



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

A report on

**Ysgol Nant y Groes Playgroup
Ysgol Nant y Groes
Greenfield Road
Colwyn Bay
Conwy
LL29 8ET**

Date of inspection: July 2019

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Ysgol Nant y Groes Playgroup

Name of setting	Nant y Groes Playgroup
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Mrs Cheryl Curran
Responsible individual (if applicable)	N/A
Person in charge	Mrs Jamie Angus-Aubrey
Number of places	42
Age range of children	2 to 4 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	11
Number of children funded for up to five terms	0
Opening days / times	9:00am to 3:00pm, Monday to Friday during term time
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	01/03/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	01/05/2012

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Dates of this inspection visit(s)	09/07/2019
<p>Additional information</p> <p>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 the people/children who use, or intend to use the service. This may be because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area and the provider does not currently intend to offer or promote a Welsh language service.</p>	

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	Excellent
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 non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Improve children's Welsh speaking skills

R2 Improve planning to develop children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively

R3 Improve provision to promote children's cultural awareness successfully

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations. 'CIW and Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a case study on its work in relation to creating a highly nurturing and caring environment to support children's wellbeing and personal and social development for dissemination on their websites. 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 settle very quickly and happily to activities and separate confidently from their parents and carers. Most children develop their personal and social skills effectively and develop a strong sense of wellbeing. They make confident choices. For example, they choose what they want to do when they arrive and are happy to pick the colour of paper they want for their collage. They contribute their ideas readily, such as making suggestions about how to make a shelter when it starts to rain. They express themselves well and communicate their needs effectively, for example when they ask to put their coats on and go back outside to play.

Nearly all children relate well to one another, are beginning to make friends and show great affection for their key workers. They show contentment and happiness, interacting positively with each other and with practitioners, for example when joining in with actions to a story. Children listen well to instructions and follow reminders about simple rules effectively, such as not to run and to be kind to one another.

Nearly all children interact well with each other. With support from practitioners, they share equipment happily and are beginning to take turns appropriately. Nearly all children co-operate well and work together effectively, for example to put together a train track. A few older children are beginning to understand how to care for and consider the needs of others, for example assisting a child who had fallen by telling a practitioner where they had hurt themselves. Nearly all children progress effectively in their understanding of right and wrong and learn to manage their own behaviour well with the help and support of practitioners.

Nearly all enjoy their learning and this is reflected well when they sing as they play. They have fun and their enthusiasm is infectious as they invite practitioners to join in. Children engage well and nearly all join in enthusiastically with activities offered. For example, they are interested in the giant land snails and finding out about the different parts of a fish. Nearly all persevere with tasks and concentrate for a good length of time, such as when they measure how much water they need to float toy fish. Children are confident learners who want to share what they are doing with other children and the practitioners around them.

Most children develop a range of skills effectively, and make good progress with developing their early speaking and listening skills. They become increasingly confident and respond well to opportunities to take on simple responsibilities, such as to be the Helpwr Heddiw. Nearly all are motivated well and many develop their independence skills successfully. For example, older children collect and put on their

own aprons to play in the water, and most choose pieces of fruit from a bowl and pour their own drinks with support.

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

During their time at the setting, most children make good progress across all areas of learning from their starting points.

Most children develop their speaking and listening skills successfully. Most children understand and follow instructions comprehensively, for example when they line up to wash their hands at snack time. Many children communicate skilfully with their peers and adults when explaining, for example what food a pirate should eat. They chat happily about what they are 'cooking' in the role play area and what fruit they like to eat during snack time. A few children handle and discuss books appropriately. During circle time, most children pay close attention to a story and join in successfully. Most understand the purpose of writing and develop their mark making skills effectively, such as when they write invitations and thank you letters, and draw lines and squiggles with chalk outside.

Most children develop good numeracy skills. For example, they join in successfully with counting forwards to ten and a minority count backwards back to one with support. Many recognise numbers to five successfully and count five objects correctly. Many children develop a good understanding of basic shapes, for example when discussing the shape of the pirate flag.

With support, many children develop simple ICT skills suitably. For example, they know how to switch a toy telescope on and off. With support, a few are beginning to take photographs competently with a tablet computer. However, overall, children's ICT skills are underdeveloped.

Many children develop their understanding of simple Welsh words and phrases suitably. They join in regularly with songs and rhymes and respond appropriately to instructions in Welsh. However, very few children use Welsh words or phrases without prompting.

