



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

A report on

**The Owl & Pussycat Nursery
Church Street
Caerleon
Newport
NP18 1AW**

Date of inspection: November 2019

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About The Owl & Pussycat Nursery

Name of setting	The Owl and Pussycat Nursery
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Catherine Jones
Person in charge	Catherine Jones and Chloe Jeremiah
Number of places	19
Age range of children	6 months to 4 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	0 children
Number of children funded for up to five terms	5 children
Opening days / times	7.30am to 6.00pm 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 does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of children who use, or intend to use their service. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Date of previous CIW inspection	24/11/2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection	

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Dates of this inspection visit(s)	05/11/2019
Additional information Most children come from English speaking homes. There were no children identified as having additional learning needs.	

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	Good
Learning (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Judgement
Care and development	Good
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 Ensure that practitioners provide engaging and purposeful opportunities to challenge more able children appropriately
- R2 Improve planning to develop children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively
- R3 Strengthen self-evaluation procedures in order to prioritise and act upon areas for improvement

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

Most children express themselves clearly and with confidence. They decide which activities they want to participate in and choose resources independently. Babies use non-verbal cues appropriately to express their needs, for example by using gestures to communicate with practitioners to point at things of interest. Children interact well with practitioners during free play and during focused activities. Toddlers and pre-school children initiate conversations effectively and can describe which activities they enjoy. During circle time and story time, they confidently request which stories they would like practitioners to read to them and which activities they are interested in for that day.

Nearly all children are happy and familiar with the routines of the setting. They cope very well with separation from their parents at the beginning of the day. They settle down to play very quickly on arrival and respond well to the warm welcome and positive reassurances from practitioners. For example, one or two babies were momentarily unsettled at various points during the day, but responded very positively to the reassurance and comfort given by practitioners. Nearly all children are relaxed and form strong bonds of attachments with practitioners who care for them. Children feel comfortable in the company of practitioners and engage in warm conversations with them during free play and at meal times.

Nearly all children co-operate, take turns and share with others in line with their age and stage of development. They are respectful towards one another and practitioners and cope well with change and the routines in the setting. They respect resources and enjoy helping to tidy away toys. Children take turns well when using large play equipment and share toys and resources successfully with others.

Nearly all children enjoy their free play and actively engage in the activities available to them. They gain a sense of achievement from what they do and respond positively to the praise they receive from practitioners. For example, babies enjoy exploring their environment and selecting their own toys and toddlers participate enthusiastically in a dance and movement activity, smiling broadly and imitating the movements of practitioners.

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

There is no report on learning because there were not enough three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection, who do not receive funded education elsewhere, who can be reported on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Good

The setting has effective systems in place to keep children safe and healthy. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Nearly all practitioners have a good understanding of these procedures and systems are in place to ensure that they receive up-to-date child protection training. The setting has clear routines in place with regard to infection control including appropriate practice in relation to intimate care, hand washing and food preparation. Practitioners implement safe and effective procedures for the administration of medicine and the transfer of babies from the mezzanine level to the ground floor. They display the evacuation procedure in every room and are clear of their role in ensuring children's safety in the event of a fire. The setting's policies and procedures promote healthy lifestyles well and meals are sufficiently varied and nutritious. There is a clear process for recording children's specific dietary requirements and key information on allergens in food products.

Practitioners implement with the setting's behaviour management policy successfully. They set realistic boundaries in line with the age and stage of development and ensure that children understand them. Practitioners act as good role models and consistently use praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem.

Practitioners promote children's general development effectively. They are responsive to children's individual needs and treat them with kindness and sensitivity, which fosters a warm and caring atmosphere in the setting. They recognise the importance of outdoor play and fresh air in their provision. Practitioners take children out into the outdoor area regularly which helps them to learn to take turns, share with each other and develop appropriate physical skills. Practitioners positively engage with children to promote their play and learning effectively, for example when sitting down with them at their level to engage in conversations and to ask purposeful questions about their play and learning. However, they do not always take advantage of opportunities to further extend children's thinking and problem solving skills through purposeful questioning. Practitioners plan effectively to promote diversity and different cultures including religious festivals and special events such as Diwali and Eid al-Fitr.

At the time of the inspection there were no children with special educational needs attending the setting. However, the setting has robust procedures in place to identify early and plan effectively for children's needs, for example by liaising with external agencies for specialist advice to ensure the best outcomes for all children.

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

Practitioners plan a worthwhile range of learning experiences that engage most children successfully. Learning activities reflect the foundation phase ethos effectively across all areas of learning. Practitioners provide useful opportunities for

children to make choices and learn through independent play well. They include the voice of the children in the planning process by following their interests skilfully. For example, practitioners provide wooden blocks for making 'hedgehog homes' after the children expressed enjoyment at making hedgehog-shaped bread. Practitioners plan a range of valuable opportunities to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills. When speaking to children, they use a wide range of vocabulary well and engage children in conversations about their learning and play skilfully, for example when discussing different sounds that fireworks make. They provide opportunities for children to count successfully, for example when counting pompoms into a pot using tweezers. Practitioners make appropriate links to developing mathematical skills and vocabulary, such as 'more', 'less' and 'enough' bowls and cups at snack time.

All practitioners have established strong working relationships with children and make good use of praise and encouragement to enhance learning and wellbeing. Through a comprehensive range of beneficial learning experiences, practitioners promote children's social, moral, and spiritual development effectively. They encourage children to take turns with resources for example, when sharing dressing up clothes. Additionally, practitioners encourage a sense of awe and wonder successfully, for example when examining the habitats of woodlice. Practitioners plan effectively to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live, for example by making diva lamps and setting up a role play activity to celebrate Diwali. As a result of these learning experiences, children learn to co-operate and share resources, showing care and compassion to each other successfully.

