



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

A report on

Busy Bodies Playgroup

**Babington Centre
Trellech
Monmouth
NP25 4PA**

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Busy Bodies Playgroup

Name of setting	Busy Bodies Playgroup
Category of care provided	Full Day care
Registered person(s)	N/A
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Natasha Wilson
Person in charge	Alexa Williams, Lisa Harris, Natasha Wilson
Number of places	24
Age range of children	2 to 4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	9
Number of children who receive funding for early education	9
Opening days / times	9.15am and 3.15pm Monday to Thursday and 9.15am until 1.15pm on Friday during term time.
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	No
Date of previous CIW inspection	02/02/2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection	03/02/2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	19/06/2024
<p>Busy Bodies Playgroup is a pack away setting, which means that the practitioners must clear resources from the hall when it is being used by other community groups.</p>	

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Well-being	Excellent
Learning (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Excellent
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)	Excellent
Environment	Excellent
Leadership and management	Excellent

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Formalise appraisals and supervisions for all practitioners

What happens next

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

CIW and Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a case study on its work in relation to creating a rich and stimulating reading environment, for dissemination on their websites.

Main findings

Well-being: Excellent

Nearly all children have an extremely strong voice at the setting and are confident in expressing themselves. They make informed choices and decisions about what they do and how they spend their time. Nearly all children are eager to express themselves and follow their interests and ideas independently. For example, children work excitedly on experimenting and developing their ideas when designing a potion from items bought for them by practitioners following a shopping list they'd made the previous day.

Children feel happy and valued because they know that practitioners treat them with respect and actively listen to what they have to say. They cope well when separating from parents and carers and build warm and stable relationships with practitioners and peers. Children laugh, chatter and show confidence when expressing themselves, communicating through gestures and speech effectively. They show a strong sense of safety and security within the setting. Children enjoy browsing the individual books that celebrate their experiences and achievements and sharing these with their families. Children refer to their family photographs displayed in the setting and a few talk maturely about their home life, which helps them develop a strong sense of belonging.

Children interact exceptionally well. They have many opportunities to practise and develop their social skills. For example, they co-operate effectively to build large structures with super-sized magnetic tiles. This gives them the opportunity to practice team-work and problem solve collaboratively with their friends. Children are learning to share and readily follow practitioners' instructions, showing delight when they receive praise or when their efforts are acknowledged. Children are happy to explore and play on their own and show great self-sufficiency without the need for practitioner interventions.

Children explore their environment enthusiastically and with great interest. They move confidently between activities and develop good levels of concentration and engagement. They show huge amounts of joy and imagination during their play. For example, when watering the bare ground, they inform practitioners that they are 'making flowers' watering poppies and bluebells. They show great pride in their work and display good levels of self-esteem and resilience.

Children self-register when they arrive at the setting, help prepare their fruits and pour their own drinks at snack time. They manage their personal needs and develop good hygiene habits. This helps them to develop their independent skills well. Their growing confidence and self-reliance supports them to transition into school with greater ease and a readiness to continue their learning.

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

Nearly all children, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make excellent progress from their starting points during their time at the setting. They develop strong communication skills and form excellent social relationships with their peers and adults alike. Nearly all children take turns, share resources and co-operate with each other well. They have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and their behaviour is exemplary, resulting in a calm and purposeful environment.

Many children speak confidently with all members of the setting and welcome visitors warmly. As they develop, they use extended vocabulary naturally in conversation, such as when explaining that there are no apples on a tree because the blossom must come first. Many children ask sensible questions and initiate many conversations independently, particularly when showing a keen interest in nature and gardening activities, or when cooking. A very few children with developing vocabulary communicate successfully using basic words and gestures.

Nearly all children are confident in asking practitioners for help when they need a hand with a task. Most children listen attentively to each other and to practitioners. They carry out instructions from adults respectfully such as washing their hands appropriately or waiting safely by a gate. They listen and respond extremely maturely to their peers. Nearly all children engage proactively with each other, developing their problem-solving skills as they build constructions imaginatively or solve problems such as how best to wash their bikes. Nearly all children remain engaged in their play for extended periods and confidently choose where they would like to play and what resources they would like to use.

