A report on

Cefn Mawr Playgroup Bright Stars Playgroup

Cefn Mawr County Primary School
Plas Kynaston Lane
Cefn Mawr Wrexham
LL14 3PY

Date of inspection: February 2025 by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and

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

About Cefn Mawr Playgroup Bright Stars Playgroup

Name of setting	Cefn Mawr Playgroup Bright Stars Playgroup
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Cefn Mawr Playgroup
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Diane Wood
Person in charge	Suzanne Pugh and Sarah Jackson
Number of places	19
Age range of children	3 – 4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	15
Number of children who receive funding for early education	5
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 9:00 – 3:00 Term time
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The service is not making a significant effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	Post registration
Date of previous Estyn inspection	N/A
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	19/02/2025
The setting is English medium and all the children have English as their first language.	

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. Continue to develop understanding of the importance of giving children time to explore and play on their own

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 are confident to share their thoughts and ideas. They are happy to move around the environment and make decisions about where they would like to play and what they would like to play with. They choose items from different areas around the setting to use in their play purposefully, for example collecting bottle tops and shells to use in their water play when exploring floating and sinking.

Nearly all children are eager to express themselves and their needs confidently. They communicate verbally or using gestures and signs, knowing that practitioners will respond with interest and understanding. Nearly all children have worthwhile opportunities to share their views and interests, and these are effectively considered by practitioners when planning activities.

Nearly all children have a strong sense of belonging, which supports them in feeling safe and secure. They develop positive relationships with practitioners and feel secure knowing that their needs will be catered for well. Nearly all children are confident to talk to others including unfamiliar adults. On arrival at the setting, nearly all children separate well from their parents, showing them being secure in their surroundings and eager to explore the environment. Nearly all children are familiar with the routines, which are successfully embedded in practice. This includes washing their hands at appropriate times and getting their belongings ready to go home at the end of the session.

Nearly all children interact well with practitioners and their peers. This has a positive impact on their social, speech and language development. They enjoy sitting together with practitioners and their peers at snack and lunchtime, where they share their experiences and ideas. Nearly all children enjoy playing alongside others and are beginning to share resources and space appropriately. For example, they happily move to enable other children to join them in their play. Many children are beginning to show empathy towards others, showing concern for their friends who are absent due to illness.

Nearly all children engage in play and learning opportunities eagerly. They explore activities and resources with curiosity and have beneficial opportunities to follow their own interests. For example, when exploring bubbles created in the water tray, they explore different ways to catch them. Children are inspired to develop a range of skills through the inviting opportunities and experiences available to them. Nearly all children are confident in their surroundings and familiar with the environment and routines, which supports them to be independent. For example, they put aprons on to play in the water, wash their hands after using glue and use the hand drier independently. In addition, they serve themselves food and butter their bread or crackers with confidence during snack times.

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

Practitioners put the well-being of children at the heart of the setting and care they provide. They have a good understanding of the settings policies and procedures, ensuring that children are safe. Practitioners have up to date safeguarding training and know what to do if they have concerns about a child. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners fully understand their roles and responsibilities and ensure that children are supervised well. They work together as a team to make sure that the setting runs smoothly, and that routines do not negatively impact on care children receive.
Practitioners complete required records appropriately including accidents and incidents and share this information with parents promptly. Practitioners understand and cater for the individual needs of children well and manage any medical or dietary needs appropriately. Practitioners conduct fire drills with the children at regular intervals, so that everyone is aware of the procedures to follow in the case of an emergency.

Practitioners support and encourage children to be healthy. They offer nutritious snack choices such as crackers, fruit and toast, accompanied by milk or water. To promote physical activity and fresh air, practitioners create engaging and inviting opportunities for children to be active. They provide children with free access to a well-designed outdoor space and regularly participate in walks and trips around the local area, including visits to the nearby school's forest school area.

Practitioners have a lovely manner with the children, and show them genuine affection, care, understanding. They take a keen interest in children's attempts at communication and support their speech and language development effectively. For example, they sit alongside children and engage them in meaningful conversations as they eat their lunch together.

Practitioners have a good knowledge and understanding of child development. They ensure that they take time to know each child well, which enables them to provide suitable and tailored support to all children, including those with additional learning needs (ALN). They assess and observe children closely and effectively and use this information to plan a rich learning environment well. Practitioners are responsive to children's needs and interests and identify beneficial opportunities where they may

extend learning in a fun and interactive way. For example, they provide mirrors for children to use when they start to create faces using playdough, which led to discussions about the features they could see, such as their eyes and eyebrows.

Practitioners use and encourage the use of Welsh during routines, group activities and play experiences consistently. They have developed a positive ethos where children are confident to use Welsh words and phrases independently. Practitioners plan worthwhile opportunities to teach children about the Welsh culture, including celebrating St Davids Day and learning about their local environment.

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

Practitioners know their children well and have a sound understanding of child development. They have embraced the principles of the Curriculum for Wales well and provide a wide range of interesting and stimulating learning and play experiences for children. They consider children's interests effectively and use them as a starting point to plan experiences and activities. For example, practitioners plan a range of stimulating activities related to cars and trucks in response to children's interest after listening to a story about vehicles. However, at times practitioners do not always give children time to explore and play independently well enough.

Practitioners provide a calm and secure environment for children to play and learn. Their planning is informed from observations of children's play and focuses on their next steps in learning well This approach builds on children's knowledge and skills successfully.

Practitioners are excellent role models and support children to develop their language skills through caring and encouraging interactions. They provide children with time and space to explore mark making and early writing with a range of resources such as pens, crayons, chalks, paint and paint in spray bottles. Practitioners plan real life opportunities for children to use these skills in their play, such as recording the different birds that visit the bird feeders.

