



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

A report on

**Rocking Horse Day Nursery
21 Main Road
Broughton
Flintshire
CH4 0NP**

Date of inspection: February 2019

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Rocking Horse Day Nursery

Name of setting	Rocking Horse Day Nursery
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Evelyn Aindow
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Not applicable
Person in charge	Evelyn Aindow
Number of places	70
Age range of children	4 months to 11 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	11
Number of children funded for up to five terms	0
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 7.30am – 6.00pm (except for Bank Holidays)
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	18/04/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection	01/07/2014
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	12/02/2019
Additional information	
<p>A very few children at the setting speak English as an additional language. There is a before and after school club that caters for children aged 4 to 11 years old.</p>	

Summary

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

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve arrangements at snack and meal times to support children's wellbeing, independence and skill development effectively
- R2 Ensure that all children make good progress in developing their skills, particularly in numeracy, across all areas of learning
- R3 Develop effective systems for observing and recording children's development throughout the setting, to ensure that all children progress well
- R4 Improve foundation phase planning to provide engaging and purposeful opportunities for children to learn through a good balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities
- R5 Make purposeful use of the outdoors to support all children's wellbeing and skills development
- R6 Develop and implement effective strategies to identify priorities and bring about sustained improvements that focus clearly on outcomes for children

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn and CIW will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Wellbeing: Adequate

Most children make confident choices about where to play and which resources to use. However, their choices are sometimes limited because activities, such as messy play, are not always easily accessible. Most children speak confidently and express their needs and preferences well. However, these are not always met in a timely manner, particularly at meal times. Older children do not have enough opportunities to express their ideas for themes and topics.

Most children cope with separation from their parents and settle well. Nearly all form close relationships with their carers and seek extra comfort and support easily. Most children form friendships appropriately and older children are keen to help the younger ones. For example, they push each other around on the ride-on toys outside and involve younger ones in their ball games. Most children feel valued and are confident to approach practitioners if they are unhappy about something. However, children who are unsettled or unhappy are not always comforted by a consistent practitioner.

Most children learn to manage their behaviour effectively and respond positively to appropriate intervention from practitioners. Most children share resources, negotiate, take turns and follow direction from practitioners well, such as going to wash their hands or putting on their coats to go outside. Nearly all older children develop a sense of right and wrong and become sensitive to the feeling of others. They comply with their 'golden rules' and enjoy social occasions such as meal times.

Most children enjoy the activities provided, such as dancing along to music enthusiastically and having fun on the slides outside. Most children sustain their interest for an appropriate length of time and persevere suitably. Most gain a sense of achievement from what they do and are eager to share their successes with other adults, such as when they manage to squeeze dough through a tube or create images with chalk. However, not all younger children enjoy mealtimes and a few become upset or disengaged at times.

Many children are becoming increasingly independent. For example, they manage to eat their meals by themselves, and take off their shoes indoors, with appropriate support from practitioners when required. They are developing their confidence well. For example, older children are keen to talk to visitors about what they have enjoyed doing. However, older children do not practise pouring their own drinks, serving themselves or preparing their own snacks often enough. A minority of children are unable to hang up their coats or access their washrooms independently. Many children develop their social skills well. For example, older children sit and enjoy meal and snack times together around a table with practitioners who support their

conversations and interactions well. However, younger children do not develop their social skills well enough. Most children follow their own interests appropriately. For example, older children particularly like to get out the construction resources or play football outside. However, they do not always have consistently good opportunities to do this.

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

Nearly all children make appropriate progress over time, particularly in developing their speaking and listening, fine motor and personal and social skills. However, not all children develop their knowledge, understanding and skills well enough in activities.

Most children develop good speaking and listening skills. Nearly all communicate with each other and adults confidently using simple sentences. More able children talk clearly, such as to describe the 'wiggly, wiggly worm' they make with dough. Most children join in singing familiar songs enthusiastically. They listen well during group times and respond appropriately to questions, for instance when talking about the weather. Most children listen carefully to stories and respond appropriately. For example, they thoroughly enjoy joining in with phrases that appear regularly in a story. Most understand that print has meaning and nearly all recognise symbols on their coat pegs effectively. Nearly all children make marks confidently, such as using water to draw shapes outside. A few more able children scribble a note about pancakes in the kitchen.

Most children develop appropriate numeracy skills. They learn to match pictures accurately while playing a board game and experiment with full and empty in the water tray. More able children count confidently to at least ten when asked. However, few children use mathematical language appropriately, such as to count or refer to size and shape naturally in their play. In general, they do not make good enough progress in developing their understanding of mathematical concepts over time.

Most children develop appropriate information and communication technology (ICT) skills. They use a digital camera confidently and control a simple remote control car effectively. Through responding to practitioners' questioning, most children develop their thinking skills well. However, their ability to persevere and solve problems is less well developed.

