



Childcare Inspection Report on

Ysgol Carreghofa Owlets

Carreghofa Primary School

**Llanymynech
SY22 6PA**



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Description of the service

Carreghofa Owlets is registered by CIW (Care Inspectorate Wales) to provide day care for up to 16 children from three to four years of age. The service is located in a classroom within Ysgol Carreghofa, Llanymynech, Powys. It has its own, easily accessible, outdoor play area and children also have use of the school's extensive grounds which includes a forest school on site. The group currently runs one session each day from 9:00 to 11:30, Monday to Friday and closes for holidays in line with Powys schools. The Responsible Individual (RI), is Claire Pritchard who has overall responsibility for the service on behalf of the committee. The Person in Charge is Elizabeth Williams (PIC) who manages the group on a day to day basis. The service does not provide the Welsh Language 'Active Offer'. This is predominantly an English language service. Welsh is introduced through songs, activities and incidental phrases. The service offers Early Entitlement provision.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Carreghofa Owlets promotes children's well-being and children enjoy themselves at this service. They are able to take part in lots of interesting activities both indoors and outside and are supported by very good resources. Children are able to influence their activities, make decisions about their play and are consequently very involved and happy. The atmosphere is fun and relaxed. Children have formed warm relationships with the staff, who are responsive and sensitive to their needs. There are positive relationships with parents who feel there are good communication systems in place. Leadership is effective to ensure that the service is well run and that the children are at the centre of the service. Staff are very enthusiastic about their roles and keen to further their professional development. There is an ethos of continuous evaluation and improvement to ensure experiences for children are positive.

2. Improvements

This is the first inspection of the service since registration.

3. Requirements and recommendations

The service is compliant with the regulations and so we have not made any requirements as a result of this inspection.

We made some recommendations in order to improve outcomes for children, and some with regard to updating the statement of purpose and the need to compile a Quality of Care review within 12 months of operating the service.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are familiar with the daily routines and most express their needs with ease. The sessions provide a very positive experience for children. They are able to build warm relationships with staff and are welcomed into the group. They can make choices about what they do and give their views about the activities they would like to experience. Consequently they are active, happy and involved. Children interact positively and are learning to be kind, take turns and share.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are able to communicate their needs and preferences and know they will be listened to.

Children were happy and settled. The sessions were structured so children could enjoy free play, balanced with circle times when they all come together. We saw that they could choose not to take part in these if they didn't want to; one child chose to pretend to be a 'taxi driver' and ride a trike outdoors instead and was supported by staff with this to create a chalk marked road to extend his enjoyment. Children could choose which activities they would like to do and could select toys and equipment from a very good range of resources. They were also able to relax and have some quiet time in the cosy book corner if they wished. During snack time children could choose from a range of fruits and select water or milk to drink. The group were developing more ways to obtain children's views about their activities in order to help ensure these were meeting the children's interests.

Children have a strong voice and their needs are known and considered during routines and planning

1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?

Children are familiar with the daily routines and approach staff with ease.

Children were happy and eager to take part in the activities. They were supported to settle into the group at their own pace enabling the children to develop a strong sense of security and forge good relationships with the staff. Throughout our visit we saw that children were given lots of attention and received smiles, praise and words of encouragement from staff. They are proud to show staff their "work" and keen to display their efforts for everyone to see. They confidently asked for help if they needed it. There are coat hooks for each child, photographs of them enjoying various activities and lots of their own work displayed. This helps them feel a sense of belonging and that they are valued.

Children feel secure and valued and are happy at the service.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact positively and are learning to be kind, take turns and share.

Children are learning to share, socialise, and consider each others feelings. They play together in pairs, small groups and on their own. They enjoy each other's company and create their own games and play. For example, we saw two children having fun together preparing for their parents, and extended family members tea party which was to be held at the service the next day. They made pretend cup cakes and cups of tea in the home corner together before the actual baking activity. Then they co operatively followed the lead of the PIC as she gently guided them through the stages to the completion of the baked cakes. We saw the children helping each other to put their aprons on and take turns with the activities. They enjoy social occasions such as snack time and are developing their understanding of manners. They respond well to instructions from staff and follow their lead with activities such as tidying up and washing their hands.