Practitioners promote a love of books to children through reading stories that engage them and link to their interests well. They provide relevant books in the areas of learning within the setting and as a result more children choose to look and refer to the pictures in books as they play.

Practitioners enable children to develop their physical skills well. They encourage children to take calculated risks in their play and challenge themselves physically, supporting them to develop resilience, independence, and confidence. For example, practitioners encourage children to be confident and careful when negotiating large obstacles in the outdoor area.

Practitioners create worthwhile experiences and ask appropriate questions that help children to develop their mathematical understanding well. For example, they encourage children to count the places needed when setting the table in the role play home area. Practitioners provide a good range of opportunities for children to explore and understand digital technology. For example, they model how to use remote controlled cars effectively, which inspires children to design and build their own racetracks for racing.

Practitioners foster a sense of awe and wonder in children well. They take good notice of children's fascinations and respond to these positively. For example, when observing children playing with torches in the role play area, they enhance the experience by switching off the room lights, sparking delight. This prompted children to shine their torches on the walls and ceiling, creating exciting patterns and shadows. This experience helped to develop and deepen children's sense of discovery and wonder.

Practitioners provide a rich range of activities that promote the children's understanding of Welsh culture well through experiences such as celebrating Saint David's and Saint Dwynwen Days and visiting the local country park and viaduct. Practitioners successfully encourage children to join in a range of Welsh songs and rhymes. They model the use of familiar phrases and vocabulary extremely well during children's play and when leading whole group sessions. As a result, most children enjoy singing a range of Welsh songs including songs about their feelings and a few children use simple Welsh words spontaneously in their play.

Practitioners develop the children's spiritual, moral, and social skills effectively. For example, they visit the local cenotaph to lay poppies they have made and celebrate diversity successfully by exploring the customs of Chinese New Year and reading books that reflect a diverse range of cultures and people. Practitioners show high levels of care and respect for everyone and, as a result, children are kind and respectful with their peers.

Environment: Good

Leaders are dedicated to providing a safe and secure environment for children to play and learn. There are effective and appropriate risk assessments in place and practitioners monitor the environment effectively through daily checks. This ensures that any new hazards are identified and managed well. The entrance and outdoor area is secure, which includes fencing and gates that are locked to prevent unauthorised access. Registers of children and practitioners are completed to ensure that everyone can be accounted for, and visitors are greeted and signed in, so it is clear who is in the building at all times.

Leaders provide an inviting and welcoming environment that is clean and well maintained. The environment is decorated well, and attractive displays create a child friendly and calming atmosphere. This helps children to develop a strong sense of belonging. Leaders

ensure that there are suitable large open spaces, which give children space to play and learn through a wide of resources and experiences. Leaders have created an exciting and inviting outdoor environment, which allows children to use resources in a variety of ways. For example, a potions area with coloured water, glitter and various containers and a cozy covered reading corner allow children to develop their communication skills effectively. A space has been created to allow children to use bikes and trikes safely away from other activities developing their gross motor skills well. One of the most effective areas is the water play area, where children spray coloured paint onto a large plastic sheet, sparking their awe and wonder through their creative exploration effectively. Leaders ensure that all of the environment is used well and that children have a choice to play indoors or outside in all weathers.

Leaders effectively equip the environment with inspiring resources and areas of learning. They provide a beneficial range of resources that support children to develop their skills effectively. The successful use of authentic resources enhances children's experiences and inspires their curiosity and learning, such as real China plates and metal utensils in the home corner. Leaders develop exciting areas of learning that spark children's curiosity.
They enhance the environment with natural materials such as sand, water and recycled materials for craft and construction effectively. They provide suitable resources that encourage children to be creative as they paint and make music. Leaders ensure that there is a diverse range of multi-cultural resources, including include dolls, books and puzzles, to help children learn about different beliefs and cultures.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have high expectations of themselves, practitioners and children. They provide calm and positive leadership where adults and children are respected and supported to achieve their best. Leaders have developed a clear statement of purpose that provides an accurate picture of the setting, and they ensure that a suitable range of relevant policies and procedures are in place. 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. Leaders, teachers and practitioners work well together to plan transitions, which ensures continuity for the children as they transfer from the setting to the school. This close partnership is a strength of the setting.

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. This allows leaders to improve the work of the setting purposefully through continuous improvement. Leaders make effective use of grants to contribute to priority areas in the setting improvement plans. For example, the purchase of new resources for

the outdoor environment has had a positive impact on developing children's independence and physical skills.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of teamwork and shared responsibility across the setting. Systems for appraisal and supervision encourage reflection and identify areas for improvement successfully. Daily meetings provide worthwhile opportunities for all staff to discuss what has been successful and plan learning experiences and improvements for the following sessions. As a result, staff feel valued and well supported.

Leaders ensure that practitioners have access to relevant and purposeful training, which supports their ongoing professional development effectively. For example, leaders have supported practitioners in accessing training that helps them to improve their Welsh language skills. As a result, children's Welsh language development is strong. Leaders have established highly beneficial partnerships, which have a positive effect on the provision and outcomes for children. For example, leaders work well local businesses to provide the setting with additional resources, such as egg boxes and cartons for children to play with in the construction area.

Leaders and practitioners maintain a strong and effective partnership with parents and carers. They share updates about their child's well-being and development through digital app notifications and regular face-to-face interactions. This proactive approach not only reinforces the connection between the setting and home but also ensures that parents and carers are always informed about their child's progress and development. Practitioners are very approachable, and parents are confident that any concerns they may have are dealt with swiftly and appropriately. Parents report their children enjoy coming to the setting and participating in the wide range of engaging experiences available to them.

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.

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