**A report on**

# Dreigiau Bach y Bannau

**Ysgol Y Bannau**
**Penlan**
**Brecon**
**Powys**
**LD3 9SR**

**Date of inspection: September 2025**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education**

**and Training in Wales**

## About Dreigiau Bach y Bannau

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of setting | Dreigiau Bach y Bannau |
| Category of care provided | Full day care |
| Registered person(s) | |
| Responsible individual (if applicable) | Angharad Woodland |
| Person in charge | Mrs Meriel Gardner |
| Number of places | 19 |
| Age range of children | 2 – 4 years old |
| Number of 3 and 4-year-old children | 11 |
| Number of children who receive funding for early education | 11 |
| Opening days / times | Monday to Friday 9.00am – 3.30pm |
| Flying Start service | No |
| Language of the setting | Welsh |
| Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer? | Yes |
| Welsh Language Active Offer | This service anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use the service. |
| Date of previous CIW inspection | First inspection since registration |
| Date of previous Estyn inspection | First inspection since registration |
| Dates of this inspection visit(s) | 25/09/2025 |

## Summary

| Theme | Judgement |
|---|---|
| **Well-being** | **Excellent** |
| **Learning**<br>**(only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)** | **Good** |
| **Care and development** | **Good** |
| **Teaching and assessment**<br>**(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. Ensure that supervision arrangements are implemented in full

## What happens next

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

CIW and Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a case study on its work in relation to sharing how strong transition procedures with the local school have an impact on children's well-being, to be disseminated on their websites.

## Main findings

**Well-being: Excellent**

Nearly all children are happy and feel very much at home within their play and learning environment. They move confidently from one activity to the next and between the indoor and outdoor areas. Children have a very strong voice at the setting and make purposeful choices and decisions. For example, they choose where to play and learn and share their ideas and wishes clearly with practitioners. Children's interests and opinions are listened to and are included in the activities that are planned. They contribute their ideas about what to investigate as part of their learning and are very confident communicators.

Children have a very strong sense of belonging to the setting. Nearly all children are happy and excited on arrival and separate well from their parents and carers. Most children are full of excitement and choose activities that stimulate them and children who are unsettled receive help and support until they settle and pursue their interests. They are eager to arrive in the morning, smile, and hug familiar practitioners. Children are familiar with the routine and expectations, which helps them settle quickly and to feel secure. For example, when practitioners say snack, children go to get their mat, go straight to wash their hands before going over to choose which snack and drink to have.

Nearly all children have developed a close relationships with practitioners and some are willing to chat informally with visitors. They foster very positive relationships with practitioners, which has a very beneficial effect on their well-being and motivation. Nearly all children foster good social skills. They greet each other in a friendly manner and go straight to play together happily in the areas. Children are polite and well behaved and treat practitioners, peers and their property with respect. For example, children wait their turn at the table during mealtimes and talk to each other.

Nearly all children show a high level of motivation and perseverance while playing, particularly when pursuing their own ideas and experimenting with indoor and outdoor resources. They participate actively in exciting learning opportunities which enable them to learn, explore and discover very successfully. Nearly all children show increasing confidence when moving around the setting and selecting resources. They explore their environment independently and pursue their interests freely. Most children respond excitedly when playing in the outdoor areas. For example, they use the equipment and develop their physical skills when balancing and travelling along a path of wooden bridges. After reaching the end, they show a great deal of pride in their achievement.

The children have a considerable amount of freedom to explore their indoor and outdoor environment safely. Most children are motivated to initiate their own play opportunities and to influence their tasks, as child-led activities are the most common. Nearly all children foster very effective independent skills. For example, they use the toilet and wash their hands independently throughout the day. They naturally try to do things independently before practitioners intervene, such as taking off their shoes and putting them by the side of the fence before changing into a rainsuit and wellingtons and playing outside.

**Learning (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Good**

Most children make consistently good progress from their individual starting points and develop a range of skills effectively while playing and learning. They demonstrate perseverance and immerse themselves fully in their play. Most respond to simple instructions from practitioners and respond with increasing confidence, either using simple vocabulary through the medium of Welsh or through gestures and actions. A minority make a good effort to speak in simple sentences through the medium of Welsh successfully. Most develop good early literacy skills. They show an enjoyment of books and print in their environment and choose to relax with their peers by looking at stories. Most children use a variety of marking implements purposefully. For example, they experiment and make marks on canvas to represent numbers and make marks when planning a shopping list in the kitchen.