Most children develop their physical skills well. For example, they ride bikes, climb apparatus and balance on a small beam confidently. Many improve their co-ordination successfully as they use a range of brushes and tools. Most children develop their problem solving skills effectively during indoor and outdoor play activities, for example when they make a garage big enough for a car using magnetic blocks. Most children develop their creative skills successfully through activities such as painting and drawing. They apply these skills well, for example, to make a pirate ship for the role play area.

Care and development: Excellent

Practitioners support children well to keep them healthy and safe. They understand and follow a thorough range of policies and procedures effectively. This includes following good hygiene practice when preparing food. The setting's arrangement for safeguarding children meets requirements and gives no cause for concern.

Practitioners prepare healthy snacks and drinks and provide children with plenty of opportunities to be physically active. For example, they provide waterproof jackets to enable children to play outside when the weather is wet.

Practitioners know children very well and have a thorough understanding of each child and their individual needs. Nearly all practitioners have built particularly strong relationships with children and are respectful and very caring in their approach. They use highly effective strategies that enable children who are often restless when they arrive, to settle very quickly. These are tailored very well to give meaningful support to individuals and make children feel special. They deal with challenging behaviour in highly effective ways. They have a very calm and patient manner and use a range of helpful strategies extremely consistently. Practitioners are very respectful of children's dignity, such as when they allow them to finish dressing in the bathroom before others wash their hands.

Nearly all practitioners manage children's behaviour in a compassionate and very positive way without causing any disruption to play and learning. This contributes well to the setting's exceptionally nurturing ethos. They have consistently high expectations and demonstrate a superb level of skill and sensitivity to help children settle when they arrive and to support them so that they are ready to take part in activities. This has a very positive impact on the wellbeing of children. Practitioners set realistic boundaries that children respond to highly effectively. They support children's play, learning and development extremely well. For example, they intervene in children's play very skilfully to help them learn how to interact effectively with each other and to conform to the setting's routines. They plan interesting and highly engaging activities that they know children will enjoy and constantly review their practice to respond to children's changing needs and interests. For example, they play alongside children sensitively and intervene effectively, such as to introduce more objects to extend their counting skills. .

Practitioners show great interest in children's ideas; they know when to support children's play and when to stand back and let them decide for themselves. For example they are careful not to intervene too soon when children have a go at 'walking the plank' by balancing on a low beam outside. They always have plenty of time for the children, encourage them with praise and join in their spontaneous play with enjoyment. For example, they respond to opportunities as they arise to jump in puddles and to make a shelter from the rain. This supports children's wellbeing highly effectively.

Practitioners observe children and track their progress successfully. They use observations effectively to plan and provide for children's next steps in learning and meet their individual needs. There are highly effective arrangements for nurturing children. For example, the setting allows time for children to begin to settle before allocating key workers, taking into account which practitioner the child likes to be with and is naturally drawn to.

The setting has worthwhile arrangements for supporting children with additional learning needs. Practitioners work well with specialist agencies to provide beneficial support for individuals, including support with speech and language development. They prepare and implement useful plans and they work in close partnership with parents.

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

Practitioners work well together to provide a valuable range of worthwhile learning experiences both indoors and outdoors that engages nearly all children well. Activities reflect the foundation phase ethos successfully and enable children to make choices and learn through play. Practitioners consult children about their interests effectively on a regular basis and incorporate their ideas into their plans. For example, in response to children's suggestions they provide opportunities to make pirate hats and a pirate boat for the role play area.

Practitioners question children skilfully and challenge all abilities appropriately for example, when counting how many items float and sink. They support children to develop their self-help skills effectively, for example by ensuring that they can access a range of resources both indoors and outdoors independently. They make good use of the indoor and outdoor space to provide interesting activities that engage children successfully across most areas of learning. They provide an appropriate balance between adult directed and child initiated learning.

Practitioners provide an effective range of worthwhile learning experiences to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills progressively. For example, activities such as counting items that float or sink develop children's skills successfully across the curriculum.

The setting provides a suitable range of ICT resources. However, practitioners do not always plan well enough to ensure that children use these to develop their ICT skills appropriately and systematically.

