



Sandycroft Pre School CIC



Sandycroft Cp School, Leaches Lane Mancot, Deeside, CH5 2EH



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www.ysgolsandycroftschool.co.uk

Date(s) of inspection visit(s):

10/07/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Sandycroft Pre School CIC
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	30
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	Yes
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The service provider is not meeting the Welsh language and culture needs of people and this requires improvement.

Ratings:



Well-being

Excellent



Care & Development

Excellent



Environment

Excellent



Leadership & Management

Excellent

Summary:

All children are happy and have excellent opportunities to make choices and decisions about their play. Children interact well together highly successfully. They are proud of their setting. They are busy, active learners who show great interest in what they and their friends are doing. Every child has access to experiences which enable them to gain skills and develop their independence well.

Staff encourage healthy lifestyles and promote children's safety and well-being successfully. They offer an excellent range of foods for snack which encourages the children to try different foods. Staff are highly committed to offer constant opportunities for children to play outdoors and be active. They follow effective cleaning and hygiene routines which makes the space clean and safe for the children. Staff are well qualified in childcare and very positive role models. They provide warm, nurturing care and have a good understanding of how to support individual children.

The setting is warm and extremely welcoming. Walls are decorated in natural tones which creates a peaceful space. Leaders ensure they provide children with an excellent range of resources and activities and learning areas are organised well to facilitate children's play and learning highly effectively. Leaders follow effective procedures to ensure the environment is safe for children.

Leaders manage the setting exceptionally well. They are highly experienced and motivated. The statement of purpose reflects the setting well and contains all the required information. Leaders have high expectations and ensure staff work towards a shared vision and roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. They enjoy very good relationships with children, staff and parents as well as visiting professionals. Staff feel supported and are encouraged to attend regular training opportunities to further develop their knowledge and skills successfully.

Findings:



Well-being

Excellent

All children have good opportunities to make choices and decisions about their play and learning. They choose successfully what they want to play with such as small figures and cars. They decide who to play with and whether they want to play indoors or outside. Children are highly confident and come to show us how to make rabbit shadow puppets. They then explain how one rabbit can become two. Children's opinions are consistently taken into consideration during play experiences. For example, if children request more water for their kitchen or to water their plants, then this is facilitated. Children are very happy and sing as they play. They are exceptionally proud of their setting, especially outdoors and three children show us round, taking time to explain how they play. They are delighted to lift the lid off a box and excited to discover the beetles underneath.

All children are happy and busy. They feel safe and settle quickly on arrival deciding where to play. They have built exceptionally positive relationships with staff which creates a trusting atmosphere where children feel safe and valued. Children happily invite staff into their play and ask which is their favourite colour from the rainbow they have made. They welcome cuddles if they need reassurance and children get cosy with staff when reading a story together. Children are familiar with the setting's routines and remind staff they are getting hungry, knowing they will be listened to, and staff will set out an early snack, with ice cream on the hot day to cool them down. Children know to wash their hands before snack time and coming in from the garden.

All children interact exceptionally well for their age and stage of development. Most smile when excitedly greeting their friends from morning school. They enjoy showing each other what they have been doing. They say, 'My aeroplane is big'. Friends take a keen interest and ask, 'Does it go fast?' Most children co-operate well and are developing an understanding about sharing and can tell us why it is important. They help their friends reminding them to bend down and be careful not to spoil a large spider web at the entrance to the den. Nearly all children listen to and follow instructions exceptionally well. They are curious learners and demonstrate what happens when they drop a toy figure down the inside of a castle turret. They are keen to discover why the toy has gone so quickly when they didn't see it move. Children work together well for example carrying a heavy box. Two children come over to help when they hear 'This box is too heavy.'

Children are busy active learners and show lots of creative skills and ideas. They say, 'It's too warm' and make fans to cool themselves down in the hot weather. Children make telescopes so they can see their friends at the end of the garden. They are flexible in their ideas, and the telescope becomes a trumpet. They love to explore the outdoors. For example, they smile and laugh with friends as they run around climbing and balancing on their wooden ship. They enjoy imaginative play experiences in the mud kitchen and show us what they are making. They use

plants and petals to make the meal tastier. Children concentrate exceptionally well for their age and show resilience and problem-solving skills by flying the paper planes they have made. They cheer enthusiastically when one flies high and laugh when one does a nosedive. Most enjoy joining in with Welsh songs and rhymes and sing with enthusiasm.

Children have access to experiences which enable them to gain skills and develop their independence highly effectively. For example, children are encouraged to do things for themselves such as turning the outside water tap on and off, helping to move a table and carry their own chairs. They choose and select their own food and pour their own drinks. Children use a pair of scissors to open a tricky packet at lunch time, and they confidently wipe their own noses and put the tissues into the bin.



Staff successfully encourage healthy lifestyles and promote children's safety and well-being. For example, they provide children with healthy food and drink at snack time, showing vigilance with any items in lunch boxes which may require further cutting up. Staff are aware of any allergies and have completed the Tiny Tums award. They offer an excellent range of foods for snack which encourages the children to try different foods highly successfully. They offer constant opportunities to play outdoors and be active. Staff follow effective cleaning and hygiene routines which makes the space clean and safe for the children. They complete accident and incident records successfully and know the importance of sharing these with parents. Staff ensure there are always plenty of staff to meet the individual needs of the children and complete children's and staff attendance records however the exact times should be recorded. Staff clearly understand their responsibilities to report child protection concerns and are familiar with the setting's safeguarding policy. All staff have attended the required safeguarding training and paediatric first aid training.

