

Bedwas Rising Stars at Willow Tree Cottage



Bedwas Infant School, St. Mary Street Bedwas, Caerphilly, CF83 8EE



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Date of inspection visit: 8 May 2025

Service Information:

Operated by: Bedwas Rising Stars Childcare Ltd

Care Type: Children's Day Care

Registered places: 18

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:

Children are exceptionally, settled and make excellent progress at the setting. They have fantastic fun playing with their friends and have a wealth of choice and opportunities to develop different skills and become independent. Children develop positive, healthy relationships with their friends and staff. They can speak freely and are encouraged to share their ideas with staff who show genuine interest in their views and opinions.

Staff have a thorough knowledge of how to keep children safe and healthy. They work exceptionally well as a team and there is a lovely atmosphere at the setting. Staff have an extensive range of policies, procedures and documentation in place which effectively support them when undertaking their roles. Staff pay very close attention to safety matters. They understand their responsibilities to report concerns and have a clear and sound knowledge of the safeguarding procedure.

The environment is very clean, welcoming, and organised so that children can access facilities and resources with ease. There is a broad range of equipment and resources both indoors and outdoors to encourage children to play and learn. Each of these areas is planned carefully and includes a good variety of age appropriate, developmentally challenging, and exciting play equipment that children get full use of daily. The environment is secure and all safety checks for the building are in place.

Leaders have an excellent vision which is shared with staff. They have a strong sense of purpose which sustains improvement and promotes outstanding outcomes for children. The staff work very well as a team and managers are dedicated and highly motivated. Leaders value staff and provide effective and regular support. They have excellent partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals, ensuring they work collectively to support children's learning and development.

Findings:



Well-being

Excellent

Children feel very safe, happy and valued at the setting. They make extensive choices throughout the day and know their ideas matter. The children are actively involved in making decisions for themselves and choosing freely, either independently or together as a group. For example, children squeal with delight as they run around the garden finding coloured leaves and twigs to make their 'nature wands' and giggle as they tell staff what superpower it will have. Children frequently approach staff and enjoy spending time playing with them alongside their friends. For example, children direct staff to close their eyes and count to ten as they hide play eggs in the garden and take great pleasure in holding their hands to help them find them.

Children settle quickly and cope extremely well spending time away from their main care givers. They are supported very well by staff who offer them reassurance and a sense of belonging at the setting. All children have formed very close bonds with their key workers whilst also being very familiar with all the staff. Children who are unsettled are given individual, patient care and attention. For example, one child who was a little upset, was cared for by a familiar staff member who offered lots of cuddles, smiles and distraction, reminding them about all the exciting plans for the day. Children feel safe and secure as they are familiar with the routines of the setting. They are given frequent verbal and visual reminders about the running order of the day and what comes next. For example, children are extremely calm as they transition from snack time to free play with a five-minute relaxation session. They listen to calm music with their eyes closed while a staff member speaks softly, encouraging them to think about the lovely time they had in the morning and their plans for the afternoon.

Children behave very well, enjoy receiving praise for good manners and being kind and helpful. These social skills are well above expectations for their age. Children learn the importance of sharing and taking turns from a wide range of relevant activities. For example, the children are very patient as they wait their turn to examine Henrietta eggs, to see if they are starting to hatch and listen carefully for any sounds of a baby chick inside.

Children have great fun with the activities on offer. For example, children run around the garden with their super powered nature wands, casting spells. They roar with laughter as they freeze staff and their friends, turn them into pretend elephants or super-fast sonic the hedgehog. Children's self-help skills are developing extremely well. For example, where appropriate, children access the toilet independently, are beginning to pour their own drinks and clear their plates into recycling after snack time. They wash their own hands, tidy up after play and put on their coats with some assistance from staff when needed.



Care & Development

Excellent

Staff provide an outstanding level of care that supports children's health, safety and development. They understand their roles clearly and carry them out with confidence and consistency. Staff follow a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that promote children's wellbeing to a very high standard. They are very confident in recording accidents and incidents which are shared with parents and signed routinely. There is a clear medication policy in place with associated paperwork which is completed appropriately and signed by staff and parents. Staff recognise the importance of delivering timely and appropriate First Aid and nearly all have full Paediatric first Aid training or booked on an upcoming course. There is a safeguarding policy for the setting and leaders ensure the policy is understood by all staff. Staff are very confident in recognising signs and symptoms of abuse. All staff have up to date safeguarding training. A daily register of children's attendance is maintained with the actual times recorded. The setting has been awarded a 5* Food Hygiene rating. Information on children's allergies is clearly available to all staff, and they manage these carefully.