A majority of children develop their creative skills well, such as when they follow their own interests to model a house or in the dough. Through regular practice, most develop strong fine motor skills. For example, they use scissors confidently and skilfully. Nearly all children enjoy physical activities and, when they have the opportunity, they develop their skills well. For example, they move to music with good control, jump confidently and walk on tiptoes.

During group sessions, nearly all children join in with simple Welsh songs readily, and greet each other with 'bore da'. They learn a few Welsh words while listening to stories about Ticw the bear and repeat these confidently. However, in general, children's use of Welsh in their play is at a very early stage of development.

Nearly all children develop strong personal and social skills. For example, they play alongside each other well and learn to share and take turns effectively.

Care and development: Adequate

The setting has effective child protection procedures and practitioners understand these well. Practitioners provide appropriately for children with allergies and specific health needs and they follow procedures for administering medication successfully. There are suitable opportunities for many children to take part in physical activity during the day and, in general, practitioners encourage children to have a healthy diet. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements in nearly all respects. However, practitioners do not all follow appropriate hygiene procedures well enough at meal times. Overall, children do not have enough opportunities to play outside, take part in physical activities, or make choices at snack times.

Practitioners manage children's behaviour consistently and suitably in line with the setting's behaviour management policy. They praise desired behaviour regularly and use simple and clear explanations when children need encouragement to follow the setting's rules, share or take turns.

Practitioners know children's individual routines and preferences well and follow these appropriately. For example, babies and younger children sleep according to their own routine and in a way they are accustomed to. When in their base rooms or outside with the children, practitioners provide responsive and nurturing care, offering cuddles and comfort if children are upset or in need of extra support. However, practitioners do not always respond quickly and effectively enough to meet children's needs, particularly when younger children are eating their meals.

Practitioners treat children fairly and provide them with equal access to resources and activities. However, they do not always promote children's dignity and privacy well enough. For example, practitioners do not always provide enough privacy for children when they use their washrooms or have their personal needs attended to. During lunch times, practitioners sometimes sit with their backs to the younger children or feed them while standing up.

Practitioners working with older children are beginning to use observations to consider their next steps and start to track their progress to promote their development appropriately. However, in general, practitioners across the setting do not assess and record children's achievements well enough to enable them to plan meaningful activities that help them progress effectively. Practitioners communicate appropriately with children to support their language development and extend their

learning. They talk to them while they play and ask suitable questions. This supports children learning English as an additional language particularly well. However, they do not use routines, such as snack times, well enough to extend children's learning effectively. For example, they do not always provide enough opportunities for children to count or sing nursery rhymes. Practitioners do not provide enough opportunities for children to hear and use Welsh throughout the day.

Practitioners ensure most children follow their own interests within the activities provided for them. However, they do not always provide sufficient opportunities or resources to allow children to develop their play and pursue their own ideas well enough. Children have regular opportunities to choose from a suitable range of activities set out by practitioners. However, in general, older children do not have enough opportunities to determine the content of their play and follow their own ideas and interests.

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

Practitioners work together to plan suitable learning experiences that support children appropriately to develop relevant skills, particularly speaking, listening and communication skills. They provide suitable activities that children enjoy, such as engaging stories and opportunities to move to lively music. However, these do not motivate children fully or support them well enough to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding progressively. In general, practitioners do not provide sufficient well thought out focused tasks to develop children's learning systematically or plan carefully to reinforce and embed their learning through activities they can choose for themselves.

The setting provides worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their language and fine motor skills. Practitioners focus well on supporting children to develop basic Welsh vocabulary during adult led sessions, and ensure that they can use simple ICT resources confidently. There are regular opportunities for children to develop numeracy skills, such as sorting and matching. However, in general, they do not co-ordinate this provision well enough to ensure that all children make the best progress. There are suitable opportunities for children to be active in the outdoor area. However, planning to develop children's skills systematically outdoors is at an early stage of development.

The setting supports children's social and moral development well. For example, practitioners play board games with children to help them learn to share and take turns effectively. Children have suitable opportunities to choose resources during the session and useful opportunities to develop their self-help skills, such as putting on their own coats and shoes. This helps them develop appropriately as independent learners. Through interesting visits such as to the nearby farm, children begin to develop a sense of awe and wonder, and an understanding of the world around them.

Nearly all practitioners work well together as a team so that the session runs smoothly. They are good language role models and intervene effectively and sensitively in children's play. For example, they frame questions skilfully to develop children's thinking skills. They understand child development well and are developing a suitable understanding of the requirements of the foundation phase. For example, they know that children learn through play and active involvement. However, practitioners do not use an effective range of strategies to support children to move from one activity to another, and they are just beginning to value the children's creative process rather than the end product.