Most children develop sound numeracy skills and use correct mathematical language when counting how many sandwiches are on a plate and how many spoonfuls of porridge to make an apple crumble. They apply their mathematical knowledge beneficially when playing in the areas by discussing which piece of wood is the longest when making an obstacle course.

Most children's digital skills develop appropriately and they understand that digital equipment has an effect on their everyday lives. Nearly all children demonstrate strong problem-solving skills. For example, they consider which piece of wood is the best to place between the tyres when making an obstacle course. Nearly all children persevere with the task until they have completed it successfully.

Nearly all children develop robust physical skills. They are physically active and show increasing control while they play. When they stand on different play equipment, they cope well with physical challenges and demonstrate effective balance. Nearly all children have skilful fine motor skills. For example, they use scissor tongs to pick up porridge and rice to make apple crumble.

Nearly all children demonstrate sound creative skills. They make effective choices about what to use to make their masterpieces, for example when choosing a paint colour to paint an apple to print on paper.

Nearly all children have strong personal, social and emotional skills. They play with their friends completely independently and respect the contributions of others.

**Care and development: Good**

Practitioners keep the children safe and healthy. They understand their roles and responsibilities and adhere to the setting's rigorous daily routines. They strive to ensure that good hygiene procedures are followed. For example, practitioners wash their hands regularly and clear the tables before the children eat. Practitioners promote good practices in terms of ensuring that children stay healthy by offering a healthy snack and promoting healthy eating habits. They are confident about what to do should they have any concerns about a child's safety and are aware of their individual duties to safeguard children. Practitioners keep detailed accident and incident records which are signed by parents to

ensure that the information is shared. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. They implement risk assessment systems and complete effective daily checks to identify and minimise risks.

There is a very close relationship between practitioners and children. They know the children well and respect them. Practitioners allow children to select resources and play areas that are of interest to them and respond to their needs at every opportunity. All practitioners are excellent role models. They talk to the children gently and warmly. Practitioners follow the behaviour policy and set a good example of positive behaviour by taking advantage of every opportunity to praise the children. For example, children are given constant encouragement and praise for speaking Welsh, for listening to practitioners or for being a good friend. This motivates children to behave well.

Practitioners know the children well and respect and support their wishes and preferences. For example, they respond to children's requests to move resources around the areas or to look for a specific outfit. They respect children's choices and allow them to choose their own path. Nearly all practitioners speak Welsh regularly to immerse the children in the language, reinforce their linguistic patterns and introduce new vocabulary to them successfully. Practitioners have a good understanding of additional learning needs. They are aware and confident when following processes as outlined in the setting's policy. Practitioners take advantage of times to support and extend children's learning by asking questions, translating children's vocabulary or joining in with play.

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

By listening to the children's voice, practitioners succeed in planning learning experiences that engage the interest of nearly all children effectively. They have a sound understanding of child development and the way in which children learn through play and experimenting. They ensure opportunities for them to have seamless access between in indoor and outdoor areas. As a result, they encourage children's independence and develop their curiosity effectively. They provide beneficial opportunities for children to take suitable risks, for example by making an obstacle course from tyre to tyre by using crates and pieces of wood to experiment with balancing at different levels.

By gathering valuable information about the children, for example about their learning motivation and interests, practitioners gain a useful overview of each child. They use this information to nurture children's well-being and provide activities that meet their learning needs successfully. They supervise children while playing alongside them effectively and are aware of when to join in with play, by taking advantage of beneficial opportunities to model learning.

Practitioners provide extensive and comprehensive opportunities for children to experience and use the Welsh language in their play. They are polished language models. Their regular input contributes effectively to ensuring that nearly all children develop their Welsh language skills increasingly.

Practitioners have created an attractive reading area that nurtures interest in the children's pre-reading skills effectively. They provide a range of opportunities that encourage children

to mark and develop their early pre-writing skills. Practitioners provide a robust range of resources and opportunities to develop children's numeracy skills. For example, they place bottles in the creative area to encourage mathematical discussions while they play together. Most are beginning to use correct mathematical language when filling bottles with paint and water.

