



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Canolfan Deulu Dolgellau
Drill Hall
Smithfield Street
Dolgellau
Gwynedd
LL40 1DE**

Date of inspection: June 2019

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Canolfan Deulu Dolgellau

Name of setting	Canolfan Deulu Dolgellau
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Eirian Davenport and Eleri Lewis
Person in charge	Eleri Lewis, Eirian Davenport, Denise Williams, Mari Davies, Dilys Owen, Catrin Jones and Anthea Evans
Number of places	48 with 18 after-school places
Age range of children	0-11 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	22
Number of children funded for up to five terms	0
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday from 09:15 to 18:00
Flying Start service	Yes
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service provides the “active offer” for the Welsh language. It provides a service that anticipates, identifies and meets the needs of those who use the service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	04/07/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection	16/05/2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	11/06/2019
Additional information	

Since the last Estyn inspection, the setting has changed its name to Canolfan Deulu Dolgellau and has moved from a chapel vestry to a purpose-built building and includes a Flying Start service. Sessions are provided for pre-school children (Cylch Meithrin and Flying Start) and after-school clubs. A majority of children who attend the setting come from English-speaking homes.

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	Good
Learning (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 (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 areas of non-compliance were identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Challenge more able children consistently

R2 Improve provision for children who attend the after-school club

R3 Ensure continuity and progression in children's ICT skills

What happens next

The setting will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations. CIW and Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a case study on its work in relation to managing change successfully and making use of local links to enrich children's experiences, to be disseminated on their websites.

Main findings

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children are happy and content, and settle well when leaving their parents. Most children decide and choose how to spend their time at the setting. They choose from the wide range of indoor and outdoor activities and play areas, and move confidently between them. This enables the children to pursue their own interests and take part in structured activities successfully in their own time. Nearly all children enjoy their play and learning. They concentrate and persevere well, and enjoy experimenting with different equipment and materials. For example, they enjoy experimenting and investigating the artificial snow, hiding the animals in it and using different equipment to move and burrow in the snow.

Most children feel safe and confident enough when expressing an opinion, sharing ideas and answering simple questions, and they know that their views are respected. Nearly all children are familiar with the daily routine and have formed a positive relationship with practitioners. This gives them a feeling of security. Most children respond well to praise and are keen to share their successes. For example, many children are keen to stand in front of their friends to sing a song during singing time, and smile and show pride as everyone applauds for them once they have finished.

Most children interact well with their peers and enjoy playing and completing tasks with their friends, for example when completing shape puzzles. Most children are happy to share resources and learn important social skills, such as taking turns, effectively. Older children form positive friendships with younger children while helping them to play games or during craft activities.

Most children develop good independent skills. For example, during snack time, most are keen to do things for themselves, such as washing their hands and pouring a drink. However, children who attend the after-school club do not help enough with tasks during snack time in order to give them opportunities to develop their self-help skills.

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

Many children make strong progress in their literacy and numeracy skills from their starting points. However, a few more able children do not always make as much progress as they could.

Most children listen well to each other and adults. They respond correctly to instructions and show an increasing understanding of what is said while taking part in routine activities and new activities, such as searching for insects. Most respond appropriately to practitioners' questions during activities, and children who come from Welsh-speaking homes use a wide range of vocabulary and natural syntax confidently when talking to adults. Many show an interest in books and their content, and know how to hold a book and turn pages correctly. They respond well to stories and answer questions correctly, for example about how many worms were in the Rala Rwdins story, 'Mwydyn yn y Jam'. Many make marks effectively and with

increasing control by using various media. They use these skills purposefully when creating a Father's Day card.

Many children's number skills are developing effectively for their age and ability. Most recite numbers to 10 and beyond successfully, and they are beginning to match numbers to objects when using mathematical equipment effectively. Many recognise patterns and follow a simple pattern successfully, particularly when using coloured teddies or pairing socks. Many name familiar two-dimensional shapes and use mathematical language correctly in relevant contexts, such as 'heavy' and 'light' when playing in the sand pit.

