Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Brynmawr Preschool

St Marys RC Primary School, Catholic Road, Brynmawr, NP23 4EF

07496067509

Date(s) of inspection visit(s):

02/05/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Megan Phillips
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	20
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	Good
Care & Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Excellent

Summary:

Children are happy, settled, have valuable and consistently good play and learning experiences at the setting. They make choices about activities and are free to move between the purposeful opportunities offered indoors and outdoors. Children have warm and positive relationships with staff and nearly all interactions are consistently good and effective. Children's social and independence skills are developing age appropriately.

Staff keep children safe and effectively implement the setting's policies and procedures. Interactions between staff and children are warm, calm and beneficial and staff positively support the needs of all children. Staff plan around various themes and consider the interests and suggestions of the children. They organise a consistently good range of worthwhile play and learning activities and experiences.

The environment is welcoming and organised purposefully by staff daily. The people running the setting ensure staff consistently implement good cleaning routines and infection control practices. This includes daily cleaning routines for all areas. The indoor and outdoor environments are safe, and suitable for the children to play purposefully. All relevant risk assessments are in place and ensure potential hazards to children are identified and minimised. The people running the setting make sure there are good quality toys and resources for indoor and outdoor activities. These resources are suitable for the ages and stage of development of children being cared for.

The people running the setting manage it superbly. Leadership and management of the setting is highly effective and very strong. The staff team are very high quality and work exceptionally well together. Parents / carers speak highly of the setting. They praised the worthwhile opportunities, and the valuable care their children receive.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children arrive eagerly at the setting and cope positively with separation from their parents / carers. Nearly all the children are comfortable in their surroundings and in the company of all the adults present at the setting. Children communicate successfully and confidently with staff, visitors and each other. They nearly all show a positive interest in activities available indoors and outdoors. Upon arrival most children are keen to engage in all experiences and activities available to them. Nearly all children show curiosity and explore a variety of valuable play opportunities. For example, children engage in free play activities and role play in the outdoor area. This included children using the toys to move gravel in the building area and moving play bricks with a small trolley. Children are aware of the moods and the feelings of others at the setting and ensure that all are part of their play.

Children have formed warm and positive bonds with staff and each other. This has a clear and beneficial impact on their well-being. For example, children and staff enjoy being together in the arts and crafts activities, playing together in the soil planter and sitting indoors listening to staff reading before lunchtime. Children are assigned a key worker dependent on who they build a relationship in the first few days at the setting. This ensures that the care they receive is tailored to their individual needs and provides a warm transition from their parents or carers. Examples observed include children being distracted to help them settle while others were introduced to activities. Children understand that all staff respond effectively to their individual needs and requirements and confidently approach them for support during activities. Other children enjoy being independent and staff understood to observe from a distance.

Children have built worthwhile friendships and work together successfully. For example, laughter and scream of enjoyment were heard in the activities outdoors especially in the water activity and on the trampoline. They patiently wait their turn in all activities. For example, children shared resources in the gravel area and took turns with the toys available.

Children develop their independence skills well through the purposeful activities prepared. Examples include, children deciding on the activities they take part in and what resources they use both indoors and outdoors. They are aware of daily routines such as toileting and washing hands. At snack time, children are encouraged to feed themselves independently.

Care & Development — Good

Staff successfully and confidently implement the setting's policies and procedures ensuring children are safe and healthy. They receive regular Child Protection training and thoroughly understand the setting's safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding and child protection is also discussed during the monthly staff meetings. The setting has a valuable system to record and file relevant documents which are signed and dated. These include accurate records of accidents and incidents which are signed by parents / carers to evidence they have been kept informed. Accidents and incidents are analysed monthly to determine the cause, identify emerging patterns to prevent further accidents of a similar kind in future. Staff keep effective records of pre-existing injuries when children arrive at the setting. These include detailed information including dates, signatures and actions taken by staff and parents / carers. All current members of staff have achieved paediatric first aid training, enabling them to deal with accidents appropriately. The setting does not routinely administer medicine, but staff have good understanding of the systems in place if medicines are to be administered. This includes storage of medicines, the administration of medicines, including last dose administered. Staff follow the Welsh Government food and nutrition guidance, they encourage children to eat healthily and provide them fruit, crackers, and water at snack time. Staff are aware of children's dietary needs and any allergies are dealt with safely. Staff wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when preparing and serving food. They consistently encourage children to wash their hands before and after eating and after outdoor activities.

Staff have developed positive and warm relationships with children. Each child has a keyworker, to assist with children's individual assessments, observations and to provide parents / carers with a point of contact. Staff are caring and patient when talking to children. Examples of interactions include, discussing whether it was a good idea to throw chippings and encouraging a child to "*blow on it*" and "*shake it off*" when they tripped. Staff create a relaxed atmosphere, and as a result, children are comfortable and respond positively. Staff support children's behaviour effectively and skilfully. They remind children about appropriate behaviours and interactions and nearly all children respond accordingly. For example, when children were becoming boisterous and excited outdoors, staff reminded children about "*nice hands*", to be careful when on the climbing equipment and to wait their turn.

