Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Dwylo Bach Preschool

Dowlais Primary School, High Street Caeharris, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 3HB

01685816480

Date(s) of inspection visit(s): The inspection visit took place on 15/09/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Dwylo Bach Preschool
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	19
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	Good

Summary:

Children are happy and enjoy their time at this setting. They have a strong sense of belonging and are developing positive relationships and friendships. Children have good opportunities to make choices and take effective decisions about what they want to do. They are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. Children are well supported in developing independence.

Staff understand and implement policies and procedures effectively to keep children safe. They are kind towards children, providing positive interactions to ensure children feel valued and happy. Staff consistently use positive behaviour management strategies to very good effect. Staff are skilled in supporting children in their play and learning.

Leaders have set up the environment to meets the children's needs very well. They have developed procedures to ensure the setting is safe and secure. Leaders provide very good indoor

play space for children to move freely and easily access an exceedingly good range of resources. Leaders have developed the outdoor play space to provide additional opportunities for play and developing physical skills and are working to allow children free access to this area.

Leaders manage the setting very well. They have very good oversight of the procedures in place that are designed to keep children safe and provide a high standard of care. They strive to develop the provision and are committed to ongoing improvements. Leaders encourage an active partnership with parents and have engaged with many other professionals and partners such as the Flying Start service to provide support to all children who attend.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children can make many decisions regarding their day. They choose activities that interest them and move confidently between play areas. Many children speak and express themselves confidently with verbal and non-verbal communication. They know that staff will help them to do what they want. For example, a child took a book to a member of staff, and they became animated as they looked at it together, laughing as they mimicked the animals in the story.

Children are settled, relaxed and happy at the setting. They run in with big smiles and quickly settle. Some children go to staff for a cuddle before playing, showing they are developing positive attachments with them. Children are proud of their achievements and respond very well to praise from staff. For example, they smile broadly as they successfully count and name colours in Welsh. As a result, the children feel valued and develop a strong sense of belonging at the setting.

Children are learning to understand the routines of the setting. They respond quickly to the staff as they wash their hands before snack, find a chair in readiness for circle time and get their belongings ready to go home. Many children feel a sense of security through the routines in place. A few children choose not to participate, engaging in alternative activities with staff support until they choose to join the group.

Children are successfully learning to manage their behaviour and behave very well. They are developing an understanding of right and wrong, and most are successfully learning to share resources and take turns. For example, one child held onto a particular dough cutter but agreed to allow another child to have a go, waiting for their turn again. Many children happily share their space with others as they make a cup of tea in the home area and join together to play musical instruments. Children are learning good manners, and use ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ spontaneously.

Children are interested in activities and enjoy their play and learning. They immerse themselves in their experience for an extended period and thoroughly enjoy using their imaginations. For example, they enjoyed anticipating what was in the bucket and laughing as a pig is pulled out, oinking loudly. Children look in awe and count eggs being laid by a mock chicken, singing along to the song it played. Others joined in circle time, singing songs enthusiastically. Children share their excitement and jump up and down as they watch staff make a toy spin up to the ceiling and come down again.

Children are learning good self-help skills and are becoming independent learners. Many children wash their hands independently and use the toilet with appropriate levels of support from staff. Nearly all children are successfully developing independence at snack time. They are becoming adept at using tongs to serve themselves food, pouring water from the jug and putting leftover food

in the recycling bin.

Care & Development — Good

Staff are motivated and place a high priority on children's health, safety and wellbeing. All staff have a childcare qualification and have opportunities to undertake training relevant to their role. They all have up-to-date training in safeguarding, food hygiene and paediatric first aid. Staff have a clear understanding of the safeguarding and other policies and implement them well. Staff record accidents, incidents, and pre-existing injuries accurately and share this information promptly with parents. Leaders have set up a system to monitor and audit these records so they can identify any pattens or trends. Staff work in line with useful risk assessments and identify emerging risks effectively. Staff encourage children to understand and develop good lifestyle habits. They promote a choice of healthy food at snack time and ensure children's dietary requirements are met.