During their time at the setting, nearly all children develop a genuine love of books. This is a notable feature of the setting. They open books readily, handle them correctly, and turn the pages thoughtfully. A few snuggle down independently to enjoy the experience of reading, referring intelligently to the pictures and illustrations. They read from memory or paraphrase passages accurately. Most share their books with friends and enjoy sitting with adults to discuss the contents. Many refer to books regularly and fetch them to illustrate a point or remember a particular fact, for example when talking to adults about tractors and their properties.

Nearly all children enjoy mark making for a variety of purposes. They use the wide range of different mediums around the setting creatively. Most children's emerging writing skills are developing to a high standard. They explore and practise their skills by experimenting with different forms of mark making with increasing control. Many show an understanding of the meaning of their marks and the purpose of writing, such as writing the ingredients for cooking a range of recipes.

Nearly all children's Welsh skills are developing well. They understand basic Welsh words and phrases. They show an interest in learning new words and a few use the Welsh language spontaneously to count to 10 or refer to different colours. Most

children respond appropriately to Welsh instructions such as when asked to wash their hands.

Nearly all children's mathematical skills are developing well. They use mathematical language in line with their stage of development successfully to explain and explore the world around them. Many confidently use balancing scales to weigh and compare objects and use a small spirit level to confirm when they think the scales balance correctly. When harvesting from the garden, many compare their vegetables and compete to see who had the biggest plant, reasoning that one bean plant may have been longer but another had more leaves. Nearly all children count independently during their play without practitioners' support, with a few counting to 20 successfully. They identify and tessellate 2D shapes correctly when building an aeroplane out of boards and a few discuss basic 3D shapes when playing. Nearly all begin to develop an understanding of capacity as they experiment with pouring sand and water into different sized containers.

Nearly all children develop strong digital skills and use a range of resources such as cameras, an overhead projector and digital scales with minimal support from practitioners. They have a growing understanding of how digital equipment affects their lives and can help them communicate with others or discover information, such as when interrogating a voice activated device in the setting.

Nearly all children's physical skills are developing effectively. They participate energetically in physical activities daily, both indoors and outdoors. They use large play equipment as well as small tools and mark making resources with increasing dexterity to improve their fine and gross motor skills. A few invent their own games and physical challenges, such as throwing bean bags to dislodge balls balancing on cones.

Care and development: Excellent

Practitioners place children's health, safety and development at the centre of their practice. They have an excellent understanding of the settings procedures and why they are important. They implement them effectively resulting in positive outcomes for children's overall well-being. They understand their responsibilities to protect children and know what to do if they have any concerns about children or colleagues. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Practitioners record accidents, incidents and administration of medications thoroughly and ensure that they share this information with parents. They know children's individual needs well and follow safe practices managing any allergies or intolerances. They supervise children extremely well and record their own, children's and visitors' attendance accurately and consistently. Practitioners know what to do in an emergency as they practise and record regular fire evacuation drills. Practitioners follow good hygiene procedures in relation to food preparation and nappy changing. They offer healthy food options at snack-time and ensure that children have access to water to remain hydrated. They support children's personal hygiene habits well and encourage children to wash their hands after using the toilet or after their nappy has been changed. This forms an excellent grounding for

establishing good hygiene practices for children. Practitioners promote healthy lifestyle choices and provide many opportunities to be physically active both inside and outside.

Practitioners are nurturing, kind and develop genuine relationships with the children. They know children's individual needs well. They ensure that all children are welcomed, included and celebrated. They agree strategies to support children's development and all practitioner's implement these kindly and consistently so that children are clear about expectations for their own behaviour. Children are taught to self-regulate and are given lots of praise for their efforts and achievements. They interact with children in a way that creates an extremely supportive and calm environment where children can flourish, and their self-esteem is nurtured. Practitioners are excellent role models.

Practitioners use careful observations of children's interests to identify future exciting and stimulating opportunities and experiences. They assess and observe children, completing thorough records to support children's development. Practitioners enhance children's interest in nature, and encourage their sense of awe at the world around them, for example providing real life opportunities to study close up the life cycle of butterflies, and the habitats and diet of hedgehogs.

Practitioners meet the needs of all children, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), very successfully. The provision for children with ALN is a strength of the setting and as result they make excellent progress from their starting points.