Staff build very strong, trusting relationships with children and engage with them in a highly meaningful way. Interactions between staff and children is respectful, relaxed and very positive, demonstrating warmth, kindness and care. Staff are sensitive to children's needs and take every opportunity to enhance interactions through careful, consistent responses. They listen attentively and respect children's individuality, frequently offering praise and encouragement. For example, after circle time, children were overjoyed to receive special award stickers chosen by Henrietta the play hen, for their individual talents noted during their circle time activity. Children were visibly beaming with pride as they were awarded stickers for best listener, most gentle, best dancer and super sharer. Staff are excellent role models for children, prompting them to say 'please' and 'thank you' at snack times. They praise children enthusiastically when they play co-operatively. Staff fully understand the behaviour management policy and consistently implement distraction techniques successfully to ensure children learn to share in the most sensitive way to have no impact on children's feelings and emotions.

Staff have a clear understanding of individual children's needs, abilities and backgrounds. They maintain detailed records of children's development at every stage of their time spent at the setting. Transition records and in-depth profiles of the children are constantly under review. This enables staff to plan age-appropriate activities and individually tailored care that keeps each child interested and develops their skills. Staff utilise outside agencies to provide a very good level of support for children with additional needs. They work closely with families and professionals to ensure children make progress. Staff also promote children's language skills, including the use of Welsh language.



Environment

Excellent

Leaders create an outstanding environment that supports children's safety, wellbeing and development. They maintain the setting to a very high standard. There is a secure system for entry to the setting and staff ensure that all visitors are signed into the service. Staff complete daily checklists to identify any matters that need addressing such as health, safety, and hygiene. Leaders ensure that annual safety and maintenance checks are completed in a timely manner. Fire drills take place regularly, and children know what to do in an emergency. They have good infection control practices which successfully minimise the risk to children's health and safety.

The indoor environment is extremely welcoming and child centred. Leaders design each area with children's needs and interests in mind. For example, in line with the children's current interest in birds and animals, staff have created exciting role play areas in the main playroom. These include a farm shop, stocked with a fantastic variety of natural products, a chicken coup alongside a wealth of other fantastic play areas with excellent resources. The main playroom is bright, spacious and thoughtfully arranged to promote independence and exploration. Children move freely between areas and confidently choose where to play. Staff organise resources at low level, making them easily accessible and encouraging children to make choices and follow their interests. The children's toilet and sink area can be easily accessed from the main room. This provides dignity, privacy, and the opportunity for children to be independent, whilst also allowing staff to easily supervise and support children. The outdoor environment is exceptional. Leaders treat it as an extension of the indoor learning space. Children access the outdoors throughout the day and enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities. Staff support children to explore, experiment and take appropriate risks.

Leaders create an extremely stimulating and exciting play environment for the children with an abundance of resources available. They provide quality furniture and resources that are suitable for the developmental needs of all the children. For example, there is appropriate furniture for children to sit at ease to undertake tabletop activities and eat their snacks. Leaders include resources which reflect diversity and promote inclusion. They ensure the environment provides excellent and challenging opportunities for children to explore and develop their creativity, physical skills and independence.



Leadership & Management

Excellent

Leaders are skilled and experienced, with a clear vision for the setting which is outlined in the Statement of Purpose. There is a strong ethos of child-centred care, and this is evident when you speak to staff. Leaders and staff work exceptionally well together as a team, and they speak highly of each other. They are very aware of national priorities and developments in childcare. They have detailed policies and procedures in place, which are reviewed and updated when required. Leaders give staff the opportunity to familiarise themselves with policies on a regular basis and ensure that parents are kept informed of any changes.

Leaders implement effective systems to support meaningful self-evaluation and improvement. They are very approachable and welcome any ideas or suggestions to improve their practice. Leaders of the setting complete a thorough quality of care review each year and consider the views of staff, parents, children and outside agencies. This review celebrates achievements and identifies areas for development.

Leaders follow timely and robust recruitment processes to safeguard children and ensure staff have the necessary qualifications and experience to care for children. They are enthusiastic and extremely motivated. Leaders set high expectations and inspire and lead staff effectively. They support staff through regular, meaningful supervisions and have recently completed the annual appraisals for staff. Staff said they feel very well supported in their roles by management and they are happy working within the team. Leaders deploy staff effectively to ensure they meet staffing ratios and children's needs fully.

Leaders have positive links with parents, a wide range of professionals, the community and other stakeholders. Leaders and staff work in partnership with parents to plan for each child's individual needs and promote excellent outcomes for children. There is a very good range of communication systems at the setting including regular daily verbal feedback, phone calls, texts, an electronic app for parents and a termly newsletter. Alongside these opportunities, leaders offer two parent meetings per year. This gives parents time to discuss and look through their child's individual development profile. Parents provided very positive feedback about the quality of care the service provide their children. Comments included, 'Staff are amazing with the children and go above and beyond to help them.' They are 'caring with genuine concern for the wellbeing and happiness of children.'

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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