Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

St Marys Pre-School

Wrexham District Scout H Q, Station Approach, Wrexham, LL11 2AA

07810373720

www.stmaryspreschoolwrexham.com

The inspection visit took place on 16/09/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	St Mary's Pre School
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	40
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	Yes
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	Yes
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:

Well-being	Good
Care & Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Adequate

Summary:

Most children are happy, settled and confident. They make choices about their play, communicate their wishes and engage enthusiastically in experiences. Children interact positively with others and are developing cooperation and sharing skills. They concentrate and persevere in activities and develop independence by accessing resources, managing routines and directing their own play.

Practitioners provide warm, responsive care and promote children's health and well-being effectively. They build positive relationships, support communication and extend children's play and learning well. Practitioners know children's individual needs and interests, promote independence and Welsh language, and work positively with schools and professionals to support children's development.

Leaders provide children with a safe, clean and welcoming environment. They organise indoor and outdoor spaces effectively, enabling children to make choices and engage in varied play

experiences. Practitioners offer children continuous outdoor access, physical challenges and a good range of opportunities to explore. Resources are accessible, well maintained and positively reflect diversity.

Leaders provide appropriate leadership and maintain positive relationships with practitioners, parents and professionals. They evaluate the service and support practitioners' development well. Recruitment arrangements have strengthened. However, inconsistencies in how safeguarding arrangements are implemented could affect leadership oversight.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Most children have a strong voice and confidently make choices about their play and experiences. They move freely around the environment and choose from a good range of activities and resources. Children communicate their wishes effectively, using words, gestures and actions. For example, some children take adults by the hand and lead them towards activities they want to access. Children make their preferences known and show confidence in expressing what they want.

Most children are happy, settled and comfortable at the setting and appear secure in their surroundings. They confidently share their achievements, for example showing their paintings and demonstrating their balancing skills. Children seek comfort and reassurance from familiar adults when they need it. They are familiar with daily routines, such as washing their hands before eating and joining in with songs at the end of the session.

Many children interact well with others in ways appropriate for their age. With support they are beginning to cooperate, share resources and enjoy playing alongside one another. For example, two children smile at each other as they repeatedly make their way around the stepping stones together. Children follow simple expectations, such as keeping sand within the sand play area and sharing tools.

Most children enjoy their play and learning and engage well in the experiences available. They explore the environment enthusiastically and become absorbed in activities including dough, painting, stories and imaginative play. For example, one child spends time rolling, cutting and stretching dough using different tools and moulds, while others listen attentively to stories and enjoy role play. Children concentrate well for their age and stage of development and persevere with activities such as mark making, cutting and selecting collage materials.

Many children develop their independence well. They freely access resources and transport and combine these across different areas to develop their own play. They make purposeful choices about what they use and how they play. Children take increasing responsibility for simple routines, such as taking their used plates to the washing-up bowl after snack. Although some belongings are stored out of reach on high communal pegs, children are involved in accessing these by identifying and pointing out their own bags when they need them.

Care & Development — Good

Practitioners provide children with good care and support and promote their health and well-being effectively. They provide healthy snacks and follow good hygiene practices consistently. For example, they support children to wash their hands before eating and dispose of paper towels in the bin. Practitioners provide good opportunities for fresh air and exercise by keeping the door to the outdoor area open throughout the session. They carry out personal care routines sensitively and hygienically. Although nappy changes were not routinely recorded at the time of the inspection, following the inspection they developed a recording proforma which they intend to implement immediately. Most policies and procedures support practice appropriately. A suitable risk assessment is in place for the premises, demonstrating how potential hazards are reduced or eliminated. Practitioners complete appropriate safeguarding training. They recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and know the procedures for reporting concerns to the Local Authority.

Practitioners manage interactions well and develop warm, nurturing and positive relationships with children. They are consistently calm and respectful role models and use praise, encouragement and reassurance effectively to promote positive behaviour and support children's emotional well-being. For example, they praise children for sharing resources and use gentle reminders when children run indoors or bump into others. Practitioners are attentive and responsive when children need reassurance. They involve themselves purposefully in children's play and extend experiences effectively. For example, in the home corner, they ask children to make them a cup of tea and join their imaginative play as they pretend to feed the dog. Practitioners use signing well alongside spoken language to support children's communication and understanding of routines, instructions and expectations.

Practitioners promote children's play, learning and development effectively. They provide a varied and interesting range of activities suited to children's ages, abilities and interests. The experiences of those attending Flying Start provision are observed and tracked, and practitioners use this information purposefully to consider what they may do next. While this is less evident for children attending for wraparound care, practitioners know these children well and demonstrate a good understanding of their individual needs and interests. For example, when a child becomes unsettled, the person in charge recognises their enjoyment of drawing and offers this familiar activity, successfully helping them to settle and re-engage.