On the whole, many children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developing appropriately. For example, they enjoy using an electronic magnifying glass to study things in the sensory garden and take pictures of them. This also contributes positively towards developing their creative skills. Problem-solving skills are developing successfully. A good example of this is by controlling a toy to move and turn from one shape to another, and when solving how to make a home for the insects. Many children develop their physical skills very well through a range of interesting activities. Many use large play equipment with increasing control when steering bicycles along a purposeful path, and they are able to balance well when stepping from one stone to another. Fine motor skills are developing well, and most children mould, squeeze and stretch dough, and use small equipment independently.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners prioritise children's safety and implement effective procedures in order to ensure that children are healthy and safe. They have received purposeful training on safeguarding children and are familiar with the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Nearly all practitioners have completed paediatric first aid training and record any accidents appropriately. Practitioners make good use of procedures in order to prevent the spread of infection, and nearly all have received food hygiene training. Practitioners encourage children to wash their hands after using the toilet and when following suitable procedures when handling food. However, they do not encourage the children who attend the after-school club to wash their hands consistently enough before eating snacks. Practitioners promote exercise successfully and ensure that there are purposeful opportunities to develop children's physical skills and spend time outside in the fresh air. By providing valuable opportunities for children to brush their teeth every day and encouraging parents to provide healthy snacks for their children, practitioners promote a healthy lifestyle successfully.

Nearly all practitioners form positive relationships with the children. They talk to the children fondly and treat them with care and respect. Nearly all practitioners use effective strategies to promote positive behaviour. For example, they draw children's attention to other activities, where necessary, and explain simply what is expected when children show any challenging behaviour.

The setting has purposeful arrangements to identify and support individual children's needs, including those with additional learning needs. It works effectively with external agencies in order to ensure that these children receive suitable support. Practitioners keep rigorous records of each child's development in order to identify any difficulties and plan to meet children's individual needs. Comprehensive daily diaries for the youngest children provide parents with useful information about their children's time at the setting.

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

Practitioners have a sound understanding of the principles of the foundation phase. As a result, they plan a wide range of stimulating learning experiences that reflect the children's interests and build purposefully on what they know. They ensure a purposeful balance between activities that are led by children and those that are led by adults. However, practitioners do not always tailor activities to challenge all children to the best of their ability, particularly those who are more able.

Practitioners use the local area to enrich children's learning experiences very effectively. A notable example of this is the monthly visits to a local home for the elderly. This bridges the gap between the generations very successfully and increases children's confidence in socialising and speaking Welsh outside the family centre. Visitors, such as the police and fire officers, are used regularly to raise children's awareness of people that help us.

Practitioners provide activities that ensure that children practise their literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills during continuous activities and across the areas of learning very successfully. An example of this is solving the problem of what needs to be collected from the garden outside to create a purposeful shelter to insects, and count how many woodlice were found under a tree trunk while it was raining. Although there are regular opportunities for children to use ICT as part of their learning, practitioners do not ensure continuity and progression in skills. Practitioners plan rich experiences to develop children's moral, social and cultural skills. For example, children are given opportunities to develop a sense of wonder by observing insects while creating a hotel for them.

One of the setting's strengths is the lovely working relationship between practitioners and children. They use effective strategies to manage children's behaviour by intervening appropriately in children's play and questioning them purposefully during their tasks. However, they do not ask more able children challenging enough questions regularly enough. Practitioners model spoken language regularly and reinforce language patterns and familiar vocabulary skilfully. This, in addition to activities that promote the Welsh dimension, ensure a strong Welsh ethos.

Practitioners know the children well and develop effective procedures to observe and assess their development. Practitioners' knowledge and understanding of all areas of learning are developing soundly. They use information from observations to plan the next learning steps for individual children and to enrich planning. A specific example of this was noticing that many children had a poor understanding and use of prepositions and, as a result, this was included in the following week's sessions.

Practitioners provide parents and carers with good information about how their children are progressing in their learning.

Environment: Good

Leaders prioritise the children's safety and ensure that there are appropriate procedures to monitor and manage any potential dangers effectively. For example, rigorous risk assessments outline potential dangers and the steps that have been taken to reduce or prevent the risk to children.

