

A report on

Llanelwedd Little Learners

**Llanelwedd Church in Wales School
Llanelwedd
Builthwells
Powys
LD2 3TY**

Date of inspection: October 2022

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

About Llanelwedd Little Learners

Name of setting	Llanelwedd Little Learners
Category of care provided	Sessional care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Adam Shearman
Person in charge	Amy Davies
Number of places	16
Age range of children	3 to 4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	10
Number of children who receive funding for early education	10
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 09.00 to 12.00
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	No
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify, or meet the Welsh language needs of children who use, or intend to use their service. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'
Date of previous CIW inspection	This is the first CIW inspection since registration
Date of previous Estyn inspection	This is the first Estyn inspection
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	25/10/2022
No children speak Welsh at home.	

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Provide more opportunities for children to hear and use the Welsh language

R2 Ensure that self-evaluation and improvement processes focus sufficiently on children's learning

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Well-being:

Children have an exceptionally strong voice at this setting and their well-being is prioritised by leaders and practitioners. Children make choices and decisions about their play and how they spend their time. For example, they choose when they eat their snack and whether they want to play inside or outside as the doors are open for the whole of each session. Children express their views clearly, including those who do not rely solely on speech to communicate, because they know practitioners will listen to them and respond. Children use the extensive range of exciting activities and resources to construct their own play and develop their ideas. For example, they see how high or wide, they can build a tower of bricks or decide what to put in their soup in the mud kitchen.

Children are very well settled and arrive happily at the setting, enthusiastic to start the day. They cope very well as they separate from parents and carers. Children form close bonds with practitioners, and this has a positive effect on their well-being. They tell practitioners each day how they are feeling and find their name peg to put on the relevant feelings card. They know they can talk to practitioners if they are worried. For example, they tell a practitioner they are feeling sad that someone else is riding their favourite bike. This contributes to children developing confidence and self-esteem.

All children behave well. For example, many children play happily together using magnifying glasses to search the outdoor area for bugs or put their babies to bed in the playhouse. A few often play alongside others as is appropriate for their stage of development. Children learn to follow rules and respect other people as they accept practitioners' gentle explanations about sharing and taking turns or put their used paint brushes in a jar for washing. They show resilience as they build a track using a selection of different sized wooden planks, matching them carefully so they are level and cars run down them easily.

All children are very active and engaged in their play. For example, they show they are curious about the world around them as they move from one activity to another exploring water and experimenting with the electronic instruments. A few spend extended periods engaged in self-chosen activities, demonstrating interest and concentration as they persevere to order number tins from one to ten and match the correct number of beads to the numerals. Children have useful opportunities to join in with more adult-led activities, for example as they contribute their ideas to a shopping list for sandwich making or listen to stories in the playhouse.

Children develop and learn very well in many all areas through the extensive range of opportunities provided for them. Through following their own interests they develop confidence in making choices and seeking help when they need it. Children develop independence and self-help skills as they manage their own coats and bags, collect their own snacks, pour their own drinks, and manage their personal needs, such as washing hands independently.

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

Many children's communication skills are good. They listen well when playing with their friends and practitioners, ask sensible questions and follow instructions carefully. Children chat happily with their friends and practitioners, using suitable language in their spontaneous and structured play. For example, they ask a practitioner to help them use a cookbook to decide what kind of cake they would like to make. Nearly all children find their name from a list and place it on a board as they self-register when they arrive in the morning. Most listen attentively to stories and a few are beginning to show a real interest in books, turning pages carefully and treating them with respect. A majority of children enjoy joining in with Welsh songs and rhymes, but very few use Welsh words or respond to simple phrases in Welsh.

Children enjoy making simple marks independently, for example when painting outdoors, making lists, and recording when they feed 'Bubbles' the fish. Most children show increasing dexterity as they use small tongs confidently to pick up nuts and beads. They handle authentic equipment skilfully as they play in the mud kitchen or at the woodwork station.

Most children touch count to five when counting out the number of leaves they want to use to make their special potion. Most use appropriate language and mathematical terms, such as 'bigger' and 'smaller' when playing with containers in the water tray.