Staff promote every child's play, learning and development, planning a range of consistently good activities indoors and outdoors. Examples of resources readily available include arts and crafts, role playing and recycled materials to make wooden trails. Staff include children's suggestions for planning activities and themes. However, at present, these are not clearly noted within the setting's planning documents. Evidence was presented of activities children have enjoyed. Incidental Welsh was heard within the setting and the staff promote the use of Welsh through words of the day, songs and nursery rhyme of the week.

Environment — Good

The people running the setting make sure the premises is welcoming and offers the children beneficial opportunities. They provide a consistently good environment for children which is used successfully to promote their learning and development. The indoor area is planned to promote children's independence, curiosity, and learning. The people running the setting further enhance children's experiences by providing them easy access to age-appropriate activities and resources. The people running the setting ensure the environment is safe and secure. They have valuable systems to manage access into the indoor and outdoor area. For instance, visitors are granted access; by staff, through the main entrance which is secure. All visitors sign in and out of the setting. The outdoor area is safely enclosed by fencing. The people running the setting have ensured risk assessments are regularly reviewed and include detailed information about the premises, the various activities and all outings' children participate in. They ensure that all potential hazards are identified, and sufficient measures are in place to minimise these risks to children. The people running the setting conduct daily health and safety checks of the indoor and outdoor area. All regular maintenance and safety checks are completed within appropriate timescales. Evidence shared include fire and smoke alarm testing, fire extinguishers and electrical testing. The people running the setting make sure fire drills are conducted regularly to ensure staff and children are confident of what to do in an emergency. The toilet facilities are age appropriate, with appropriately situated sinks, and the facilities ensure that they meet children's privacy and dignity requirements. Cleanliness of the setting is consistently good, and tables are cleaned daily and before and after snack time.

Resources are stored at appropriate levels and children can access them and make their own choices. The people running the setting ensure children have access to a wide range of resources which include painting easels, building blocks, a wooden train track and musical instruments. There are also role-playing resources, a small kitchen and dressing up clothes. The outdoor area is safely enclosed and is used well for the requirements of the children.

Outdoor resources include age-appropriate bikes, obstacle blocks and a mud kitchen. Children have access to an area where they have an opportunity to see various plants and animals. All resources are appropriately and securely stored.

The setting provides a worthwhile range of age-appropriate toys and resources that keep children engaged. All furniture and equipment are age-appropriate and of good quality. All toys and play equipment are clean and well-maintained and are regularly cleaned during the day. There is a range of resources to promote cultural awareness, celebrations, and diversity within the setting. However, these were limited but their availability is being developed further to enhance children's understanding of cultures and diversity within the community.

Leadership & Management — Excellent

Leadership and management of the setting is very strong and highly effective. They have superb expectations of staff and extensively support them to do their best through offering regular training. For example, training on developing woodland crafts, the curriculum and assessment arrangements. The statement of purpose is very high quality and reflective of what the setting offers. It provides parents / carers with the information they need to make an informed choice about the provision. People who run the setting regularly review their policies and procedures and ensure staff implement them extensively. They have very strong record keeping systems in place including children's contracts, external agency visits, children's attendance, and staff files. People who run the setting inform Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) about events as set out in regulations, providing relevant information at the correct times.

People who run the setting have extensive systems for the evaluation of the setting. They regularly seek feedback from parents, staff, and children using questionnaires. Regular parents and children together (PACT) sessions are held by people running the setting. These sessions offer parents highly effective opportunities to come into the setting and see the environment their children are in. People who run the setting also use this as an opportunity to gather verbal feedback from parents. Information is used expertly to review performance, identify priorities for improvement and to further improve opportunities for staff and children. People who run the setting value their staff and there is a very strong and highly effective ethos of teamwork within the staff team. They work superbly together to ensure the best opportunities and outcomes for children.

The staff are very high quality and highly experienced and make sure children are safe and have very high-quality experiences. During the inspection, staff files we looked at, contained evidence of regular supervisions and appraisals and evidence of additional training completed. Staff felt expertly supported by management and feel they can confidently talk and discuss ideas and concerns with them freely and openly.

Partnerships with parents / carers and outside agencies are exemplary and superbly support the work of the setting. Staff share regular daily updates with parents / carers at collection time. Information is extensively shared and includes nappy changing, activities participated in and general information. Parents / carers told us their children receive consistently good care and feel involved in the setting. Examples of comments include 'friendly staff and my child comes home happy every day,' 'staff are very friendly and communicate really well with parents' and 'they are really good for parents who aren't together and make sure we have the same information and not felt left out.' The setting has very strong partnerships with the local school situated on the same site and the Local Authority through the Flying Start Speech and Language Therapist and the Additional Learning Needs Officer from the Early Year Team.

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)
Standard 23 - Equipment	Increase the resources available that promote cultural diversity and equal opportunities.

Best Practice

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Recommendation(s)
Increase the voice of the children in the planning of activities.
Develop the opportunities for children's independence especially during snack time

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