The two main rooms are pleasant, comfortable and cosy, and there is plenty of room for children to move around freely. Leaders ensure that children have a sense of belonging by displaying examples of children's work on the walls. Rooms are organised into purposeful learning areas with a variety of activities and resources to enrich children's experiences successfully. For example, the role-play area has been set up as a florist to correspond with the current theme, which is the garden. The outdoor play areas are very attractive and provide a large number of exciting experiences. This engages children's interest effectively and provides them with a valuable opportunity to develop their physical and creative skills, for example by using the climbing equipment and creating music with the percussion instruments in the sensory garden. However, although the children who attend the after-school club have access to the whole environment, leaders do not give enough attention to one of the rooms that is used as it is not completely suitable for them.

Leaders ensure that a wide range of interesting and exciting resources and equipment is available in the main rooms. These are of good quality and are stored at a low level to enable children to choose them independently. Practitioners clean the equipment and toys regularly in order to ensure that they are clean and in good condition, although they do not keep a record of when these tasks are completed. Leaders ensure that there are good opportunities for children to learn about the world around them. Resources and natural materials are used effectively in order to enable children to experiment and discover, for example when planting flowers and spending time experimenting in the mud kitchens.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have a clear vision for the family centre and they share and realise this vision very successfully. One of the obvious strengths is the highly successful way in which leaders have worked with a number of partners to expand provision very significantly. They have done this by ensuring that all staff act robustly on the setting's procedures and policies. As a result, they have succeeded in achieving good standards in terms of new provision.

Leaders create a positive ethos in which children and staff feel that they are valued. They ensure that all practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities clearly, and set high expectations and challenge everyone to do their best. Regular staff meetings help to realise this effectively. Leaders ensure that the provision operates smoothly and in an orderly manner, and that staff maintain high standards by supervising and supporting them to care for the children from day to day.

The centre has a beneficial relationship with the management committee. The committee meets at least every term and receives purposeful information about the running of the centre and its progress. Evaluation findings are shared with the committee, but the committee's role in the self-evaluation process has not yet been developed soundly enough.

Leaders evaluate provision and its effect on children's outcomes continuously. This includes listening to children's opinions and considering the views of parents and staff. This process takes advantage of first-hand evidence and includes the views of external partners, such as officers from the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. Through the self-evaluation process, leaders identify the setting's strengths and nearly all areas for improvement correctly. On the whole, the development plan deals appropriately with areas for improvement, and leaders monitor progress against the targets regularly.

There is a successful record of robust strategic planning that leads to clear improvements. The effect of planning for improvement can be seen most prominently on recording and observation processes. For example, leaders arranged for the local authority's support teacher to hold internal training on observation methods and recording observations. As a result, all practitioners keep daily records, and leaders have ensured enough funding to fund an additional half an hour a week for all practitioners to transfer this information to the assessment file in order to use it to inform planning. This has a positive effect on planning and assessment, and all practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of each child's development.

Leaders ensure that there are enough practitioners with appropriate qualifications and relevant experience of working with children. Practitioners are deployed effectively, in line with their strengths, to meet children's needs. A particular example of this is appointing an assistant as deputy leader with responsibility for language groups. There is a very effective system of supervising and evaluating practitioners, which leads to agreed targets. Leaders link the targets that derive from this process effectively with priorities in the improvement plan. By doing so, leaders support staff to improve their performance very effectively. Purposeful use is made of annual evaluations, which track staff performance and show how it is improving in areas that were in need of development. For example, the process identified that the behaviour support skills of a few members of staff needed to be strengthened, and purposeful training was organised for them. As a result, nearly all members of staff manage behaviour well.

Leaders and practitioners work effectively with a range of partners and the community. This contributes beneficially towards raising standards and promoting children's wellbeing. A highly successful example of this is the partnership with the local home for the elderly. There is a positive relationship between practitioners and the children's parents, and parents praise the setting highly for its strength in this area.

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 evaluates 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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