The setting provides a satisfactory range of ICT resources that children enjoy using such as remote control cars and toy phones. However, practitioners do not always make the most of opportunities to ensure that children develop their ICT skills appropriately and systematically.

Practitioners model the Welsh language consistently well and provide effective opportunities for children to develop their Welsh language skills successfully. They encourage children to use Welsh naturally in their communications, for example when talking about their favourite colours. Practitioners provide meaningful opportunities for children to learn about their Welsh culture, for example by wearing traditional costume and painting pictures of daffodils and Welsh flags as part of their St David's Day celebrations.

The setting makes effective use of the local community to support learning by visiting local places of interest and inviting visitors to talk to the children. For example, children regularly visit the local residential care home for the elderly and recently made and enjoyed eating soup together. Regular visits to the nearby community gardens, in addition to the local shops, reinforce children's awareness of their local area successfully.

Practitioners use a systematic approach to ensure that foundation phase skills are taught. Practitioners record observations of children's learning regularly and methodically. They record their achievements as 'learning stories', which provide a worthwhile and informative profile of children's progress during their time at the nursery. However, practitioners do not always use information from assessments effectively to challenge the more able children to improve their mathematical or literacy skills. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress, such as through the parents' blog on the setting's website, and they receive a written report before children transfer to school.

Environment: Good

Leaders have effective systems in place to ensure that the setting's environment is safe and secure and includes an electronic door entry system. The building is a converted chapel with ground floor facilities and a mezzanine level where the baby room is located. It is well maintained, clean and in good decorative order. Practitioners check the identification of visitors on arrival at the setting. There are suitable procedures in place to ensure safety checks are completed in a timely manner and records indicate up to date gas, electrical and fire checks. Unnecessary risks are identified and resolved where possible through the daily safety checks by practitioners.

The setting is welcoming and provides a child friendly environment, which is conducive to good quality play and learning. As a small nursery, space is at a premium, but leaders ensure that play rooms are thoughtfully designed and meet the needs of the children. Most resources are easily accessible and stored in clear boxes, allowing children independence when selecting toys and equipment. There are purposeful areas for quieter activities as well as designated areas for messy play. Bathroom facilities are well appointed and facilities on the ground floor of the building allow children a good degree of independence. Rooms benefit from appropriate natural light and pre-school children have immediate access from their play room to the outdoor area. The outside space provides a variety of well-resourced areas for play and learning, including a planting area for the growing of herbs and vegetables and a useful canopy provides shelter in poor weather. The outdoor space can be utilised by children at all times.

Leaders ensure that children have access to a good supply of resources and equipment. Resources are age appropriate, clean and well maintained. Children benefit from good quality, suitably sized wooden tables and chairs and many good quality wooden play resources. The setting has a suitable range of resources including toys, play materials and books to develop children's understanding of diversity and the world around them. Practitioners ensure that there is a variety of Welsh signs, labels and books to enable children understand that they live in Wales and embrace their culture successfully. Practitioners provide natural materials to encourage children's curiosity, for example cones, stones and conkers. Practitioners

promote sustainability well. They encourage children to recycle materials and understand the need to cut down on wastage. For example, practitioners make paint dispensers out of used hand wash bottles.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have a strong vision for the setting based on providing high quality care for children. There is a positive, compassionate ethos throughout the setting and practitioners show sincere commitment to their roles. Leaders have established positive relationships with parents, practitioners and children and ensure that they feel genuinely valued and cared for. The setting establishes regular contact with parents through monthly newsletters, the carefully managed social media site and the parents' initial meeting. Both leaders share responsibilities for leading and managing the setting effectively and ensure that practitioners understand their roles successfully. As a result, the wellbeing of children and practitioners is consistently good. Practitioners have up-to-date job descriptions that specify their roles and responsibilities clearly and they have a good understanding of what is expected of them. The statement of purpose provides an accurate picture of what the setting offers and is reviewed regularly. There is a wide range of appropriate policies and procedures that support the work of the setting successfully.

Leaders have established appropriate self-evaluation systems and processes, which identify the setting's strengths. They observe practitioners in their work, discuss their wellbeing effectively and identify relevant training needs usefully. Leaders have identified suitable areas to develop, such as improving children's early mathematical and ICT skills. However, they do not prioritise areas for improvement or always act upon them and thus many targets are carried forward to the next year. As a result, the setting is slow to address important areas in a timely manner, such as developing the ICT skills of children and practitioners.

The leaders ensure that there is a sufficient number of practitioners working at the setting. All practitioners are well qualified and deployed effectively, making the best of their expertise. For example, leaders have employed a fluent Welsh speaker who has improved the quantity and quality of Welsh throughout the setting. Leaders ensure that they comply with safe, robust and timely recruitment processes for all new appointments. The initial induction process supports new practitioners well. Leaders implement helpful supervision and appraisal systems that encourage practitioners to reflect on their performance and identify areas for improvement. They support practitioners well and value their contributions, ensuring that they receive relevant training to develop their knowledge and skills. They support staff in their professional development so that they feel fully involved in the setting and in improving outcomes for children.

Leaders and practitioners work effectively with a range of partners and this contributes beneficially towards raising standards and promoting children's wellbeing.

The positive relationship between practitioners and families is a real strength. For example, leaders organise beneficial 'grandparent afternoons' for grandparents to observe and participate in new activities, including craft, with their grandchildren. The setting's open door policy ensures that parents are given regular opportunities to meet with practitioners to discuss any concerns at a very early stage.

The setting has a range of valuable and beneficial partnerships that have positive effects on provision and children's progress. The setting has strong links with the community and works successfully with other agencies to support children for example, Newport's Active Tots programme.

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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