Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Clwb Y Ddraig @Bryn

Bryn Primary School, The Bryn Pontllanfraith, Blackwood, NP12 2PL

07769219417

The inspection visit took place on 04/03/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Clwb Y Ddraig CYF
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	40
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	No
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider is not promoting the Welsh language and culture needs of people, and this requires improvement.

Ratings:

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

Summary:

Children experience positive well-being, confidently making decisions and openly expressing their emotions. They form warm, trusting relationships with staff which helps them feel secure. Children interact kindly with their peers, enjoy varied play and stay focused. They develop independence through serving their own snacks, accessing resources and taking small responsibilities that support their growing confidence.

Staff provide appropriate care and follow effective hygiene procedures. They offer healthy snacks and regularly promote physical activity. Staff engage positively with children and support their learning well. Staff generally provide a safe and stimulating setting, however they are not always confident to identify and remove immediate hazards in the environment.

Leaders provide children with a secure, clean, well-maintained environment. They organise indoor and outdoor areas thoughtfully, offering space, challenge and choice. Leaders offer high quality

resources, that are accessible and culturally varied. They promote independence and respond to children's and families' ideas to keep the environment stimulating and supportive.

Leaders generally have effective oversight of the setting and maintain clear policies that guide staff. They respond well to feedback and collaborate effectively with external partners. Leaders ensure recruitment is safe and staff access appropriate training. However, leaders do not always formally record regular supervisions and appraisals. Parents value the service, and leaders have strong connections with the link school which supports children's well-being.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children are supported to make choices, and their decisions are respected. They talk about how they are feeling and choose their emotions during self-registration. Children are able to move freely between activities and resources. They share their ideas for activities and topics, which are included within weekly planning. Children express themselves well and enjoy relaxed conversations and familiar songs during the session. Children have opportunities to make decisions for themselves. For example, they choose which play areas they would like to visit and select the resources they need to extend their play.

Children are settled, feel secure and have a good sense of belonging at the setting. They are happy, relaxed and form positive attachments with care staff. Children confidently approach staff for support and comfort and know that they will be listened to. They follow routines successfully, such as lining up to enter the foyer before lunch and preparing to wash their hands. Children invite staff into their play and enjoy warm, trusting relationships which support their emotional well-being.

Children interact well with one another. Many show sensitivity towards their peers and treat others with respect and care. They cooperate during activities, for example when mixing paint colours together or waiting their turn to use bikes outdoors. Children take part in imaginative play, caring for dolls and reading to teddies, which helps them develop empathy and social understanding.

Children enjoy their play and remain focused on activities for increasing periods of time. They benefit from a good balance of freely chosen play and meaningful adult-led opportunities. For example, they enjoy colouring alongside staff and confidently request additional resources, such as cutting and sticking materials, to extend their ideas. Children showed sustained interest in a sensory ‘soup making’ activity and took pleasure in choosing songs during group singing sessions.

Children are developing confidence and increasing independence. They serve themselves snacks using child-sized tongs and clear their own plates afterwards. Children use the water station with some staff support and access resources easily. When they need help, they ask confidently. Children respond well to small responsibilities and enjoy sharing the lunch hall with older children, helping to prepare them for transition into school.

Care & Development — Adequate

Staff generally have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe and healthy. They follow appropriate hygiene routines and implement cleaning practices throughout the day. Staff provide healthy snacks and ensure fresh drinking water is available at all times. They promote physical well-being effectively by supporting regular access to the outdoor play space and the natural garden area. Staff generally follow procedures to ensure the environment is suitable. However, outcomes for children require improvement because during the inspection staff did not identify and remove an immediate hazard in the environment. We expect the provider to make improvements to ensure this does not happen again.

Staff demonstrate general awareness of the policies and procedures in place to keep children safe. However, not all staff are clear of the procedure to report a concern themselves if necessary. Staff keep accurate registers for children which reflect that ratios are maintained. They conduct and evaluate fire drills regularly, helping children become familiar with evacuation routines. Staff complete accident and incident records appropriately, and monitor these for any emerging patterns, ensuring records are signed and dated correctly.

Staff engage positively with children's play and learning. They notice when children need support and introduce additional resources to extend activities. Staff provide warm, calm interactions and use gentle voices and appropriate questioning to encourage children's thinking. Mealtimes are sociable because staff model good manners and chat naturally with children. They manage interactions in a consistent way and follow the behaviour management policy. Children receive praise and encouragement, such as *"Da iawn ti!"*, which helps promote positive behaviour and develop Welsh language skills.

