Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

O law i law

Barnardos, Caban Bach, Meirion Terrace, Blaenau Ffestiniog, LL41 3UA

07493411521

The inspection visit took place on 16/09/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	O Law i Law cyf
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	45
Main language(s):	Welsh and English
Flying Start service:	No
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider promotes, anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and culture needs of people.

Ratings:

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

Summary:

Children are happy, settled and feel secure within the setting. They make meaningful choices, communicate confidently and develop positive relationships with staff and each other. Children enjoy a range of engaging play experiences, cooperate well and are developing important social skills. They demonstrate increasing independence and confidence in their daily routines and play.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities in supporting children's safety, health, learning and development. They promote positive interactions, use effective strategies to support behaviour and provide meaningful learning opportunities. Staff respond to children's interests and individual needs and are developing systems for monitoring children's progress and development.

Leaders maintain a safe, secure and welcoming environment for children through effective risk management, regular safety checks and ongoing improvements to the premises. They organise the

environment well, supporting children's independence, play and learning. Leaders ensure children have access to suitable facilities, equipment and resources that meet their needs.

Leaders provide effective leadership and management and have a clear vision for the setting. They are committed to continuous improvement and ensure the setting is managed in a way that promotes positive outcomes for children. Leaders support staff effectively and maintain strong partnerships with parents and other professionals.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children have a strong voice and make meaningful choices about their play and learning. They choose what they play and who they spend their time with. Younger children move freely between activities and are confident that their preferences are listened to and responded to. For example, when a child asked to play with bubbles, a staff member supported them to access the resource by opening the container. In the older children's room, the well-established free-flow environment enables children to move independently and purposefully between the indoor and outdoor areas, supporting their decision-making and engagement in play.

Children are settled and relaxed, which demonstrates they feel secure and comfortable within the setting. They are happy and have developed positive emotional attachments with staff and each other. Children feel valued because they know staff respond warmly and promptly to their needs. For instance, when a child approached a member of staff for comfort after becoming upset, the staff member offered a reassuring cuddle without hesitation. Many children demonstrate trust and confidence by inviting visitors into their play and engaging them in conversation, reflecting their strong sense of safety and belonging.

Children are confident communicators and readily engage in conversations about their experiences and interests. For example, a group of younger children enthusiastically discussed a soft toy bird that lives in a cage, sharing imaginative stories and ideas about it with each other. Children are developing positive social skills and show consideration for others during play. In the older children's room, children cooperate well as they explore and play together. For instance, they worked collaboratively to fill a watering can before watering plants together. Children are beginning to negotiate and take turns independently, such as when one child said, "*Ti'n cael tro wedyn, iawn?*", reassuring another child that it would soon be their turn.

Children enjoy their play and learning experiences and engage enthusiastically in a wide range of activities. Younger children follow their interests and also enjoy participating in group activities, such as singing familiar songs. Older children show good levels of concentration and sustained engagement in their play. For example, they remain focused for extended periods as they create soups and ice cream in the mud kitchen using a range of resources. They also engage purposefully in other activities, such as arts and crafts, demonstrating enjoyment and perseverance.

Children develop independence skills and complete tasks for themselves. Younger children feed themselves and develop self-help skills, such as washing their hands and removing waterproof clothing after outdoor play. Older children demonstrate increasing independence during snack time by choosing what they would like to eat, cutting fruit and vegetables, and pouring their own drinks.

Care & Development — Good

Staff understand their responsibilities for keeping children safe and healthy. They are confident in the actions they would take if they had concerns about a child's welfare. Staff record accidents appropriately and ensure parents acknowledge these records to confirm they have been informed of any incident. They carry out fire drills to help children become familiar with evacuating the building safely in an emergency and maintain appropriate records. However, fire drills are not undertaken at least every six months in line with requirements. Staff promote healthy lifestyles by providing regular opportunities for children to spend time outdoors. They provide healthy snacks, such as fruit and vegetables, and offer milk and water to drink. Staff are well informed about children's individual dietary and allergy requirements, with clear information available to support safe practice. They follow hygiene procedures, such as wearing appropriate personal protective equipment during nappy changing and food service, and support children's personal care needs in a sensitive and respectful manner.

Staff manage interactions effectively and develop warm, positive relationships with children. They know children well and take a genuine interest in their lives and experiences, contributing to a welcoming and nurturing atmosphere. For example, staff greet children warmly on arrival and engage them in conversations about personal interests and achievements. They treat children with respect and consistently use praise and encouragement to promote confidence and self-esteem, such as acknowledging children's efforts during mealtimes and play. Staff support children to develop positive social skills by encouraging sharing, turn-taking and kind behaviour. They use effective strategies to manage interactions and respond to children's needs, including distraction techniques and calm reminders to reinforce expectations.