Nearly all practitioners observe and assess children's progress regularly. They record children's achievements appropriately and keep examples of their work. This helps practitioners build a suitable picture of what children can do and provides an appropriate record of progress over time. The setting has identified that using this information to establish and plan for children's next steps is an area for development. Practitioners have recently begun using a colour-coded system in their planning to support this. However, it is too soon to judge the impact on children's standards.

Environment: Adequate

Leaders and practitioners cater for children's needs in a suitably safe, secure and clean environment. For example, they identify hazards appropriately, have suitable measures to mitigate any associated risks, and follow suitable cleaning rotas.

The nursery is bright, warm and welcoming and there is sufficient space to meet children's needs appropriately. There are suitable facilities for staff and appropriate arrangements to hold confidential conversations and store records securely. Practitioners set out resources in each base room suitably to allow children to find what they want independently and help them put things away at tidy up times. This provides relevant opportunities for children to develop their independence. However, the overall layout of the indoors does not promote children's independence well enough. For example, many children cannot access the outdoors freely or use their washrooms by themselves.

The setting provides an appropriate environment for play and learning. For example, the pre-school room includes an attractive role play kitchen and a well-stocked mark-making area for children to use. However, in general, play spaces do not always provide a sufficiently rich learning environment for children. For example, children do not have good enough opportunities to access creative play freely. Throughout the setting, there are suitable facilities for children to sleep and eat their meals comfortably. Within the setting as a whole, there are sufficient washroom facilities for the numbers of children. However, current arrangements mean that older children do not have access to an appropriate number of toilets. The washrooms downstairs and nappy changing arrangements do not allow children sufficient privacy.

Leaders provide a suitable range of learning resources indoors. These include interesting small world toys, construction equipment, and books. Practitioners ensure that these are clean and appropriately maintained. There is a spacious outside area with plenty of room for children to enjoy physical play. The setting provides suitable resources, such as attractive mark-making boards, a sand tray, slides and scooters that children enjoy using. However, in general, the resources available in the outdoors do not provide sufficient choice and challenge for children to develop their skills well enough. In most areas, the resources and furniture meet children's needs appropriately. These include a useful range of resources to help children sleep, such as cots, rocking chairs, and cushions, and sleep mats for toddlers. However, furniture is not always of a suitable size to meet all the children's needs, and practitioners do not always arrange furniture well enough to promote children's social skills. There is insufficient furniture for the number of older children attending the out of school club.

Leadership and management: Adequate

The setting leader is committed to providing good quality pre-school experiences for children. She values the staff and is very approachable. She leads by example, and is a strong presence in the nursery. This creates a tight knit and well-established team of practitioners who work together and support one another well. As a result, there is a welcoming and positive ethos in the setting. The setting leader delegates responsibility to room leaders appropriately and they have suitable aims and objectives to follow. There are appropriate procedures for communicating key messages with staff through written newsletters that all practitioners sign. The setting complies with regulations and meets the national minimum standards in most respects. However, the setting leader does not always ensure that practitioners are deployed effectively, such as at snack times, to meet children's needs fully, or that they follow appropriate hygiene procedures at all times. The statement of purpose provides an accurate picture of the setting.

The setting leader has developed appropriate processes to evaluate the work of the setting and involves all practitioners suitably in this. For example, all practitioners contributed suggestions to the most recent quality of care review in their room teams. However, the setting does not focus well enough on outcomes for children to identify the most important areas for improvement successfully. Practitioners work appropriately with the local authority link teacher to identify suitable priorities that have led to improvements in the education provision. These include improved opportunities for children to develop their mark-making skills. However, in general, the setting does not prioritise areas for improvement well enough, or involve all practitioners effectively in working towards achieving targets. Where improvements are made, the setting leader does not always succeed in sustaining these effectively, such as the development and use of the outdoor area. All practitioners benefit from annual appraisals that provide a suitable opportunity for them to share concerns and identify training needs. However, appraisals and supervision arrangements do not

support practitioners well enough to assess the quality of their performance, or work towards meeting the setting's improvement priorities.

The setting implements safe recruitment processes and defines practitioners' roles and responsibilities suitably. There are enough appropriately qualified and experienced practitioners to work with young children, and it has effective contingency plans to cover staff absence. However, leaders do not always focus well enough on meeting children's needs when deploying staff.

The setting works appropriately with parents to identify children's individual needs and preferences, and keeps parents suitably informed about their child's care and progress. The leader keeps up to-date with national initiatives, such as the childcare offer. There are useful opportunities for practitioners to benefit from attending regular foundation phase training and network events. However, in general, there are few other opportunities for professional development, including visits to other settings.

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

© Crown Copyright 2019: This report may be re used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 16/04/2019