



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

**A report on**

**Maldwyn Nursery & Family Centre  
Park Lane  
Newtown  
Powys  
Powys  
SY16 1DE**

**Date of inspection: October 2019**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

## About Maldwyn Nursery & Family Centre

Name of setting	Maldwyn Nursery and Family Centre
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	N/A
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Alicia Pelling
Person in charge	Alicia Pelling
Number of places	70
Age range of children	0-12 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	14
Number of children funded for up to five terms	24
Opening days / times	7:45am to 5.45pm, Monday to Friday
Flying Start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	No
Date of previous CIW inspection	05/12/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	01/05/2013
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	08/10/2019
Additional information	<p>There is an out of school care provision at the setting under the same Care Inspectorate Wales registration for children up to the age of 12.</p> <p>A few children have English as an additional language.</p>

## Summary

Theme	Judgement
<b>Wellbeing</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Learning</b> (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	<b>Good</b>
<b>Care and development</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and assessment</b> (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	<b>Good</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **Non-compliance**

**No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.**

## **Recommendations**

R1 Improve children's mathematical development

R2 Improve practitioners' questioning and opportunities for children to develop their thinking skills

R3 Provide effective opportunities for children to learn about their own and other cultures

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all children speak and express themselves well as they engage with practitioners. They make choices and decisions about what affects them with developing confidence. For example, a younger child in the 'Tweenies' room decides not to play outdoors and instead chooses to read their favourite book in the cosy corner. Children in the out of school club contribute their ideas on how to explore the current theme of autumn actively. Most children express their views and comments confidently.

As a result of effective daily routines and a supportive environment throughout the setting, nearly all younger children cope well with separation from their parents or carers. For instance, when a child becomes unsettled they respond well to reassurance from practitioners. Nearly all children feel they are valued and listened to by practitioners, this results in positive relationships between children and practitioners. For instance, older children who are tired after school respond well to practitioners' efforts to involve them in activities and this lifts their spirits.

Interactions between children and practitioners are consistently good and children co-operate well. Younger children enjoy the social occasion of meal times, and talk to their friends and those caring for them with enthusiasm. They are polite and use good manners consistently. Children in the out of school club interact with their friends positively. They share resources and take turns well, for instance while playing a board game.

Nearly all children follow their own interests successfully and enjoy playing and learning. For example, children enjoy making a hedgehog out of chocolate scented playdough and comment on its scent as they insert spaghetti strands to make its spiky back. During outdoor play, children develop their hand and eye co-ordination well as they hammer pegs into a pumpkin using a small wooden mallet. Older children initiate their own play successfully and concentrate for a suitable length of time. For instance, when exploring the autumn display, children in the out of school club show curiosity about the textures of the natural materials and take time to look, hold and consider the various items with interest.

Most children develop independence and self-helps skills well. For example, younger children help themselves to fruit and pour their own drinks at snack time. They wash their hands with limited support and place their rubbish in the bin. Before outdoor play, many children put on their wellington boots and coats with little assistance. Most children carry out a range of tasks for themselves at their own pace. For instance, older children butter their pancakes independently and use a step to reach the sink to wash their own plates.

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

Most pre-school children make good progress in the development of their skills over time. They demonstrate effective listening skills. For example, they listen and follow

carefully the instructions of practitioners as they describe the activities for the morning. Most children express themselves with appropriate clarity and confidence. For example, they describe how they enjoyed a walk through the town the previous day to collect conkers. Most children show enthusiasm for books and stories. They show enjoyment when listening and responding to a story read by the lead practitioner. They pick up and explore books independently and show an understanding of their contents when sharing them with an adult. They demonstrate suitable mark making skills and a few begin to make the connection with written communication when writing notes in notebooks in the mark making area.

Most children develop their understanding of number and counting skills appropriately. For example, following a hunt for five hidden pumpkins around the woodland area, many join in counting how many they have collected confidently. However, overall, they do not develop their understanding of a full range of mathematical concepts, including shape and measure, well enough.

Most children use information and communication technology (ICT) regularly and well as part of their play. For example, they use a hand held device to create and colour simple pictures and create a series of simple instructions to move a programmable toy.

Most children develop a range of physical skills well through regular use of the outdoor areas. They show balance and control when climbing over tyres and through tunnels in the woodland area. They develop effective fine motor skills and demonstrate dexterity as they place pegs on cardboard hedgehogs to create spikes.