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

Practitioners have an excellent understanding of child development and of how children learn. They understand the importance of learning through play and following children's interests. Practitioners have high expectations of all children and know their individual strengths and needs. They provide a rich variety of high-quality learning experiences that they match skilfully to children's fascinations and stages of development through an exceptionally well-planned learning environment. For example, practitioners developed an exciting construction and digging area in the outside environment in response to noticing a few children's interests and patterns of repetitive play. As a result, all children benefit from a fresh, stimulating learning environment that develops their creative, problem-solving and physical skills extremely successfully. Practitioners listen well to children's thoughts and ideas. They pay close attention to every individual, and they analyse simple, child-friendly questionnaires that are sent home for parents and carers to discuss with their children. Practitioners ensure that the majority of activities and experiences are based on children's interests and are child initiated. For example, they arrange for a parent to bring their tractor to the setting's car park for the children to see up close, in a safe environment. This allows children to have a clear voice in what they learn.

Practitioners are excellent language role models. They provide children with valuable opportunities to develop their communication skills through the use of mature and

extended vocabulary, appropriate to their stages of development. As a result, many children talk confidently with adults, expressing their thoughts and ideas considerately and clearly.

Practitioners create an environment and an ethos that instils a love of books in nearly all children. This is a notable strength of the setting. Practitioners encourage and inspire a joy of reading for pleasure and information with a wide range of books in nearly all areas of the setting. Books are chosen deliberately to reflect children's fascinations, to be inclusive, and to reflect the families and community in the setting and beyond. The recent addition of a reading shed in the outdoor area allows children to learn more about nature as their curiosity about the world around them takes hold. Practitioners showcase excellent reading behaviours, choosing books to help answer queries from children, and displaying a genuine enjoyment of reading. They sit patiently with children, pouring over books time and again, responding to all their questions and comments. This has impacted positively on nearly all children's prereading skills and also on their sense of identity and belonging.

Practitioners provide interesting activities and resources that help to develop children's early mathematical skills successfully. They ensure that children have access to and know how to use a range of equipment such as weighing scales, tape measures and measuring jugs with a developing level of accuracy. They carefully blend these activities into opportunities to develop a range of skills.

Practitioners use highly effective observations and assessments to identify where children require support or challenge. They play alongside children patiently and use purposeful interactions to extend children's learning, knowing when to stand back and observe and when to intervene to develop children's skills.

They plan an interesting and varied curriculum and surround children in a world of awe and wonder that ignites their curiosity and inspires them to learn. For example, the introduction of a solar powered fountain created valuable opportunities for children to learn about light and shade and how they can control digital equipment. Practitioners provide worthwhile opportunities for children to explore and use resources at their disposal freely and without any preconceived outcomes. Practitioners demonstrate excellent questioning skills, which encourage children to extend their ideas, knowledge and understanding through stimulating learning opportunities. Practitioners ensure a good balance of activities indoors and outdoors, allowing children to choose where and when to play, despite the physical limitations of the building that prevent children from being able to move freely from one area to another.

Practitioners interact skilfully and support children effectively to make purposeful choices that enhance their play. For example they provide binoculars and magnifying glasses for children to use when searching for aeroplanes, birds or mini beasts in the outdoors. They encourage children to ask questions, make observations and learn useful facts, such as when they unexpectedly encounter a hedgehog in the outdoor area.

Practitioners ensure that Welsh is used throughout sessions. They encourage children to use simple words and phrases during group activities such as singing songs, asking questions in Welsh and counting to 10. Practitioners promote children's social, moral, cultural, and spiritual development well. They regularly provide purposeful opportunities for children to learn about and celebrate festivals and cultures from around the world. They display post cards from family members on a world map and provide a range of books and resources to aid this process. They intervene sensitively when appropriate to remind a very few children of the need to take turns, and as a result children treat each other with respect and friendship, which creates a caring and compassionate ethos throughout the setting.

Practitioners make very good use of the local community to enhance children's learning, such as visiting local farms to pick blackberries or taking part in intergenerational coffee mornings in the church hall. Practitioners support regular opportunities to involve children's families in activities with parents visiting the setting regularly to cook or show interesting artefacts such as honey from bee hives. Regular discussions with parents provide staff with a better understanding of their child's strengths and areas of development. As a result, practitioners make strong links with children's homes that supports them to make strong progress during their time at the setting.

