



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

A report on

Mini Miners Club

**57 Cameron House
Commercial Street
Ystrad Mynach
Hengoed
Caerphilly
CF82 7DW**

Date of inspection: January 2023

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Mini Miners Club

Name of setting	Mini Miners Club
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Not applicable
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Kellyanne Evans
Person in charge	Fern Harris
Number of places	56
Age range of children	0-5
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	4
Number of children who receive funding for early education	3
Opening days / times	7am – 6pm, Monday to Friday
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service that is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service or demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	6 February 2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection	
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	31/01/2023

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that there are robust procedures for signing children and staff in and out of the setting
- R2 Ensure that all systems for recording and analysing accidents and incidents are rigorous and adhered to by all staff
- R3 Develop greater opportunities for children to learn about the lives and cultures of others

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 the effective use of resources to ignite children's curiosity, for dissemination on their websites.

Main findings

Well-being:

Nearly all children arrive at the setting happy. They settle easily and enjoy playing with the wide range of play and learning opportunities available to them. They show clear bonds of affection to practitioners and reach out to them for comfort when upset.

Children are familiar with the routines of the day. They take cues from specific music used at different times to instruct them to pack up and tidy away their play resources. Nearly all children independently wash their hands before eating, and enjoy a sociable lunchtime. They chat happily with their friends and practitioners.

Most children express their needs well through verbal and non-verbal communication and make independent decisions about how and where they use the resources. They move freely around the indoor and outdoor environments. For example, younger children choose where and when they want to play with their toys. Older children have opportunities to share their views through voting for the Book of the Week and Book of the Day. Nearly all children are confident to engage practitioners in their play. For example, younger children offer food from the kitchen role play area.

Nearly all children behave and interact well for their ages and stages of development. They are kind and considerate towards their peers, approaching each other thoughtfully. For example, they happily share resources and toys. Nearly all children are beginning to follow the rules of the setting and respond positively to practitioners gently prompts and reminders of how to be kind and take care of their friends.

Overall, children enjoy joining in imaginative play and taking part in a range of role play activities. This supports their all-round development and enables them to confidently follow their own interests. Nearly all children enjoy playing collaboratively. For example, older children move large cardboard tubes from one area to another. Nearly all children show enjoyment in the time they spend outdoors. For example, they enjoy playing with large building blocks and spending time in nature. Younger children show interest in sensory activities, such as smelling lemons and flowers in the water tray and watching how water moves when poured. Nearly all children have valuable opportunities to take managed risks in their play, such as climbing on large play equipment.

Nearly all children develop increasingly independent and self-help skills. For example, the youngest learners wipe their faces with flannels after eating and begin to feed themselves. Older children use the toilet facilities and wash and dry their hands independently. They serve themselves food and pour drinks during snack and lunch times. They enjoy being 'Helpwr Heddiw', laying the table with glasses, plates, and cutlery for themselves and their friends.

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

There is no report on children's learning. This is because the number of three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection that do not receive funded education elsewhere was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development:

Practitioners have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. Overall, they follow the setting's policies and procedures in relation to hygiene, health, and safety appropriately and demonstrate robust hygiene and infection control practices. Practitioners have a good understanding 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 supervise children well and complete relevant records in relation to accidents, incidents and administering medication. However, these results are not recorded separately, and practitioners do not always analyse their results well enough to identify any patterns or areas for development.

Practitioners have a good knowledge of what to do in the case of an emergency and undertake regular fire checks and drills. Leaders provide children with a variety of healthy and nutritious food and snacks including water, which is readily available. Practitioners regularly encourage children to brush their teeth after snacks and mealtimes. They follow effective procedures to support children with allergies and dietary needs. Practitioners ensure that suitable adult to child ratios are maintained consistently. However, leaders do not ensure that staff members and children are signed out in a timely manner when they leave the room.

Practitioners are caring, nurturing and supportive. They know the children well and work together effectively to ensure that all children's needs are met promptly. They respond positively to children's interactions to play and support them in their learning.

Practitioners provide warm reassurance if children are upset or tired and use thoughtful methods of drawing attention to distract and cheer them up. Practitioners interact with each other positively and use everyday situations as opportunities to role model effective behaviours for the children to observe. For example, when a practitioner accidentally put a on a colleague's coat, they had a valuable discussion about sharing. Practitioners encourage children to display good manners and wait until all their friends are at the table before beginning to eat at lunch and snack times.

Practitioners support children's imagination and learning naturally; they play alongside them, encouraging number and language development. They skilfully use children's interests to plan activities and experiences that develop their skills and understanding. Practitioners carry out useful evaluations of activities along with detailed observations of children's play to identify next steps in children's learning.

Practitioners have a good understanding of children with emerging or additional learning needs. They engage well with parents to ensure that children's needs are met and reviewed. They make good use of the specialist services, including health

and the Early Years Additional Needs Lead Officer, to provide them with beneficial information and support.

Practitioners use the Welsh language suitably throughout the day, for example through counting and songs. They celebrate Welsh culture and traditions such as St David's Day.

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

Practitioners have a secure knowledge of child development and how children learn through play and exploration. They are developing a suitable understanding of the Curriculum for Wales and how it supports children's development and learning. They use their understanding of children's repeated patterns of behaviour to plan responsively and flexibly, taking account of children's interests and fascinations. Practitioners provide a calm environment that strongly supports children's natural curiosity. The opportunities for children to play for extended periods of time, and the extensive range of real-life resources within the environment that encourage children to take risks, explore and investigate, are a strength of the setting. These beneficial opportunities allow children to become confident explorers of their environment. Practitioners interact with children sensitively and remind them of the rules of the setting and how they should treat their friends.