Although many children are new to the setting and few have previous knowledge of the language, most children respond well to instructions in the Welsh language. They understand the Welsh terms for numbers to five and simple colours. They join in well with songs and rhymes as part of everyday routines and answer simple questions in Welsh, for instance when asked who has a block of a particular colour.

Most children make appropriate progress with developing their creative skills. For example, they use musical instruments regularly to experiment with sound and rhythm. Nearly all children develop useful personal and social skills. For example, they co-operate well with each other and listen with consideration to one another. Most children demonstrate persistence and persevere with tasks when they face difficulties. However, due to a lack of opportunity, they do not develop sufficient problem solving skills.

### **Care and development: Good**

Practitioners have a sound understanding of the settings policies and procedures for keeping children safe and healthy and implement these successfully. Their arrangements to safeguard children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. There are thorough arrangements for collecting children from school safely, including ensuring that children wear high visibility vests and they hold hands to help ensure safety. The setting carries out fire drills regularly, and practitioners attend suitable training to support their understanding of first aid and child protection procedures.

Practitioners promote healthy lifestyles effectively for all children. For example, meals are healthy and drinking water is readily available to the children throughout the session. There are plenty of valuable opportunities for children to play outdoors in the fresh air to develop their physical skills. Practitioners encourage children to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet, this develops children's understanding of effective personal hygiene practices well.

Practitioners throughout the setting have a warm approach to care giving and manage interactions fairly and consistently. They communicate clearly with children, praise them for their efforts and celebrate their achievements enthusiastically. As a result, children are happy at the setting and confident to participate in activities.

Practitioners plan a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities. For example, they lead an engaging story telling session where two year old children imagine they are going on a bear hunt and join in with actions, such as squelching their feet in the mud. Practitioners reinforce positional language effectively and children demonstrate their understanding through physical movement. For instance, showing how they would walk through a river, over rocks and under a bridge.

Practitioners promote the Welsh language suitably, such as by using a few Welsh words and phrases during the session. They provide attractive posters to greet children in their own language, helping to create a sense of belonging for all children in the setting. However, overall, there are not enough opportunities for children to begin to learn about the diverse world they live in.

Practitioners work innovatively to make resources that enrich children's learning through play. For example, a practitioner creates an installation of a tree, decorated with toy birds and autumn leaves, as a resource for children to practise using their senses and learn about the natural world.

There is worthwhile focus on children with special educational needs. Practitioners and leaders work well together to complete comprehensive individual play plans. The setting works effectively with a range of external agencies, such as the local authority educational psychologist, speech and language team and health visitor, to provide valuable support for children.

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

Practitioners know the abilities and interests of pre-school children well. They use this knowledge effectively to plan activities that challenge children at an appropriate level, capture their imagination and stimulate their learning. For example, children enjoy developing their creative skills when collecting leaves and sticks to make artwork in the woodland area as part of their 'autumn' topic. Practitioners talk regularly with children about what and how they would like to learn. For instance, they act on children's suggestions to arrange a visit to a fire station and use the fire engine's hoses to squirt water. Practitioners pay close attention to the progress children make and plan subsequent activities at a level that meets children's needs and builds well on their previous learning. For example, they note how well they have matched the correct number of spikes to the numbers on a hedgehog and ensure that the next counting activity builds on what they can already do.

Practitioners make useful assessments of the progress that children make and summarise these into assessments of progress on a termly basis. They maintain clear records of the skills children have developed and use these well to plan subsequent activities. This helps to ensure that children build on previous skills and make good progress over time. Practitioners make beneficial use of this information by sharing it with parents at a meeting during the summer term and passing their final assessments on to receiving schools.

All practitioners maintain consistently positive relationships with children. This helps to ensure that children feel safe and valued. Practitioners respond to any issues of unacceptable behaviour firmly, but with sensitivity. They encourage children to persevere with tasks they find difficult and to try find ways to overcome challenges. However, they do not plan sufficient opportunities for children to improve their problem solving and thinking skills.

Practitioners plan well for children to develop and improve their literacy skills. They model the reading and enjoyment of books well, encouraging children to respond and join in with familiar tales during story time. They encourage children to explore books independently and provide a good variety of texts for the children to enjoy. Practitioners model good language skills and encourage children to listen carefully and speak with clarity. They provide good opportunities for children to explore mark making with a variety of tools and mediums, including natural materials, paint, paper and pencil. Practitioners provide suitable opportunities to improve children's skills in counting and a few aspects of their mathematical vocabulary throughout the session. However, practitioners do not plan sufficient opportunities for children to develop a full range of mathematical skills, such as those in shape and measure.