Children are able to manage their behaviour, enjoy friendships and respond positively to the staff.

1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?

Children enjoy the activities they choose to take part in.

Children are active and involved in their play. They enjoy exploring their environment and are eager to take part in activities. We saw them spending time on activities that interest them and are excited to try new things. They were fascinated with the "digital scales" and carefully took turns as they measured the ingredients for the baking activity and delighted at cracking the eggs to go into the mixture. We saw they loved going outside, particularly to have snack and explore and take part in activities in their outdoor area. They enjoyed the balance bikes and making sounds with the new outdoor "music area". The RI told us the children had loved the Gruffalo trail they set up for them in the school forest area recently and had thoroughly enjoyed their mini beast hunt.

We saw their excitement as the smell of the cakes cooking wafted outside, they clearly had great anticipation for the parents and extended family members tea party they were hosting the following day as they created their individual tissue paper flowers to decorate the tables. They keenly took part in circle time activities which included the "musical instruments" and were confident to contribute their ideas and join in with actions and songs.

Children are provided with enjoyable opportunities to develop their play and learning.

1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?

Children develop well, and learn good independent skills.

Children are encouraged to become independent and there is an emphasis on developing a range of self help skills such as using the toilet independently, hand washing, and putting on own coats and clothing. Resources are thoughtfully placed so children can easily find

what they need and coat hooks are at their height. They are developing good independence as they cut up their own fruit and pour their own drinks. A self registration system encourages children to take responsibility for themselves as well as learning to recognise and write their own name. Staff are on hand to assist when necessary. Children are able to learn because the activities are planned according to their interests and stage of development.

Children are able to develop a range of skills, including independence

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are well qualified, experienced and enthusiastic. They implement effective systems to assess children and design activities which will promote their development, whilst incorporating the children's ideas. Staff create good opportunities for children to develop a healthy lifestyle. They give warm and sensitive care and have consistent and realistic expectations of children. Good systems are in place to ensure that children with additional learning needs and children with a different first language receive suitable levels of support.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities to keeping children safe and healthy.

Children are kept safe and well because staff have a clear understanding of their role in protecting children and implement policies and activities to promote children's health. Staff are up to date with current child protection procedures because they have attended relevant training and are confident of the processes they would follow. Some of the staff have attended training in Prevent duty, which is new Government legislation designed to protect children from radicalisation; information on this has been included in the child protection policy. The group adheres to the Healthy and Sustainable Pre School Scheme which is a scheme designed to promote and protect all aspects of children's health. We saw children enjoyed healthy snacks of fruit with milk or water to drink. We recommended that staff ensure children can help themselves to water throughout the session. Staff are trained in food hygiene and so are able to follow appropriate procedures when preparing food. Good systems are in place to ensure that staff are aware of children with allergies. Children are reminded to wash their hands at appropriate times, which supports children to develop healthy habits. Outside play forms part of each session and children bring appropriate wet weather clothes so they can go outside even in inclement weather. Staff understand their roles around safely administering medication and an appropriate form is used to record any given. All staff are trained in paediatric first aid and the correct ratios of children to appropriately trained staff are maintained at each session. The accident book shows that staff use appropriate first aid following any minor accidents.

Staff keep children safe.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff effectively encourage and support appropriate behaviour.

Staff were good role models and promoted positive interactions. They communicated with the children, talking about their home lives, interests and activities they were taking part in. Staff celebrated and rewarded good behaviour and achievements by giving children lots of

praise and encouragement and high levels of interaction helping children stay involved and interested. Positive strategies such as “Helpwyr Heddiw” give children responsibilities and promote their self esteem. Acting as good role models, staff encouraged children to undertake tasks such as tidying up and sat with them for their snack to promote their social skills, supporting them with using manners , sharing the food and demonstrating expected behaviour.

Staff ensured there were plenty of opportunities for children to learn appropriate behaviour through sociable experiences.

Staff manage interactions well and are good role models for the children.

2.3 How well do practitioners promote children’s play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?

Staff understand child development and the needs of the children they care for.

Staff knew the children well and understood their developmental needs. Information was effectively shared by parents, which helped ensure staff knew the children’s routines, likes and dislikes before they started caring for them.