Nearly all children co-operate well with each other. They take turns and share equipment willingly. Children enjoy sharing their learning experiences with others. For example, one child noticed a spider in the forest school area and encouraged other children to use magnifying glasses so that they could see it clearly.

A few children choose to play with a set of electronic instruments to create repeating patterns and sounds. Generally, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) equipment is limited.

Children participate confidently in a wide range of physical activities. For example, many manoeuvre bikes and pedal cars skilfully around a narrow track, swing on tyres, navigate uneven ground and climb low trees with confidence. As a result, most children's physical skills are developing well.

Care and development:

Leaders have developed a comprehensive range of relevant policies and procedures to support practitioners to keep children safe. All practitioners have a secure knowledge of how to protect children and know what to do if they have any concerns. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners follow the settings policies and procedures in relation to hygiene and health and safety. They work well to keep children safe and healthy. They supervise children appropriately, following relevant policies and procedures in relation to accidents, incidents and administering medication. Practitioners know what to do in an emergency, as they practice and record regular fire evacuation drills in conjunction with the school. The practice of allowing children access to outdoors at all times ensures they get plenty of fresh air and physical exercise. Leaders provide

milk or water and encourage parents to provide healthy snacks for their children. There are suitable systems to manage allergies and, if necessary, the specific health needs of individual children.

Practitioners are very caring and supportive. They interact with children in a warm, friendly manner, creating a calm and relaxed atmosphere. There is a suitable behaviour management policy in place, which practitioners use effectively. They praise children for good behaviour and use positive techniques, such as distraction and explanations, to manage minor issues. Practitioners are positive role models and create an atmosphere that fosters and promotes children's self-esteem.

Practitioners meet the needs of all children including those with additional learning needs (ALN) effectively. They identify children who may have additional learning needs and have effective systems for supporting them and their families. Practitioners make effective use of support from the local authority. As a result, all children make progress in the setting. Practitioners track children's development effectively. They complete one-page profiles and identify next steps in learning for all children. They take opportunities to support these next steps as they arise in children's play and record them appropriately.

Practitioners are very responsive to children and interact effectively with them in their play. Children are encouraged to learn about the world around them by exploring in the forest school area and visiting a local farm. Practitioners provide a range of worthwhile experiences to develop children's awareness of diversity in the wider world, for example making rangoli patterns and preparing food to celebrate Diwali.

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

Practitioners have created an exciting learning environment where children feel confident to explore, play and learn. The use of natural and authentic resources both inside and outdoors enriches the range of learning experiences available and engages children successfully. Practitioners are skilled at responding to children's interests. For example, they support children to research animal foods when they find a squirrel who was looking for food in the forest area.

Practitioners are committed to facilitating child-led play and they are very skilful at knowing when to step back and when to encourage children to persevere or think for themselves. For example, when investigating the rolling properties of natural items, the practitioner makes a few thoughtful observations before stepping back and allowing the children to complete the investigation. For some children, there are too many choices available to them, both indoors and outdoors and, as a result, they do not always immerse themselves in sustained periods of uninterrupted play.

Practitioners encourage children to look carefully around them and use binoculars or magnifying glasses to look for small creatures, responding with great enthusiasm and praise when children find something that interests them. All children are encouraged and supported to take appropriate risks which gives them confidence to explore their environment independently. For example, most children confidently climb low trees to get a closer look at birds in the setting.

Practitioners provide a good variety of daily opportunities for children to develop their physical skills, such as riding bikes and building racing tracks from wooden planks.

They encourage children to be creative by painting fireworks on a large scale with oversized brushes or making cake models using natural materials and playdough.

Practitioners plan beneficial opportunities to explore Welsh culture and heritage. However, opportunities for children to develop and use their Welsh language skills is under-developed. Practitioners develop children's awareness of diversity in the wider world by celebrating festivals such as Hannukah and Chinese New Year.