Practitioners know their children well and regularly discuss how they can support their progress in learning. They use assessments and observations effectively to inform them of children's achievements and identify the activities and experiences that can further support their next steps in learning. They keep parents well informed through informal daily discussions, parent events and through the setting's online learning journal.

There are effective systems to support children with additional learning needs. Practitioners make useful observations of children's play and how they are making progress against their targets. They monitor progress against these targets regularly and use this information to inform specialist services about how well children are progressing.

Practitioners provide children with useful opportunities to develop their communication skills in their play. They are good language role models and use questions skilfully to spark children's thinking, for example prompting children to consider how they will make a roof when building a house from blocks in the outdoor area.

Practitioners plan a worthwhile range of activities that support children to develop their mark making skills, for example providing chalk boards and clip boards in the outdoor area. They develop children's mathematical skills appropriately through opportunities that occur naturally during their play. For example, they talk about the shapes of the blocks when playing in the block play area. The purchase of cameras, light boxes and metal detectors has had a positive effect on developing children's digital and communication skills.

There are beneficial opportunities for children to learn about Wales and its culture and traditions. They look at local Welsh artists and celebrate Shwmae Day and St David's Day where children dress in national costume and sing Welsh songs and rhymes. Practitioners use Welsh frequently in their interactions with children. They provide regular opportunities for children to join in singing Welsh songs and rhymes during carpet times. As a result, children's Welsh language skills are developing well.

Practitioners help children to develop a sense of awe and wonder through their explorations of artefacts and objects such as animal skulls and wooden masks. They take trips to their local parks and around their local area, which support children to develop a sense of belonging. They encourage children to discover and enjoy nature and to observe the signs of the seasons in their local environment.

Practitioners provide appropriate activities for children to learn about their own and other cultures, traditions, and celebrations, such as Diwali and Harvest. They provide an interesting range of resources and artefacts from around the world for children to investigate and explore. However, resources and experiences to develop children's understanding of equality and cultural differences are limited. As a result, practitioners do not provide children with sufficient opportunity to learn about their wider society and the diversity of Wales.

Environment:

Leaders have effective systems and procedures to ensure that the environment is safe and secure. Leaders and practitioners monitor entry to the building and all visitors sign in and out. They undertake thorough risk assessments for all areas of the setting, resources, and visits and these are reviewed regularly. Practitioners carry out daily safety checks for all areas used by children. Regular fire drills take place and staff ensure that children know how to leave the building safely.

Leaders have worked hard to provide an inviting, child-friendly and stimulating indoor environment that ignites children's curiosity. They use an effective balance of natural and man-made resources. Each of the playrooms is bright and well-organised, with clearly identified areas. Leaders have ensured that there is a level of consistency within the various playrooms to aid transition and develop a sense of belonging as children move through the setting. Practitioners provide a beneficial range of resources to engage children as they wait to enter the playrooms, for example a cosy book area where children can sit and share books with their parents and carers.

Leaders make good use of real-life furniture and resources and see this as central to their vision for the setting. Each room contains attractive, child-sized furniture, ornaments, real clothes and kitchen utensils. These resources effectively support children's imagination and curiosity and provide a valuable inspiration for role play. All resources are stored at a low-level, which allows children to access them independently. Leaders ensure that there are robust risk assessments for the use of the furniture and resources and that practitioners supervise their use well.

Children have regular access to an attractive, well-designed outdoor area, which is adjacent to the main building. It contains a suitable range of resources that offer further opportunities for learning and active play. For example, practitioners provide opportunities for children to grow plants and bulbs in containers.

Leadership and management:

Leaders work effectively to share their vision throughout the setting. It is based on developing curious children with a strong sense of belonging. They offer staff regular opportunities to review and reflect on how they are delivering this vision in their individual base rooms. This supports staff to gain a greater understanding of the ethos of the setting and their roles and responsibilities within it. Leaders have created a positive team ethos and, as a result, practitioners feel well supported and confident to come to them with ideas or to raise any concerns.

Leaders have created clear improvement processes, which identify accurately their strengths and areas for development and how they will address any areas requiring improvement. They make good use of grant funding and income streams to purchase resources to develop children's physical and problem-solving skills, for example improving the opportunities for water play in the indoor and outdoor environments. Leaders ensure that practitioners have access to beneficial professional learning opportunities. They encourage them to share their knowledge and expertise with others, for example sharing how to observe children's repeated patterns of behaviour in their play. As a result, practitioners provide a range of resources and make adaptations to the environment to better suit individual children's interests.

Leaders actively support practitioners to provide high quality care to children and their families. Leaders have a robust system for the safe recruitment of staff and ensure that they have the relevant qualification and experiences to fulfil their roles. They provide a good standard of induction, supervision and appraisal to effectively support practitioners and to help them reflect on their practice and monitor and identify training needs. The setting has a clear statement of purpose that provides an accurate picture of what it has to offer, and leaders ensure that a suitable range of relevant policies and procedures are in place.

Leaders develop strong relationships with their parents. They ask for parental feedback through a range of worthwhile activities. The parent committee panel effectively supports leaders to identify what is working well in the setting and suggest areas for improvement. Leaders take note of these findings along with the outcomes of regular parental questionnaires and children's feedback to identify their next development priorities.

The setting works well with a range of partners to support children's health, learning and well-being. For example, it works effectively with its feeder primary schools to ensure that children have a smooth transition into school. There is a strong relationship with the local authority early years advisory teacher and leaders respond positively to recommendations for improvement.

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)

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