Staff chatted happily with the children, creating a relaxed atmosphere, helping the children to engage with activities. We read activity plans which showed staff understood the importance of play for the age range of children, for example, interesting experiences were planned across all areas of learning with clearly defined learning intentions. We saw adult focussed activities as well as plenty of opportunities for child initiated play. We saw a strong commitment to promoting physical play. Children had a range of opportunities to use, for example the outdoor areas to play games and ride scooters and trikes. They also have planned activity times in the forest school on site.

Staff provided a language rich environment with many opportunities to use and experience the Welsh language. For example, children answered the register, sang songs and were encouraged to say please and thank you in Welsh. It was evident that staff consistently promoted the Welsh language and ensured it was embedded into the children’s daily routine.

We saw staff recorded appropriate observations on children’s progress and development. We viewed children’s records which confirmed observations were relevant and recorded regularly. This enabled staff to track children’s progress and developmental milestones,, plan for next steps in learning and meet their individual needs.

Staff successfully promote children’s all round development and ensure they consistently meet children’s individual needs.

3. Environment

Summary

Leaders ensure they provide a safe environment that is well maintained. They provide suitable space for the children in a calm and welcoming atmosphere. Resources and equipment provided is of good quality. The lay out and range of resources, equipment and facilities allows children to make choices, follow their interests and develop their independence. These are suitable for the ages of the children and stored effectively to promote children's independence.

Our findings

3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?

Leaders ensure the environment is safe and secure, this could be improved further by ensuring additional locks are used on the children's out door play space.

Leaders ensured all visitors were authorised and signed on arrival and departure. The entrance was secure. Risk assessments were thorough and children are able to enjoy a safe and secure environment. General safety and maintenance checks for the building, including heating systems, are carried out by the school through Powys County Council. Risk assessments are robust and cover all areas of the service's operation including the outside areas, trips and specific activities. Thorough daily checks of the premises are carried out, with records kept of any issues so that any actions required to ensure children's safety take place promptly. Insurance certificates are up to date. Records demonstrate that evacuation drills are carried out on a regular basis. We noted that all play areas are clean and free from hazards. However, we noted that the gates to the children's play space had been used by school children to gain access to an outside area during the session; the RI confirmed this was a rare occurrence and agreed that in order to totally ensure children's safety simple locks will be used in order to keep this area secure during the operational times of the group.

Leaders work closely with the staff, the school and other professionals to ensure the environment is safe and well maintained.

3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?

The environment is welcoming and provides a calm atmosphere.

Leaders are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring the environment is suitable. The indoor play space is light, well organised and child friendly with plenty of room for children to move around freely. Areas are set out to create interesting and attractive spaces for the children and allow them to enjoy different types of play, such as role play, Information Technology activities, messy play and table top activities. A cosy book corner allows children areas space to relax and there is plenty of space for children to comfortably take part in whole group circle time activities. Resources are arranged so that children can

access them easily, promoting choice, decision making and independence. The washrooms are located so children can access them by themselves, which also helps promote their independence. There is a suitable outside area leading directly from the playroom which children can access freely. The group also makes good use of the extensive school grounds and school hall, both of which give the children the opportunity to take some risks in their play.

Leaders ensure the environment is suitable and inspiring to the children to help promote their play and learning.

3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?

Leaders provide suitable resources and equipment which promote independence and learning.

There is a wide range of age appropriate, good quality resources, furniture and equipment. The play resources promote children's learning and development and meet their needs and interests. They are clearly visible and easily accessible to the children, which encourages their decision making and promotes their self help skills. There are resources and a range of books to help promote children's understanding of the Welsh language and resources and books to help children learn about diversity, different religions and cultures.

Leaders ensure the resources and equipment are of good quality and suitable for the children.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The service is managed effectively with all policies and procedures up to date and implemented. However the statement of purpose needs to be amended to reflect the reduction of current opening times due to low numbers of children attending the service. Leaders make sure staff are suitably qualified and receive regular training which helps them provide good support and care to the children. Leaders are committed to evaluating the service and plan improvements which consider the views gained from parents, staff and children. Positive partnerships are developed with parents.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leaders have a clear vision for the service, which is shared with parents.