Practitioners use regular observations to ensure children's learning needs are identified. They use these to plan focused 'invitations to play' at an individual child level. All children have their own book, which details their learning journey and progress during their time in the setting. Children decide what work they want to include in this book.

There are effective arrangements to record and monitor children's progress. Practitioners ensure that parents receive regular updates about their child's achievements. Practitioners regularly use an app to send photographs and messages to show parents how their child is getting on in the setting, and they often chat with them at the start and end of the session to share information.

Environment:

Leaders and practitioners provide children with an extremely rich environment that offers them challenge and appropriate risk taking and supports all their learning and development needs. They ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. The premises are secure with suitable arrangements to ensure children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Practitioners demonstrate a good understanding of relevant safety matters. They complete daily checks of the environment, adhere to cleaning schedules and check fridge temperatures.

All areas of the setting are clean and well maintained. Leaders undertake suitable assessments that consider risks both inside and outside to ensure there are arrangements in place to keep children safe. For example, the leader is aware of a very small area that is difficult to supervise from some parts of the building. As a result, practitioners are vigilant about checking the area regularly and leaders are re-considering how they use the space.

The playroom is welcoming and bright. Leaders and practitioners have developed the area to give children independent access to an extensive range of interesting and developmentally appropriate activities and resources. There is an emphasis on using a range of natural materials in children's play. Authentic resources, such as china crockery in the home corner, help children to learn to take care of objects and treat things with respect.

The outdoor play space provides further extensive opportunities for learning and development across all areas. Children learn to consider their own safety as they negotiate the sometimes-slippery slope in the wooded area or choose a helmet to wear when on a balance bike. The wooded area offers a natural environment for children to find out about nature and some of the creatures that live there.

Leaders provide good quality, age-appropriate furniture. Resources include those that promote cultural awareness, including the culture of Wales. They ensure that

resources and equipment are clean, well maintained, and appropriate for the children in the setting.

Leadership and management:

Leaders have created a warm and welcoming environment where children feel happy, safe, and well supported. Relationships between children and practitioners are based on high levels of trust and mutual respect, which has a very positive impact on children's confidence and well-being. Leaders have high expectations of practitioners and children. They ensure that practitioners provide constant encouragement and reassurance to enable children to do their best and take pride in their achievements. Overall, leaders are successful in achieving their vision of 'happy, caring and confident children'.

The setting has well-established self-evaluation processes, which capture the views of a range of stakeholders. There is a good link between the priorities identified, and plans for development. The leader identifies clear actions to address priorities. However, most of these actions focus on improving resources, rather than on more strategic steps to bring about sustained improvements. For example, leaders have not identified the need to provide professional learning for practitioners in the Welsh language to improve the Welsh language skills of children. Leaders make good use of grants to enhance provision. However, the evaluation of the impact of resources on children's learning is at an early stage of development.

There are relevant policies to support the safe running of setting, which leaders review regularly and share with staff and parents. The leader ensures that all documentation is clear, well organised, and meets all regulations. The setting's statement of purpose provides a clear and accurate picture of the setting.

Robust staff recruitment procedures are in place and roles and responsibilities are well defined. There is an effective appraisal system, which supports staff to develop their practice and skills to a high level. All mandatory training is up to date and staff are given many opportunities to participate in additional professional learning. Practitioners work very effectively as a team they share ideas and develop new approaches collaboratively. They feel well supported by each other and by the responsible individual who is a regular visitor to the setting.

Leaders ensure that practitioners maintain strong links with parents and, as a result, partnerships with parents are excellent. Parents feel that their children are safe in the setting and that the staff know their children well. They report that staff are very accessible and feel confident to approach them with any concerns.

Leaders regularly use a mixture of social media, newsletters, and personal interactions to share information about the setting, the children, and future events or important information. Consequently, parents feel very well informed and involved in their child's learning journey.

More recently, the setting has developed partnerships with the local church and local farmers, which have enriched learning opportunities for the children. Leaders have identified this as a key area for further development and is a current priority for the setting.

The setting has a strong relationship with the early years advisory teacher and highly values the advice and support it receives.

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)