



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Blaenllechau Youth Project**

**The Welfare Hall  
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Blaenllechau  
Ferndale  
CF43 4NP**



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## **Description of the service**

Blaenllechau Youth Project is a registered charity, and is run by the committee of Blaenllechau Youth Project. The responsible individual on behalf of the charity is Kathryn Razey, and the person in charge with day to day responsibility for the running of the scheme is Julie Crotty. It is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to provide care for up to 30 children under the age of 12 years. It is an open access provision, which means that children can arrive or leave at any time. The project is open during most school holidays, excluding bank holidays. The main language of the service is English and they operate from 10am to 12 mid day, Monday to Friday during most of the school holidays, and 4pm to 5:30pm Monday to Thursday during term time.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children are very busy and thoroughly engaged in their play at this service. They are offered good play opportunities in an indoor and outdoor environment. Staff are caring and they promote children's care very well. Some minor issues were identified in relation to some aspects of the environment and the leadership and management of the service.

### **2. Improvements**

As a result of the inspection visit, the person in charge has:

- Purchased cereal bars for alternative snacks;
- Placed Welsh signs around the hall, for example on the toilets;
- confirmed staff are using more Welsh language;
- confirmed that the service does not need to register with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO);
- ensured staff are aware of Prevent Duty guidance
- added to the child protection policy the action taken if there is an allegation against the responsible individual, or the person in charge;
- produced a anti bullying policy and
- provided CIW with her qualifications.

### **3. Requirements and recommendations**

We notified the responsible individual that they were not compliant with the regulation in relation to:

The statement of purpose. This is because it did not accurately reflect the service provided. We did not issue a non compliance on this occasion, as it did not adversely impact on the well-being of the children

We made a number of recommendations and these are listed at the back of the report.

# 1. Well-being

## Summary

Children are very content and busy at this open access scheme. They have good opportunities to develop their individual skills through exciting and interesting activities. They interact well with each other and with staff and they are confident that their voices will be listened to.

## Our findings

### 1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children have frequent opportunities to make choices and they can be confident that they will be listened to.

A child's parents had made a comment that their child *"likes having the independence to walk home"*, as the children had free choice to come and go as they pleased. They chose what they wanted to play with, both indoors and outdoors. Children were encouraged to partake in a structured activity of an indoor obstacle race; however, some children chose not to join in. They asked staff if they could do painting, and this was promptly given to them. Children had free access to water and squash, and were able to purchase items from the 'tuck' shop. When a child wanted to paint their clay item they had made the day before, they were enabled to do so.

Children have a strong voice.

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

Children are relaxed and content. They have bonds of affection with the staff.

Children told us *"I like playing with my friends"* and *"I like playing on the mats"*, when we asked them what they liked doing at the play scheme. Children were very content when playing and they approached the staff with confidence when they wanted help or wanted to show them something, for example, when they could not reach to put the parachute over the mats to make a den. Children chatted to staff, and told us that some of them also worked in their school.

Children feel very safe, happy and valued.

### 1.3 How well do children interact?

Children play well together and show thought for others. They listen to staff and cooperate.

We saw a number of examples during our visits of children playing together happily and cooperatively in pairs and small groups. For example, two children were playing snooker, and when another child approached, they all took turns with the cue. Older children played well with the younger children. We saw an older child giving a 'piggy back' to a younger child around the hall. Children had lots of good humoured banter with staff, and they said, "please" and "thank you," sometimes with prompting.

Children interact well.

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

Children are engaged and interested in their play.

Children were very busy, engaged in free play and focused activities during our visit. They were all very enthusiastic when playing hide and seek and when playing 'rock, paper, scissors'. A child proudly showed us his clay model that he had made the day before, and told us he was going to paint it, ready to take home. Children had access to a Wii, where they played games on the TV screen, and they told us about their 'sports day' where they had been given medals.

Children really enjoy their play and learning.

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

Children have many and varied experiences to help them develop their individual skills. They are confident to use a good range of media and materials and do things for themselves.