Staff know the children well and respond sensitively to their individual needs. They create a nurturing atmosphere and support children to feel secure. Staff promote and celebrate a range of cultural backgrounds and are considering ways to include and support children who speak English as an Additional Language.

Staff have purposeful planning that reflects children's interests and ideas. They offer a variety of experiences that encourage curiosity and support learning. Staff work with the nursery class teacher to plan activities that build on children's previous learning and link meaningfully to current topics. They encourage children to identify numbers, colours and shapes in Welsh and use incidental Welsh throughout the session to develop children's confidence in the language.

Environment — Good

Leaders ensure children are cared for in a secure, clean and well-maintained environment. The entrance remains locked, and leaders keep an accurate record of visitors to promote security. They achieve a good balance between protecting children from harm and enabling them to take considered risks that support their development. Staff provide children with exciting physical challenges outdoors, encouraging them to climb, balance and explore nature in the forest school area. Leaders review and update risk assessments regularly and ensure gas and electrical safety checks are completed promptly. They ensure firefighting equipment and smoke alarms are tested at appropriate intervals.

Leaders provide a welcoming, light and spacious indoor play area. They celebrate children's achievements with colourful displays of their art and crafts projects and learning journeys, which contribute to a strong sense of belonging. Leaders thoughtfully arrange the playrooms so that children can engage in a range of activities without overcrowding. Designated areas support different types of play, including mark-making, role play, creative play and construction. Leaders organise resources so they are easily accessible at child height, which promotes their independence. They also provide a quiet space for children who wish to rest, read or take a break from busier areas. Leaders see that the outdoor environment offers further opportunities for exploration and challenge, with features such as play tunnels and a mud kitchen to encourage experimentation and imaginative play.

Leaders ensure resources and equipment are of good quality. They provide furniture and equipment that is suitable for children's needs, including steps and seats in the bathroom, low level tables and chairs and toys appropriate for their age and stage of learning. Leaders ensure that resources are kept clean and are of a suitable design. They celebrate festivals and promote cultural awareness through the themed activities offered throughout the year. Leaders offer a mix of natural and manufactured materials, including wooden furniture, raffia baskets and a variety of loose parts that stimulate curiosity. They offer some real-life resources that helps children engage in meaningful role play, such as kitchen accessories and real foods. Leaders welcome children's and families' ideas about new resources through the home consultation book, helping ensure the environment continues to evolve in response to children's interests.

Leadership & Management — Adequate

Leaders generally have effective oversight of the setting and work to ensure the service meets many of the regulatory requirements and the National Minimum Standards. The statement of purpose is clear and gives an accurate picture of the service. Leaders communicate their vision successfully and offer aims and policies that are accessible, well-written and child-focused. They update policies when required and ensure staff understand and follow them. This is evident in the way staff consistently approach behaviour management, in line with the setting's policy. Leaders promote a positive ethos in which children and staff feel valued, and they work with purpose to support good outcomes for children.

Leaders gather feedback from parents, children and staff and use this to shape improvements. For example, they introduced an improved end-of-day collection system following parent suggestions. Leaders collaborate well with external agencies, including the Local Authority Early Years team, and have achieved the Bronze Award for the Welsh Promise.

Leaders follow safe and appropriate recruitment procedures to support children's well-being. Staff are suitably qualified and have opportunities to access further training to enhance their practice. Staff we spoke to said they feel supported by leaders. However, during the inspection, we were informed that supervisions and appraisals had not taken place consistently over the last year, and records were not readily available for staff to reflect on their progress. Outcomes for children require improvement because leaders do not formally offer staff an opportunity to regularly reflect on the quality of their practice and raise any safeguarding concerns. We expect the provider to make improvements.

Leaders maintain strong, positive relationships with parents and place a clear emphasis on open, effective communication. Parents speak very highly of the service, describing staff as "brilliant with the children" and recognising that the setting "takes feedback on board." Those we spoke to told us they feel well informed about their child's wellbeing and appreciated receiving key policies and procedures during the settling-in period. Leaders work closely with parents from the outset to identify each child's needs, routines and preferences, ensuring tailored support. They have also established strong and productive links with the school and nursery class, promoting continuity of care and learning.

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
Children may be placed at potential risk because the provider does not provide staff with an opportunity to regularly have a formal review of their performance.	04/03/26
Children may be placed at potential risk because staff do not always identify and remove potential hazards immediately.	04/03/26

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)
Standard 20 - Child protection	Ensure every staff member understands the steps to take if they have to report a child protection concern themselves.

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 ways to include and support children who have English as an Additional Language.

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