Staff implement the setting's behaviour policy consistently and highly effectively. Staff are highly skilled at gently reminding children of simple rules and de-escalating situations in an exceptionally calm and supportive manner. They are highly sensitive and use a range of different strategies, including plenty of good humour, demonstrating a clear understanding of children's emotional needs. Staff are always very calm and get down to the child's level and help them understand their feelings in a highly positive way which promotes the children's self-esteem. They give gentle explanations which the children can easily understand. Staff provide children with regular praise for what they are doing which promotes a positive and encouraging environment.

Staff are well qualified in childcare and highly successful role models, particularly in developing children's language skills. They provide warm nurturing care and support children's emotional well-being highly effectively. Staff provide children with a range of engaging activities that meet their interest levels, and they make use of all learning moments successfully. For example, when they hold a tiny spider, they talk about it, ask if it tickles and then break into song which the children join in enthusiastically. When a child sees an aeroplane staff say 'Well spotted' making the child beam with joy. Staff provide opportunities for children to grow fruit and vegetables which they use for snack. They grow unusual fruits for children to try such as yellow raspberries. This allows children to understand where their food comes from and watch it grow, and how it is prepared for snack. Staff show an excellent understanding of when to stand back, promoting the development of children's self-help skills and when to join in a game such as rolling a ball. They plan activities and observe and track children's progress highly successfully. Staff have a good understanding of children with Additional Learning Needs. They work closely with specialist services when children require further support. This ensures children all make good progress and reach their full promise. Staff work closely with parents and use an app to keep parents updated highly effectively. They invite parents to come for stay and play sessions so parents can spend time with their children and have a greater understanding of how their children learn in the setting. Parents are happy and

confirm their child is well supported to meet their full potential. They enjoy coming into the setting and are happy with the quality of care. Parents say, 'Staff are brilliant'.



Environment

Excellent

Leaders follow effective procedures to ensure the environment is safe for children. For example, staff ensure the main entrance to the setting is kept locked. All visitors are authorised and recorded as the setting is accessed through the school. The outdoor area is secure, with staff carrying out checks to ensure this area is safe before use. Leaders complete effective written risk assessments and review these frequently. The setting is exceptionally clean and well maintained.

The setting is warm and extremely welcoming. Walls are decorated in natural tones which creates a peaceful space. Learning areas are organised well and facilitate children's play and learning highly effectively. There is plenty of room for children to move around and a space for children to rest or enjoy looking at books. This area has been made attractive and comfortable and promotes a love of reading. All resources are stored at children's level, so it is easy for them to access independently and follow their own interests and take the lead in their own learning. For example, when the children want to play with water, they can easily access their aprons. Leaders ensure there are a suitable number of toilets, and wash basins for the children. Plenty of examples of children's work, which they enjoy talking about, are displayed giving them a feeling of belonging.

There are an excellent range of resources and activities that encourage exploration, curiosity and skills. For example, staff are developing the use of open-ended resources such as recycled parts of a washing machine, crates, blocks and planks of wood which encourages children to problem solve and invent their own play ideas. The outdoor kitchen has some real-life items which stimulate curiosity and staff encourage children to use authentic items in their play to understand the world they live in.

Staff understand the benefits of outdoor learning and are committed to using this area as much as possible. They ensure it offers a variety of play opportunities. For example, there are wooden tee pees, a large, almost full size, pirate ship complete with hidey holes for children to explore and hide. They provide digging opportunities in the garden growing fruit and vegetables such as carrots and radish. A large sandpit promotes fine motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination. The hard surface area allows children to use ride-on toys, developing gross motor skills, balance and spatial awareness. The mud kitchen with outdoor tap encourages imaginative play and language development. Leaders provide children with furniture, toys and resources that are exceptionally clean and of good quality. Resources to reflect cultural diversity resources are plentiful and reflect cultural celebrations. These are integrated into the daily learning environment well.



Leadership & Management

Excellent

Leaders manage the setting exceptionally well. They are highly experienced and motivated. The statement of purpose reflects the setting well and contains all the required information. Leaders have high expectations and ensure staff work towards a shared vision and roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Leaders understand their regulatory responsibilities well and monitor to ensure the setting adheres to regulations. Leaders inform CIW of significant events and keep records and documentation clear and up to date.

An effective self-evaluation which includes views of parents, children and staff as well as visiting professionals forms the basis for the quality-of-care review. Leaders use this to reflect on the setting's strengths and areas for development and set targets for future improvements highly successfully. Leaders have beneficial links with a range of professionals and work well with the Flying Start Advisory team which helps support and develop their practice effectively.

Leaders manage staff exceptionally well. They ensure they are deployed effectively and there are plenty of staff to guarantee children's needs are met. Leaders follow safe recruitment procedures when appointing new staff. They conduct annual appraisals successfully and encourage most staff to attend mandatory training which helps them keep up to date with the latest policies, procedures and practices. They are encouraged to attend any extra training which extends their knowledge and improves outcomes for children. Staff clearly enjoy their work and feel well supported. Regular staff supervision encourages staff to regularly reflect on their practice and identifies professional development.

There are highly positive relationships with parents and carers. Leaders share the children's targets with parents each half term and keep parents updated when these are reviewed. They also share electronic photographs of children's activities through an app. Leaders share daily information with parents such as what children have eaten, what activities they have taken part in, toileting information and how they have spent their time. Parents are very happy with the care provided and staff take plenty of time when parents collect their children to exchange a good level of information. Parents say, 'My child is happy'. 'Leaders provide children with good opportunities to learn from and be part of their local community by taking children on outings, such as the library.

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.

National Minimum Standards

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

Standard	Recommendation(s)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

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