Children engaged in a good range of freely chosen and adult-led activities. For example, they developed their creative skills using the clay and paints. They developed thinking skills by playing 'rock, paper, scissors', and hide and seek, and had opportunities to use gross motor skills by engaging in the assault course, and outside play. Children confidently helped themselves to drinks at times and used the toilets independently. Children's parents had made comments such as "*Thank you for improving my child's social skills*". Children could arrive or leave the scheme at any time, and this was made clear to parents.

Children develop and learn very well and they have good opportunities to be independent.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

Staff are knowledgeable and caring and they use positive behaviour strategies. They support children effectively to develop their individual skills. They keep children safe; however, they do not always promote a healthy lifestyle for children.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

Staff understand and follow procedures to keep children safe. They provide healthy activities, but do not encourage healthy eating for children.

Staff had all completed child protection training a few years ago, and two members of staff were scheduled onto a course at the end of September. Staff provided an appropriate response when we asked a hypothetical safeguarding scenario, which showed they would act appropriately if an issue arose. Staff had all completed First Aid at Work training, which had an element of first aid for children. They provided appropriate care when children hurt themselves and fully completed accident records. Although the records were not signed by the parents due to the children walking home on their own, a photocopy of the accident record was sent home with the child. On occasion, staff had tried to contact parents/carers by telephone, if the accident was more serious. Food was not provided by the scheme. However, a tuck shop sold chocolate and crisps. On discussion, the person in charge told us they had tried selling the children fruit, but this had been unsuccessful. Staff provided water and squash for the children. Staff ensured that outdoor play was an integral part of the child's time at the open access scheme. They took the children to play outside for a significant part of our visits. However, some areas of the outside had sheer drops, such as at the elevated side area, and below the front railings. The mirrors in the bathrooms were not safety mirrors and had not been covered in protective film.

Overall, staff keep children safe and provide healthy activities.

#### **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

Staff manage behaviour in a positive manner.

Staff gave all of the children individual positive attention. They praised the children for their behaviour and their efforts, saying for example, "Good try" when a child tried the 'paper, rocks, scissors' game with them. The children's behaviour was good overall; we did see a member of staff reminding a child who had run up the steps to the broken school gate that they were not allowed to go up there.

Staff manage interactions very well.

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

Staff monitor children's play, and plan activities according to the age group attending. However as this is a short session, the main emphasis is allowing free play.

Staff regularly asked the children what they would like to do, and sometimes gave them suggestions, such as playing 'hide and seek' and going outside. Staff chatted constantly to children, and were able to meet their needs. For example, staff explained how to play a game, using words the younger child would understand. Staff promoted some multicultural celebrations, and we were told how the children wrote their name in Chinese to celebrate Chinese New Year. One parents who had completed an evaluation questionnaire stated that '*I think it is very good for them to go somewhere in the holidays.*' We did not hear the staff using words from the Welsh language; however, we were informed that some staff had previously had Welsh training.

Staff promote children's play and support their learning. They meet their individual needs well.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

Leaders provide a welcoming environment for children that has been laid out and sufficiently resourced to provide interesting play opportunities for children. Leaders have some processes in place to ensure that the environment is safe overall. However, the ceiling was leaking in part, and some of the inside and outside areas had not been risk assessed.

#### **Our findings**

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

Providers identify some risks in the environment and take action to minimise or eliminate them in most areas.

Providers had completed some detailed risk assessments for the indoor area including art and craft activities, and sporting activities, which were reviewed in August 2018. However, the side raised play area and railing to the front had not been risk assessed, and posed a potential risk to children playing on them. There was evidence of up to date Portable Appliance Testing for electrical equipment, and the heating. Leaders ensured that they practised regular fire drills, including when new members attended and they kept a detailed record of these. The roof was leaking in one area, which the leaders were in the process of addressing. The premises allowed the children free access to arrive and leave at anytime, and therefore the entrance doors were not locked. However, there was only one entrance, and staff were visible at all times.

Leaders ensure that most of the environment is safe overall.

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

Leaders provide a suitable environment for children.