Staff engage purposefully in children's experiences, model language and use questioning to encourage thinking and participation. They use children's interests to shape meaningful experiences and learning opportunities. For example, when children developed an interest in cars, staff extended their learning by taking them on a walk to visit a local garage. Staff have recently introduced a new system for recording children's progress and developmental milestones, capturing meaningful observations and celebrating achievements. They are beginning to use this system to identify and monitor children's next steps in learning and development. Staff promote the Welsh language consistently across the setting, reflecting the needs and backgrounds of those who attend. They work proactively with relevant external professionals to ensure children with emerging needs receive appropriate support, contributing to positive outcomes.

Environment

Good

Leaders take appropriate measures to ensure the environment is safe and secure for children. Access to the premises is managed effectively, and visitors are required to sign in on arrival. Leaders ensure the outdoor areas are secure, enabling children to benefit from outdoor play safely. They implement a comprehensive range of risk assessments covering the premises, activities and individual children's needs. These identify potential hazards and outline clear control measures to minimise risks. Leaders ensure daily checks of the indoor and outdoor environments are completed to help identify and address hazards promptly. They maintain records of essential safety checks, helping to ensure the environment remains safe for children.

Leaders have worked hard to develop a welcoming and suitable environment for children. They have made improvements to the premises, including creating a dedicated sleep room and installing new toilet and nappy changing facilities to better meet children's needs. Leaders make effective use of a dining room, where children come together to enjoy meals in a social and comfortable environment. They provide calm, well-maintained indoor and outdoor environments that support children's play and learning. Leaders organise the environment well, enabling children to move independently between areas and access opportunities that support their play, learning and development. They provide comfortable spaces where children can relax, supporting their well-being and sense of security. Leaders promote a sense of belonging by displaying children's photographs and achievements throughout the setting.

Leaders provide a good range of quality resources and equipment that meet the needs of children across different ages and stages of development. They offer a variety of open-ended and authentic resources, including mud kitchens, natural materials, construction items and real-life household equipment, which encourage children to explore, experiment and engage in imaginative play. Leaders organise resources effectively and store them at children's height, enabling independent access to resources and supporting children's choice and independence in play. They provide opportunities for managed risk-taking, including low-level climbing apparatus in the younger children's room and a larger climbing frame within the older children's outdoor area, supporting children's confidence and physical development. Leaders provide Welsh language books and visual communication resources that support children's language development and understanding. However, resources that reflect diversity and promote children's awareness of different cultures, backgrounds and experiences are limited across the setting.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders have a strong and clear vision for the setting, which has driven improvements and enhanced outcomes for children. They took prompt action during the inspection to address matters relating to the statement of purpose. This now provides parents and carers with clear and sufficient information to support informed decisions about the care provided. Leaders maintain a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that prioritise children's needs and are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain up to date and reflect current requirements and guidance.

Leaders demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and have established effective systems for self-evaluation and planning for development. They gather the views of children, parents and other professionals and use this feedback to review the quality of the provision across all areas of the setting. Leaders produce an annual quality of care review report that identifies priorities for improvement and clear measures of success to support ongoing development. They respond positively to feedback and use this to inform improvements within the setting. For example, following feedback from parents, leaders introduced a new app to enhance information sharing between the setting and families.

Leaders manage staff and resources effectively to support the smooth running of the setting. They follow safe recruitment procedures, ensuring staff are suitably qualified and that all required pre-employment checks are completed before they begin working with children. Leaders ensure staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals to support their professional development and maintain effective practice. They ensure all staff have completed mandatory training and encourage ongoing professional development in areas such as speech, language and communication, additional learning needs, hygiene, and play-based approaches that promote exploration and discovery. Staff spoke positively about the support they receive from leaders and described them as approachable and supportive. Leaders ensure there are sufficient staff deployed to meet children's needs. However, staff attendance records do not consistently provide a clear audit trail of staff deployment throughout the day.

Leaders have established strong partnerships with parents, other professionals and the wider community. They maintain effective communication with parents and carers through daily conversations and the use of an app. Parents spoke very positively about the setting and described staff as approachable, supportive and responsive to their child's needs. Leaders work closely with other professionals to inform and implement improvements, helping to enhance the quality of care, play and learning experiences provided for children. They make good use of opportunities within the local community to enrich children's experiences and support their learning and development.

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)
Standard 24 - Safety	Undertake fire drills at least every six months to ensure children and staff remain familiar with emergency procedures.
Standard 5 - Records	Strengthen staff attendance records to clearly demonstrate staff deployment and responsibilities throughout the day.

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)
Ensure children have regular access to a range of resources that promote an understanding of diversity, different cultures and the wider world.

Mae’r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

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