Practitioners share an appropriate range of Welsh songs confidently and effectively and introduce simple words and phrases suitably during group times. However they do not support children well enough for them to develop their confidence to use

Welsh words and phrases independently. Practitioners provide an appropriate range of activities for children to learn about the wider world and celebrations from different cultures. For example, they make lanterns and dance with a dragon to celebrate Chinese New Year.

Through a wide range of learning experiences, practitioners promote children's social, moral, and spiritual development well. For example, practitioners encourage a sense of awe and wonder successfully when they help children to look carefully at the scales of a fish and examine its texture. Practitioners provide useful opportunities for children to learn about and care for living things such as when they make bird seed balls to hang up outside.

Regular visits into the local community provide worthwhile experiences that enrich children's learning. For example, there are visits to the local beach to find different sizes of shells and to the post box to post a Christmas card. Practitioners reuse a small range of materials beneficially including paper in the mark making area and carpet rolls for large construction. This contributes to helping children learn about sustainability appropriately. Practitioners carry out useful daily assessments that they record appropriately, and these inform the next steps for learning comprehensively. Reports to parents outline areas children's progress well, powerfully supplemented with photographs. Parents appreciate these and keep them as valuable mementos.

Environment: Good

Good safety arrangements ensure that children are cared for in a secure environment. Practitioners undertake robust daily checks of indoor and outdoor areas to ensure all equipment is clean and safe. Practitioners support children sensitively to allow them to learn through taking appropriate risks, for example when they prop up tarpaulins to make rain shelters.

The premises provide ample space for children to move around freely and rooms have been set out thoughtfully to provide good opportunities for learning through play. The setting offers a rich learning environment that is both welcoming and well maintained. Plenty of children's creative ideas are displayed giving them a sense of belonging. Photographs, hanging attractively from twigs, show children enjoying a variety of activities and visits in the local community. This helps create an appealing learning environment.

Resources are suitable for the age and stage of development of the children. There are plenty of good quality toys and equipment that provide children with variety and choice, and support their learning well. Resources conform to safety standards and most are stored at low level in an interesting variety of containers so children access them independently. Natural and sustainable resources such as a mud kitchen,

wood, shells and pebbles enhance children's play effectively and the addition of sand and water make an exciting beach for pirates. However the setting does not provide a wide enough range of resources to promote cultural awareness and help children learn about the diverse world in which we live. Furniture of differing height and size enables children to play and eat comfortably.

Leadership and management: Good

The person in charge sets high expectations for herself and practitioners. She has a clear vision to provide and develop high quality care and education. She shares this vision effectively with all those who are associated with the setting. This creates a highly caring and supportive ethos and a strong culture of safety. Communication within the setting is strong, and this means that all practitioners have a voice, feel valued and are fully informed about the setting's work. There is a strong statement of purpose, which outlines comprehensive aims and objectives and provides an accurate picture of what the setting offers. Useful policies and procedures support working practices well.

The person in charge and the registered person both lead the setting effectively. They have a thorough knowledge of the setting's strengths and a clear understanding of what improvements are necessary. Nearly all practitioners know what the setting does well and play an active part in identifying areas for improvement. This has raised standards of teaching and learning, such as by encouraging practitioners to use more mathematical language when they interact with children.

Recruitment systems are robust and ensure that there are sufficient practitioners who have relevant and appropriate qualifications and experience of working with young children. Leaders use induction processes effectively so that all practitioners understand and implement policies and practices. All practitioners evaluate their daily work through regular performance management and they prioritise areas they aim to improve successfully. For example, practitioners implemented a speech and language programme consistently well and this has had a positive impact on children's wellbeing and language development. The management committee appraises the setting leader's performance appropriately and identifies training opportunities that support her beneficially. Practitioners have all benefited from professional learning opportunities. For example, training on how to use specific mathematical resources has enabled children to begin to understand the relationship between numbers.

Leaders consult effectively with parents to build up a picture of their child before they start at the setting. This contributes to children's wellbeing and promotes a strong partnership with parents. Practitioners keep parents well informed about their child's progress and provide information about the setting through informal discussions and

regular newsletters. There is an effective 'open door' policy where parents can stay and play with their children at any time. Practitioners listen to parents' concerns and give useful guidance and advice. Parents speak highly of the level of communication they receive from practitioners. The setting has a range of effective partnerships with the wider community. For example, there is a very valuable link with the primary school on the same site, which benefits the children's transition to full-time school effectively. Leaders take good account of advice and support from the local authority advisory teacher to develop their practice.

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 evaluate 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

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