Provision for developing physical skills is sound. Practitioners provide a range of purposeful resources that allow children to develop strong physical balancing skills. Provision for children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is effective. Practitioners ensure beneficial opportunities to learn about events in other cultures. They promote children's awareness of their Welshness and their *cynefin*, or local area, skilfully, for example by celebrating Owain Glyndŵr Day.

**Environment: Good**

Practitioners ensure that the environment is safe and clean and, as a result, they promote children's safety and well-being effectively. They have arrangements in place to welcome visitors and follow safe and effective procedures when the children arrive and leave the site. Practitioners conduct fire drills so that the children become familiar with these arrangements. Detailed risk assessments are in place for the building and for fire safety. They ensure that insurance certificates are valid and that other documents relating to the building's safety checks, such as fire and electricity checks, are in place.

Leaders ensure a welcoming and safe environment that stimulates children's play effectively. Practitioners ensure that children receive care and education in an environment that is planned purposefully to promote their independence and encourage them to learn. Leaders provide furniture, equipment, toys and resources of a high standard appropriately and they are well maintained. Practitioners create play areas that ignite children's imaginations and enable them to take risks, such as building in the construction area and moving the tyres successfully. These areas provide valuable opportunities for children to nurture their skills effectively. Leaders and practitioners create a strong sense of belonging for the children, for example by providing displays of photographs of the children undertaking activities and their art and craft work. There are excellent opportunities for children to have quiet time. Appropriate opportunities are provided which develop their understanding of other cultures, for example stories and play resources including puppets and dolls.

Leaders and practitioners organise the indoor and outdoor areas appropriately to provide a wide variety of stimulating experiences. Practitioners create an environment that encourages children to move effectively from one activity to another. They provide suitable resources for all ages and stages of development. This promotes a variety of children's skills through sensory, imaginative and creative play and physical play. For example, children take risks and nurture their skills during a role-play activity in the home corner by using 'authentic' items, such as cups and saucers. Practitioners store resources at a low level so that the children can choose them independently and pursue their individual interests. For example, children collect resources from the role-play area to use in the hospital in the tent. As a result, children are very familiar with collecting and returning equipment and resources to help them pursue their own interests.

**Leadership and management: Good**

The leader has a robust vision for ensuring that all children are happy and safe at the setting and is passionate about providing the best possible foundation. She inspires staff enthusiastically and succeeds in creating a strong sense of belonging. She is completely committed to the work of the setting and children's well-being is at the heart of everything. As a result, children are happy and make good progress.

The setting's statement of purpose is appropriate and leaders ensure that there is a suitable range of relevant policies and procedures in place. Leaders consider the regulations and national minimum standards when reviewing policies and procedures. They follow robust recruitment processes and ensure that the roles of all practitioners are defined clearly. Practitioners have relevant qualifications and leaders support them to undertake their roles effectively through staff meetings and informal discussions. They have appropriate processes in place for annual appraisals; however, not all members of staff receive individual supervision. No breach of regulations or national minimum standards was identified during the inspection.

The setting's self-evaluation procedures focus effectively on a wide range of evidence and input from all stakeholders. Leaders identify strengths and areas for improvement appropriately and work with the staff to make improvements to provision. Leaders share the sensible actions with practitioners and consider the most effective methods for achieving their priorities.

Leaders use the budget and grants wisely to support improvement priorities and meet children's needs. For example, by funding improvements to the outdoor area, attractive, good quality resources have been provided which support children's learning and enrich their experiences successfully.

Leaders and practitioners have established a beneficial partnership with parents and carers, the local authority's advisory teachers and umbrella organisations to improve provision. For example, they share a contact booklet of what the children have done on a daily basis with parents to ensure that parents and carers have full access to children's education and experiences. The setting also has a good partnership with the school and they share a site and resources effectively. For example, strong transition procedures are maintained throughout the year, where the school's practitioners visit the children at the setting regularly and develop a close relationship through activities such as reading a story and inviting them to eat in the school hall on a daily basis. As a result, there are very robust arrangements in place to ensure that children transition to the next stage in their education smoothly and without fuss.

## 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 |

**This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).**

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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.

**CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.**

**CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.**

Mae’r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

**This report is also available in Welsh**

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