Staff know the children well and use this knowledge to adapt behaviour management strategies. They are calm and patient, using positive language, good eye contact and facial expressions at every opportunity. Staff are nurturing and develop warm and encouraging relationships with children. They discretely support children to resolve disagreements and to show kindness and respect to each other. Staff successfully use prompts to get children's attention such as saying *'let's switch on our listening years'.* They are skilful in teaching children to share, by reinforcing their expectations and demonstrating the benefits of accepting others into their play. For example, helping each other to build a taller tower of blocks by working together. Staff are good role models, speaking with each other respectfully, using positive language and using good manners.

Staff support children's learning and development effectively. They implement good systems to identify and support children with any additional learning needs. Staff have a particularly good understanding of children's individual needs and use this to plan activities around their individual interests and abilities. They know that many children enjoy playing with cars and put out a variety of focused activities to support them to take interest and learn, using these. For example, loose parts they can build ramps and tunnels with. Staff effectively use children's invitations to play to extend their learning, such as discussing the size of items and their texture. Staff ensure a consistent approach in using the Welsh language with the children. For example, they sing songs, talk about the weather, learn colours and numbers in Welsh. Staff make learning fun and support all children to participate in experiences that help develop good learning skills and habits, such as concentration and perseverance.

Environment — Good

Leaders have established effective procedures to ensure a safe and secure environment. Staff understand these procedures and implement them well. For example, robust risk assessments are in place and staff undertake daily checks to identify any unexpected risks. Leaders liaise closely with the local authority to ensure the premises are well maintained and safety checks including fire and electrical systems are undertaken. Staff are confident in operating emergency procedures and practice the fire evacuation procedure regularly.

Leaders ensure the environment is bright and welcoming for children. Staff display children's paintings and there are some photographs in the playroom, giving children a sense of belonging. They use neutral, calming colours and natural materials wherever possible to create an inviting atmosphere. Staff set up areas to provide interesting spaces where children can access activities that promote their all-round development. They sanitise tables in the playroom to provide an area for children to sit and eat their snack. Children can easily access the toilet and handwashing facilities which are designed for their age and supports their independence. Leaders have established spacious facilities outside, but children cannot always access this area as the doors cannot be secured open safely in some weather conditions. We did not see children playing outside during our visit as it was windy.

Leaders ensure that equipment and resources are plentiful and are of high quality to meet the needs of the children. Staff set up areas to stimulate and promote children's curiosity, with some 'real life' resources such as musical instruments and kitchen items. They change the focus of some areas such as the home area regularly, to sustain interest. Leaders include some resources and experiences that promote learning about Wales and other cultures, but they recognise that this is an area they can improve. Staff have set up the outside with activities such as construction resources, messy play, mark making and role play. Children have plenty of space to enjoy physical play such as running, climbing and balancing on large outdoor equipment such as low-level climbing frame.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting based on the wellbeing of all the children. This is outlined clearly in the statement of purpose and shared effectively with parents and staff who reflect this in their daily practice. Leaders have a strong commitment to teamwork and shared responsibilities across the setting. This leads to a positive working environment which ensures a happy setting for children and staff. Leaders have good oversight of the procedures operated at the setting and keep these under review. They ensure records are well organised and stored appropriately.

Leaders have developed effective processes to evaluate the different aspects of provision to clearly identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. For example, leaders recognise the need to be able to use the outside area more and seek to resolve this matter. They actively seek the views of parents and other agencies involved with the setting. Leaders produce an annual report reviewing their setting, which is comprehensive and clearly reflects stakeholder views, improvements made and areas where further improvements are required.

Leaders manage staff very well. They ensure that all the required pre-employment checks are undertaken to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Leaders have numerous procedures in place to support staff during their employment. They carry out a thorough annual appraisal, giving staff an opportunity to reflect on their practice and performance. Staff said they feel extremely well supported by leaders and get regular opportunities to discuss their practice and any other matters. Staff meet together regularly where they discuss safeguarding, children's individual needs, plan activities and share any other relevant information.

Leaders have established very positive relationships with parents who told us how happy their children are at the setting. They spoke highly of the setting, the staff, and the care their children receive. Leaders have developed very good working relationships with other professionals and agencies for example, the Flying Start advisory team, local school and other professionals that support them to meet children's individual needs.

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

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)
Consider how the environment can further support the promotion of the Welsh culture.

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