, in the home corner, which stimulate children's interest and supports their learning well. Leaders also provide a suitable range of resources that promote children's understanding of diversity and different cultures, including the culture and traditions of Wales.

Leadership and management: Excellent

Leaders provide excellent strategic leadership for the setting. They share a clear and passionate vision based on providing the best possible experiences and care for all the children who attend. Leaders work together successfully and facilitate the happy and effective joint working between practitioners. They fulfil their roles with enthusiasm and are an extremely effective team. Leaders provide parents with an informative Statement of Purpose that accurately reflects the setting.

Leaders have embedded extremely thorough self-evaluation process which are used effectively to highlight areas of provision which are particularly effective, and those

aspects which would benefit from further development. This approach includes opportunities for staff and other stakeholders to contribute meaningfully to the process. The setting development plan provides a detailed framework to bring about improvements in specific areas. For example, leaders have highlighted the need to increase practitioners' consistency when using Welsh vocabulary with the children. Leaders evaluate progress regularly and promote a strong culture of aiming for excellence.

Staff receive a well-planned and comprehensive range of professional learning opportunities. For example, leaders provide time for staff to learn about aspects such as neurodiversity in the early years. Staff also meet regularly and discuss their approaches to supporting the children's well-being and the development of their skills. Leaders arrange regular non-contact time for practitioners to consider important aspects, such as children's progress in skills and how their confidence is developing over time. Leaders undertake regular supervisions of practitioners and provide additional support and training as required. They apply this professional approach across all aspects of the provision. As a result, practitioners feel valued and respond positively to the high expectations set by leaders.

Leaders have established particularly strong partnerships with a range of organisations, such as the local authority advisory teachers and a range of other organisations. They have developed excellent relationships with the local authority's family support service. As a result, they work effectively to support children and their families who may be experiencing particular challenges, either as a result of poverty or other social challenges. Leaders work well with this service to discuss the family's needs and signpost them to a range of wider support agencies within the local authority.

The setting leader works very successfully with the headteacher of the host primary school, where the setting is located. They share professional learning opportunities to develop their approaches to the Curriculum for Wales in the early years. In addition, leaders have collaborated well to discuss their approaches to self-evaluation and look together at their methods of considering evidence, and how best to respond to priorities for improvement. Leaders also work closely with other settings to facilitate professional learning and share good practice. This collaborative approach is highly effective and has a significant impact on the provision.

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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