



Childcare Inspection Report on

Little Stars Pre-school - Clyro

**Clyro School
Hereford
HR3 5LE**



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Description of the service

Little Stars Pre school is based in Clyro and was registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in June 2018, to provide care for up to 19 children up to 12 years of age. The registered persons are Letitia Jones and Rebecca Golesworthy; both also take on the role as person in charge. The operational hours are Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 6:00pm term time only.

1. Overall assessment

Children really benefit from this service, which is thoughtfully planned and child-centred. Children settle quickly and enjoy a wide range of play and learning experiences that are tailored to meet their needs. Staff are nurturing, consistent, knowledgeable and there is exceptional teamwork. The environment is very safe, secure and well maintained. Children have free access to a wide range of good quality toys, materials and equipment to encourage them to play, explore and learn. The service is very well run. Leaders work in partnership with parents and other professionals in health and education to ensure that children's needs are identified and addressed appropriately so that they benefit from the service.

2. Improvements

None as first inspection since registration.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made one recommendation in relation to staff files which is detailed at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are very happy; they settle quickly and have opportunities to make decisions. They thoroughly enjoy their play and have an excellent choice of interesting activities that are designed to promote their development. Children experience very warm and caring relationships. They are learning to interact and to cooperate with each other and with staff.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are able to express their views and needs in a variety of ways and they are listened to.

Each child had a voice children were able to express their needs and preferences through verbalising their wishes. Each child had an individual play and development plan which was promoted throughout the session, with a mix of free play and focused tasks. We saw that children chose activities during free play sessions and they played alone or as part of a group in activities including singing songs, counting, playing with musical items, dinosaurs, using building blocks. Children also enjoyed playing with cars, dolls and plastic animals and playing with water. Children were heard asking for specific toys and their requests were met without delay. Children were actively involved in deciding what topic they followed.

Children have a significant voice at this service.

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

Children are familiar with their surroundings and the routines of the service which makes them happy and gives them a sense of security and belonging.

We saw that most children arrived happily at the service and they moved around with confidence and went to staff or their preferred play area. Each child had a keyworker who worked closely with them to help them settle in and get the most out of attending. Settling in was very much on the children's terms and parents were able to stay with their child and play alongside them until they were happy. There was a very relaxed atmosphere and we saw children playing independently and with others. Children approached staff readily for cuddles or assistance. Children had a sense of belonging because we saw children's work and photographs displayed in the playroom every child had their own dedicated coat hook, which gave them a good sense of belonging.

Children feel fully valued, safe and happy.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are learning the importance of sharing and turn taking.

Children played happily. Children were learning to co-operate and responded very well to praise. Children waited patiently at snack time and said 'please' and 'thank you'.

We did not see any disagreements or disputes during our visit and children were relaxed and happy.

Children interact well with each other and with staff.

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

Children are interested and excited in their play and learning.

Children were fully engaged across the age range during the inspection visit. We observed children enjoying adult-led activities and free play, such as outdoor play. We also saw children play with cars, dolls and jigsaws, water play and a number-recognition activity. Children laughed and had fun exploring in a range of natural materials for example water play and sand. The children showed great delight in playing with the dinosaurs with a staff member. There was also a lot of laughter and smiles throughout the pre school. Children were enthused and wanted to tell us about their experiences when at the pre school. Children were self-motivated and fully absorbed in their chosen free play both indoors and outdoors.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning.

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

Children are confident and motivated and are developing their individual skills.

Children were confident in choosing their play and developing their play independently, although they were also supported to extend their play by staff. Children had access to a rich and imaginative play environment. Toys, equipment and resources were arranged so that children could help themselves and routines and staff-led activities supported children's development. Most children were confident to choose their play and try new things. We saw that children enjoyed singing songs and they joined in eagerly with familiar responses, repeated phrases and actions. Children were developing their self-help skills; they were encouraged to wash and dry their hands without adult support. The children's development records evidenced that they were making excellent progress and developing new skills in line with set targets. Children fed themselves well using cutlery as was appropriate to their age. Children put on their own coats and wellies before going to play.