Leaders provide clear direction and promote effective teamwork. They have a sense of purpose and high expectations to promote improvement and good outcomes for children. For example, staff told us they enjoyed working at the service, leaders were approachable and listened to their ideas. This created a positive ethos whereby staff and leaders worked together and felt valued. We saw consistent child care practice and staff worked well as a team. Apart from the opening times which had not been amended, there was a clear, statement of purpose. All records were well organised, policies and procedures had been recently reviewed and reflected the service provided.

Leadership is strong and has a clear sense of purpose which results in good outcomes for children.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Leaders have an effective system to self- evaluate the service and plan for improvement.

Leaders are motivated to develop the service and there is a culture of continuous improvement. There are good systems in place for self evaluation and improving quality. The group had begun to undertake a self-evaluation and a plan was being drawn up with targets outlining areas for development. We advised leaders of the need to produce a Quality of Care report by 12 months of operating.

Leaders told us they are currently considering ways to more effectively capture the views of children. Parents views are welcomed and questionnaires used. Recent suggestions from parents to hold a parents' evening have been acknowledged and an evening to discuss their child's progress and show the sorts of activities their children enjoy has been planned for the very near future. Questionnaires from staff show that they feel their views are listened to and that the group strives to continually improve. A system of sharing information from staff training and ensuring information gained feeds into the development of the group is being set up. Staff work closely with their Early Years Advisor and take part

in programmes such as the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School scheme to help improve outcomes for children.

Leaders effectively draw on advice from other professionals and the views of parents and staff to evaluate the service and plan for improvement.

4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?

Leaders ensure staff are suitable to work at the service.

Management of the team and resources is good and the group runs smoothly and efficiently. Staff told us they feel well supported and their questionnaires show they enjoy being part of an “*effective team*”. They are keen to develop their professional skills and knowledge to help improve and develop their practice. Recruitment procedures are robust to ensure that staff are suitable to care for children. Staff told us that they found the supervision and appraisal system very helpful as it gives them opportunity to review their practice, offer positive comments, and identify any support needed or training required. A comprehensive induction system is in place which enables staff to feel confident in their roles.

There are effective procedures in place to support staff and assist with their development in order to ensure good outcomes for children.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Leaders effectively share information with parents.

The service has established partnerships with parents. Parents are invited to share their knowledge about their child before they start so that their child’s needs and preferences may be identified and appropriate plans to support them put in place. Parents receive a good range of information through notices, newsletters, social media and day- to- day contact with staff. Leaders and staff were approachable and communicated openly with parents at the beginning and end of the day. The group works with other professionals such as the Health Visitor and Early Years advisor and acts on the advice given to ensure children’s well being is promoted.

The nursery teacher visits the children in the group and the children take part in a number of planned transition visits. These activities give children confidence and help them make a smooth transition to full-time education.

Leaders ensure that partnerships with parents, the school and others benefit the children and have positive outcomes for them and their families.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Additional lock on the gates on children's outdoor play space ;
- to provide a jug of fresh water for children to help themselves to outside;
- up date the Statement of Purpose to reflect changes to the operating hours and
- to produce a Quality of Care report by 12 months of operating.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full, unannounced inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections.

One inspector visited the service on Wednesday 23rd May 2018 from 9.00 to 12.00

We:

- observed the children undertaking their activities and the care provided by the staff;
- looked at an extensive range of records and documents including staff files, accident records, policies and procedures, children's records and planning;
- inspected the premises, risk assessments and other documentation relating to safety measures and took account of the security measures in place;
- spoke with the RI, PiC / member of staff present during the inspection to obtain their views and clarify information about the running of the group and future plans and
- our findings were fed back to the RI and PiC present and all recommendations were discussed.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Responsible Individual	Claire Pritchard
Person in charge	Claire Pritchard Elizabeth Williams
Registered maximum number of places	16
Age range of children	3 and 4 year olds
Opening hours	9:00 – 11:30 Monday to Friday term time .
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is the first inspection
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	23 May 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	Yes
Does this service provide the 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 people/children who use the service. This is because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area. However, we recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government’s “More Than Just words” strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.
Additional Information:	