Environment: Excellent

Leaders are highly motivated and dedicated to providing a safe, stimulating learning environment for all children. They implement effective risk assessments and constantly monitor and evaluate the play space eliminating risks to ensure that areas effectively meet children's needs and interests. This encourages children to experiment and take risks. For example, practitioners have aided children to create raised walkways with crates and boards to develop their independence and also their physical skills in the outdoor area.

Practitioners ensure that the environment is well maintained, and all required safety checks are completed appropriately. All visitors are greeted and signed in, and practitioners oversee the safe handover of children. Practitioners complete registers so that they know who is in the building and are clear about the children they are responsible for.

Leaders give due consideration to all aspects of the environment and, as a result, they provide warm, welcoming spaces that make children feel safe and inspire their curiosity and imagination. Staff anticipate children's needs very well and accommodate their wishes in a timely manner, for example when children indicate that they would like to play in the outdoor area. Toileting facilities are easily accessible, which promotes children's increasing independence.

Practitioners have developed a well-resourced outdoor play space, containing sheltered areas and continuous play provision. This provides creative zones that spark children's imagination and encourage them to investigate freely and learn for themselves. Leaders and practitioners work extremely hard in the pack away setting

to set up and organise the environment before children arrive and ensure that there is no negative impact upon children's experiences resulting from the temporary nature of the service.

Leaders have a clear vision for the environment and use feedback from children to support this vision. The resources and equipment are of a high standard and ensure that the environment is child focused. Communication between leaders, practitioners and children is excellent, and constant evaluation of activities and resources ensures that children remain engaged and stimulated by the rich learning environment they access. Leaders ensured that practitioners and children had their ideas included in the design of their new nursery building. They walk to the perimeter of the building site regularly to see the progress on the new building, enthusing the children with the building process and preparing them effectively for their transition.

Leadership and management: Excellent

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting and are passionate about providing quality education and childcare for all children. They have high expectations and lead by example. They provide outstanding leadership, which has a direct impact on practitioners and the progress children make at the setting. They create and maintain an exceptional team ethic, where staff feel valued. They set clear aims and objectives for the setting that are focused on children's needs and are understood and implemented by all practitioners. Leaders complete formal staff appraisals and supervisions with nearly all practitioners. They invest extensively in their staff through regular training that is based on the setting's priorities and practitioners' individual needs. This impacts positively on children's progress.

Processes for evaluating the setting's strengths and areas for development are comprehensive and very effective. Leaders evaluate all aspects of the setting and ensure that practitioners have a clear voice in the process through regular formal and informal activities. All staff reflect continuously on what is working well and how they can improve provision. This has resulted in a highly effective environment for developing children's communication skills. They encourage parents to discuss the setting and its activities with their children at home, and feedback to the staff on a prepared form. As a result, all practitioners have a clear understanding of what they are doing well and what needs to improve. They know their children exceptionally well. They make decisions about provision based on the impact it will have on children. They monitor what they do and adjust accordingly. For example, leaders evaluated their transition arrangements with the local primary school and realised it was an area that could be improved since COVID-19 restrictions came to an end. They attended transition training and arranged for more visits from the school's teacher to the setting, and for the children to visit the school. As a result, the transition process is more robust, children are better prepared for the school environment that awaits them, and school staff get to know their new intake better.

Leaders have established strong links with a range of partners. They work closely with the local authority early years advisory teacher to improve provision and support children's learning. They work closely with the local school through activities such as

using their exercise track and attending different services. They have nurtured extremely strong links with parents, and they appreciate the time that practitioners are willing to spend discussing any issues and updating them on their child's progress before or after a session. Parents are also invited into the setting on a termly basis to discuss their child's progress. Another successful aspect of the strong links with parents are the volunteers that attend to introduce different skills such as baking, sewing or gardening activities.

Leaders make effective use of the grant funding available to them to support and improve provision for children. They ensure that the setting is well resourced with quality equipment. For example, leaders purchased a good quality shed for the outside area that has been developed into a rich reading environment that enhances the reading experience for all children and helps develop their early reading skills.

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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