Children are developing well.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are very motivated, consistent and thorough in supporting children's development and in keeping them safe and healthy. Staff have an excellent understanding of the children's individual needs and work together effectively. They manage behaviour very well and provide a range of activities to enable children to play, learn and develop.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff follow a range of clear policies and procedures to keep children safe and healthy.

Staff are familiar with the service's policy on safeguarding and know what to do if they have any concerns about a child. Staff ensured that there was a great emphasis on healthy eating and outdoor activities. Children were offered water and healthy snacks through the day. Staff were aware of children's allergies and there was a record of these clearly displayed in the rooms and kitchen. Staff were seen using good hygiene practices, for example, we saw staff telling children about personal hygiene and safety; we saw all children washing hands before meals and after using the toilet without being prompted. Staff ensured that there were risk assessments for activities and outings to keep children as safe as possible.

Children's safety and health is a priority in this service.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff follow the pre school's behaviour management policy and are consistent in their approach. They are good role models; very calm and respectful to the children and each other.

Staff implemented a comprehensive positive behaviour policy which encouraged them to think about the reasons behind children's behaviour and their stage of development. We saw many examples of staff implementing this effectively throughout the pre school. We saw absolute consistency in the management of behaviour. Staff made good eye contact with the children and used calm voices to encourage and reinforce good behaviour. We heard lots of, '*Well done!*' and '*Give yourself a pat on the back!*' as they praised children's efforts and celebrated their achievements.

Staff are highly effective at managing children's interactions. They skilfully promote children's excellent behaviour, confidence, independence and positive relationships.

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

Staff are aware of children's individual needs and plan for the next stages in their play and learning.

Staff ensured that before children commenced at the pre school, the parents/carers completed a registration form for their children. The forms contained information including their child's routines, likes and dislikes which helped the staff to settle the children. Staff knew children well through daily observations and sharing information with other staff and parents.

Children's engagement and progress was recorded and staff had clearly identified their achievements and the next steps. Staff told us that activities were reviewed weekly to evaluate their effectiveness and then planned for the next month based on each child's individual needs. Keyworkers ensured that those needs were met. Planning included celebrations of different traditions and cultures of the world. Staff had ensured that there was a good balance between child-selected and staff-led activities, both indoors and outdoors. Staff enhanced Self-directed play by asking open ended questions to extend the children's understanding and experiences. Staff gave children time to pursue their interests but never left them playing in isolation and we saw very positive reinforcement from staff.

The Welsh language was promoted. Welsh-speaking children and parents were spoken to in Welsh; there were bilingual signs on displays around the pre school; we heard children singing a Welsh song and several children used Welsh words.

Staff are dedicated and enthusiastic in promoting children's play, learning and development. They comprehensively meet children's needs and provide them with exceptional learning opportunities.

3. Environment

Summary

Children are cared for in a safe, stimulating and imaginative play environment. They have free access to a very wide range of resources and an environment that is suited to their needs both indoors and outdoors. The environment is well maintained and continually developed to encourage exploration and learning.

Our findings

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

The leaders ensure that children are cared for in a safe, clean and secure environment and that unnecessary risks to children are identified and reduced or removed.

The pre school was secure from unauthorised visitors and there was a record of all visitors. All areas of the pre school and equipment and toys were very clean and we saw very good hygiene practices. We looked at risk assessments and saw that they were up to date and covered all areas of the pre school and activities inside and outside. Wellingtons and raincoats were provided for the children to use outdoors. We saw that there were annual tests for heating and electrical equipment and that regular fire drills had taken place.

Leaders have ensured that the pre school environment is as safe as possible.

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

The indoor and outdoor play areas are welcoming, well-decorated and provide a rich environment for learning. There is sufficient space and facilities to meet the needs of different age groups and individual children.

Leaders had made the outdoor play area a high priority and it was used as an integral part of the learning environment. A hard surfaced area was used for playing with wheeled toys. The environment was being continuously developed to suit children's interests. Leaders had ensured that the environment was bright and welcoming and that children's work and photographs were on display throughout the pre school which created a good sense of security and belonging.

Leaders effectively ensure the suitability of the environment.

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

Children have access to a wide range of clean and good quality furniture, equipment, toys and materials which fully meet their needs.