Practitioners establish positive partnerships with schools and other professionals, sharing relevant information and working collaboratively to support children with identified or emerging Additional Learning Needs. As a result, children receive appropriate support that helps them participate in their experiences and make suitable progress. Practitioners weave incidental Welsh naturally into everyday experiences through praise, familiar words and songs. As a result, children become increasingly familiar with hearing Welsh as a natural part of their everyday experiences.

Environment — Good

Leaders ensure children are cared for in a safe, clean and well-maintained environment. They manage access to the premises effectively. Practitioners check visitors' identification and ask them to sign in, supporting appropriate oversight of people entering the service. The outdoor area is secure, with perimeter fencing and a newly installed, locked gate. Leaders maintain the premises and facilities to a good, clean standard.

Leaders use the available space very effectively, particularly as this is a pack-away setting. They take time to thoughtfully organise the space before children arrive, creating welcoming, inviting and clearly defined areas for role play, books, mark making, creative and physical experiences. As a result, children confidently make choices and engage purposefully in a varied range of interesting play opportunities. For example, children investigate real-life items in the role-play area, build imaginatively with large wooden blocks and enjoy creative activities such as painting. Leaders make particularly good use of the outdoor environment and provide children with continuous free-flow access. Children enthusiastically explore the sloping forest area, show great enjoyment as they roll tyres down the hill and make good use of the rope swing. Planks, crates and tyres offer interesting physical challenges, while sand, water and the mud kitchen encourage children to experiment and discover. Consequently, children benefit from a good variety of experiences that support their physical development, curiosity and imagination. In addition, leaders provide suitable and accessible facilities, including toilets and appropriate nappy-changing facilities.

Leaders provide a good range of interesting and developmentally appropriate resources and equipment. They have purposefully increased the variety of natural materials and open-ended resources alongside manufactured toys over time, providing children with varied opportunities to develop curiosity and extend their play. Resources are attractively presented across the different play spaces, helping children engage readily with what is available. Multicultural dolls and stories, alongside experiences linked to celebrations such as Diwali and Chinese New Year, provide positive representations of different cultures and backgrounds. Practitioners share responsibility for cleaning toys and resources as part of their daily routines, with a more thorough deep clean each term. Consequently, children consistently access clean, suitable and well-maintained resources that support a broad range of play experiences.

Leadership & Management — Adequate

Leaders are committed to the setting and provide suitable leadership. The person in charge understands her responsibilities and works appropriately with the responsible individual. Practitioners feel valued and supported and describe leaders as approachable, understanding and willing to listen. This contributes to a supportive working environment where practitioners work well together and feel able to contribute ideas. Leaders generally maintain suitable policies and procedures which provide practitioners with appropriate guidance to support their roles. The Statement of Purpose accurately reflects the service provided and gives parents suitable information to help them understand what the setting offers.

Leaders recognise the importance of prioritising and promoting a culture of safeguarding at the setting. For example, following a significant incident, they have reflected on practice, strengthened their safeguarding policy and provided further safeguarding training for practitioners. However, there are some inconsistencies in how safeguarding concerns are recorded and where these records are held, which may affect leaders' ability to maintain a comprehensive overview of safeguarding matters. In addition, risk assessments for outings do not consistently provide sufficient detail about potential risks and how these are to be managed. Therefore, outcomes for children require improvement and we expect the provider to make improvements.

Leaders evaluate the quality of the service appropriately and seek feedback from parents, practitioners and professionals to identify strengths and areas for development. Feedback is positive and covers different aspects of the service. Leaders consider the information received and make improvements in response. For example, they have purchased new resources to enhance children's experiences. In addition, leaders have recently introduced an online application to share photographs of children's experiences with parents and support communication.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have strengthened procedures for appointing practitioners, and records demonstrate safe recruitment. Almost all practitioners have received supervision and appraisal since the last inspection. These provide opportunities for practitioners to discuss their practice, professional development and their experiences of working within the setting. Practitioners attend a wealth of training, which supports them to develop their knowledge and skills. They ensure children's records contain required information which helps them understand and respond to children's individual needs.

Leaders have developed successful partnerships with parents. Parents speak positively about the care their children receive and value regular communication, the range of activities and the individual support provided. Leaders engage well with external professionals and share relevant information to support children's individual needs and development. Leaders have chosen to pause

trips and outings at present. As a result, children currently have fewer opportunities to access experiences within the wider community. However, leaders plan to invite community visitors into the setting to help broaden children's experiences.

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.

The table(s) below show the area(s) for priority action and/or those for improvement we have identified.

Summary of Areas for Improvement	Date identified
Inconsistencies in the implementation of safeguarding arrangements could affect management oversight.	16/09/26

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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