The setting provides an appropriate range of learning experiences to support children's spiritual, moral, and social development. For example, they develop a sense of wonder by watching caterpillars pupate, turn into butterflies and releasing them. They use daily routines, such as snack time, as an opportunity to remind children about tidying up after themselves and, through all activities, encourage children to share resources and take turns.

Practitioners promote aspects of Welsh culture suitable, for example by arranging activities to celebrate St David's Day. However, there is insufficient planning for the development of children's understanding of their own and other cultures as part of children's ongoing learning.

### **Environment: Good**

Leaders ensure that the premises are safe and secure. For example all visitors are required to sign and sign out and access through the main entrance is controlled via buzzer entry system. The setting uses its space well to ensure the best environment for children to play and learn. There are good systems for regular maintenance and safety checks for both indoor and outdoor environments. Leaders ensure the completion of accurate risk assessments for the premises, activities and visits. Practitioners engage in effective cleaning routines and play areas are well maintained.



The environment is welcoming and child-centred. There is sufficient space and facilities to meet the needs of children, and hand-washing facilities are easily accessible. The layout and design of the environment promote children's independence, enabling them to explore their play area and freely make choices about how they learn and play. Leaders ensure that books are displayed in an attractive way and this encourages children to read them. There is a designated area for children to store their personal items, which promotes a sense of belonging.

Practitioners provide all children with a wide range of age appropriate toys and good quality resources, which appeal to them and encourage the development of their curiosity and creativity. There are plentiful natural resources, re-cycled commercial household goods and loose parts to support children to practise using their senses and to develop imaginary play effectively. Storage is at a low level, enabling children to reach their toys easily, and furniture is appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Practitioners extend children's knowledge and development in the outdoors by offering a good range of resources to stimulate children's interests. They have designed the courtyard well to offer children interesting activity choices, such as planting flowers or attractively decorating the borders with rainbow painted pebbles.

Practitioners create imaginative recipes for the mud kitchen to enable children to have fun making pretend food, such as stick stew and leaf lasagne, using natural resources effectively. The woodland play area is an extensive space with an appropriate range of climbing apparatus and resources to help children improve their balance and co-ordination skills while being active in the fresh air.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

Following recent changes to leadership roles, the manager and deputy manager are developing a clear vision for the setting based around providing high standards of care and learning for children from the local community. Leaders share this vision well with staff. This results in a strong sense of team work amongst practitioners and a sense of common purpose in providing the best possible experience for the children in their care.

Leaders have put in place effective processes to ensure the smooth running of the setting. A well-structured system of meetings ensures that all staff remain well informed about developments at the setting and have an opportunity to contribute their ideas and opinions. Leaders work well with the management committee to keep them up-to-date with developments through regular meetings. The committee has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of the setting. Regular visits by committee members help them to gather first hand evidence about the work of the setting that is valuable in decision-making.

The setting's statement of purpose provides an accurate picture of what the setting offers. There are effective procedures to ensure the safety of all children and practitioners, and leaders review these regularly.

Leaders have developed effective systems to draw conclusions about the strengths and areas for improvement in the setting. Leaders use first-hand observation,

regular meetings and questionnaires to gather the views of parents and practitioners. They take these findings seriously and use the information they gather well to make judgements about the quality of most areas of the setting's work. There is a close link between these and the setting's improvement actions. For example, the setting identified a need to improve children's mark making and now children have extensive opportunities to explore this and are beginning to develop their understanding of its link with written communication.

Leaders ensure that there are enough suitably qualified practitioners to meet children's needs and they deploy them well to make the most of their skills. All practitioners have up-to-date job descriptions specifying their roles and responsibilities clearly. Leaders have recently implemented beneficial supervision and appraisal systems that provide useful opportunities for practitioners to reflect on their performance and identify areas for improvement. Leaders ensure effective professional development opportunities to improve staff skills. Recently, this has included visits to other providers to observe good practice in how they organise their early years funded provision.

Leaders and practitioners work successfully to maintain productive relationships with parents and keep them well informed about their children's progress and the activities they take part in at the setting. The setting has many beneficial partnerships with the local community that support children's learning well. For example, children find out about 'people who help them' through visits to the local police and fire stations.

## 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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
<b>Poor</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

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