Leaders had ensured that children of different ages had access to resources and equipment that suited their interests and developmental needs. Children at the pre school offered a balance of good quality ready-made play equipment alongside items specially developed by staff for sorting, matching and discussion. The toys and equipment were clean and good quality.

Leaders ensure that all children can access a wide range of good quality resources and equipment.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The leadership at the service is highly effective and provides clear direction. Leaders thoroughly plan and review the service provided and they fully involve parents, staff and other partners. Staff are very well trained and they receive regular supervision and appraisals to improve their skills and knowledge. There are excellent partnerships with parents and professionals which enhance the well-being of children

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leaders have a clear vision for the service and set clear and relevant policies and procedures that are focused on children's needs. The PIC creates a very positive ethos where children, parents and staff feel valued.

We found that the service was very well run. The PIC was very clear about the aims of the service and was a very visible presence in the pre school. Staff engaged with children, parents, staff and health professionals throughout the day. She was very open and approachable and she reinforced good practice by celebrating successes and achievements with staff as well as being an excellent role model. Staff welcomed the PIC's support and advice and children were relaxed and at ease in her presence. The PIC regularly reviewed the service information, policies and procedures. The statement of purpose accurately reflected the service and the policies we looked at showed a clear understanding of best practice for children with additional needs. Staff told us that new policies and guidance were discussed in regular meetings and during staff supervisions so that everyone understood what was expected. The systems to monitor the development of children were very effective.

Leaders are highly motivated and extremely effective.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Leaders ensure that there is ongoing review and development of the service including the views of children, parents, staff and other professionals.

Leaders had ensured that staff used the foundation phase outcomes to monitor the development of children and plan next steps and review the success of pre school programmes each week. We saw that staff worked very well together as a team, they shared good practice and were very open to ideas for improvement. Leaders had encouraged staff from other services to visit and see the pre school at work.

There is excellent continuous self-evaluation and thorough planning for improvement.

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

Leaders ensure that staff are well supported; that they are clear about their roles and responsibilities and those resources are sufficient and suitable.

Leaders used staff and resources effectively and that they worked alongside staff and other professionals to meet the children's needs. Staff and they confirmed that they had received a good induction and that the PIC gave them regular feedback on their performance, which helped them to work more productively. We saw that the leaders deployed staff effectively to meet the children's needs as well as to promote their job satisfaction. For example, staff took turns for cleaning, food preparation and snack supervision and they had responsibility for different areas in the playroom. Staff worked well together and said that they learned from each other. Leaders followed safe recruitment processes but all documents aren't always readily available as they were kept at another service. The PIC ensured that staff received regular supervision and an annual appraisal of their practice and training needs. Training records showed that the leaders had provided all the required training for staff as well as specialised training to meet the needs of individual children.

Leaders manage staff and other resources extremely successfully.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The Pic works with parents to identify children's needs and to keep them informed about their children's progress and well-being. She involves parents in making decisions about their children's care.

We saw that the Pic had collected detailed information from parents about children's needs, preferences and routines before they attended the pre school and was available to talk to parents each day. Parents were informed about the service, activities and events in a variety of ways including a website and newsletter. We saw clear systems to review children's progress regularly and parents were kept fully informed and invited to contribute and add more information regular reports of children's progress are sent home.

The leaders of this service have established excellent partnerships with parents.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Areas of non compliance identified at this inspection

None

5.3 Recommendations for improvement

We recommended that;

- all staff files are readily available during inspection.

6. How we undertook this inspection

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

- One inspector visited the service on 14 March 2019;
- we spoke to children, parents/carers, staff, and the pre school PIC;
- we observed children and staff in all areas of the pre school and in the playground, and
- we looked at a sample of documentation and policies including staff files, registers, children's development records, the statement of purpose, policies and procedures and the service's quality of care review report;

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
Registered Person	Rebecca Golesworthy Letitia Jones
Person in charge	Rebecca Golesworthy Letitia Jones
Registered maximum number of places	19
Age range of children	2-12 years
Opening hours	8am – 6pm, term time
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	none
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	14 March 2019
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 is working towards providing the 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language.
Additional Information:	