The environment, both indoors and outdoors provided ample space for the children to be active. Indoors, the leaders had set the room out into some designated areas where children could use the table and chairs for desk top activities, and comfortable chairs for children to relax or play games on the television. There was ample space for the children to move between activities freely and they were able to wander inside and out. We saw children playing games in the centre of the room, such as hide and seek, and an obstacle course. Resources were stored within a storage cupboard, and although not accessible to children, they were given any resources requested. Leaders provided a small grassed area to the side of the building, where children had planted flowers, and decorated CD's to hang from the small tree. There was also a concreted area to the front where the children liked to play. The building had one female and one male toilet and wash hand basins.



Overall, leaders provide an adequate environment.

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

Leaders provide varied resources for children to play.

Leaders provided resources that were very suitable for the age range and stages of development of the children who attended. These included games, construction blocks and sports accessories such as hoops and balls, which could be used inside or out. Arts and crafts were plentiful including paints and clay, for which appropriate tables and seating was used. A stack of mats was used for different purposes by the children who used them to make a den during our visit.

Leaders provide satisfactory resources and equipment.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

Leaders have established very good relationships with parents to meet children's needs. They have established a suitable process for reviewing and identifying targets for improvement for the service. They provide some of the relevant information in the statement of purpose and policies and they have certain procedures in place for the recruitment and induction of staff. However, some improvements are needed in this area.

### **Our findings**

#### **4.1 How effective is leadership?**

Leaders provide some of the relevant information about the service in their statement of purpose and policies.

Leaders had a statement of purpose, which contained minimal information in accordance with regulations and national minimum standards. It did not include the current hours of operation, which had resulted in a failed inspection visit, the staff, routines and numbers of children registered for. We read a sample of policies for the service and these were mostly suitable, and had been reviewed recently. However, the behaviour policy did not include specific details on managing bullying, and a confidentiality policy was not available. The safeguarding policy did not have the action to take if there was an allegation against the responsible individual, or person in charge, and had no procedure for staff to follow, if a situation arose. The person in charge was not familiar with Prevent Duty guidance regarding who to seek advice from if she had concerns about radicalisation. The person in charge provided us with an up to date certificate of employers' liability insurance.

Leadership is appropriate.

#### **4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?**

Leaders evaluate the service and set targets for improvement.

Leaders had sought the views of children and parents as part of their review of the quality of care. They wrote a detailed quality of care report based on this, which included review forms from parents and children given out six times a year, however these were not dated. Leaders ensured young people's thoughts were captured through interactive evaluation. This included writing or drawing their favourite things to do in play scheme on 'leaves' and sticking them onto the 'evaluation' tree. This would then be considered by the local authority to plan the next scheme.

Self evaluation and planning for improvement is effective.

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

Leaders have some systems in place for induction and appraisal of staff. However, regulations and national minimum standards are not fully met in all areas of the recruitment of staff.

We checked a sample of staff files and found that most of the documentation in relation to recruitment checks was available. However, one staff file was missing proof of identity and the medical declaration of health was not dated, one file did not have a photograph, proof of identity, and one reference was not signed. The responsible individual assured us that she would take action to put this in place as soon as possible. Leaders had conducted basic annual staff appraisals, and staff had completed supervision evaluation forms. Leaders had established a system to ensure that there was the correct ratio of staff caring for the children; however, as this was an open access scheme, and as the children could come and go, they were inevitably overstaffed at times. Leaders ensured staff were positioned effectively, depending on whether the children wished to play inside or outside. We noted that times of children's arrival and departure were recorded however, staff times were not.

Some improvement is needed in relation to the recruitment of staff.

#### **4.4 How effective are partnerships?**

Leaders and staff work with parents to meet children's needs and they provide information to parents about the service. They establish partnerships with other providers and agencies.

We checked a sample of children's records and found that leaders had sought all of the relevant information about children's personal details and needs from parents. They provided updated information for parents about the service in a leaflet. Leaders told us they had 'Family Engagement Groups' where families can come with the children to do arts and crafts, and Communities for Work Plus provided some of the training for the staff. Leaders told us that there was a minimal fee for each session; however, no child would be turned away. Parents said that the scheme allowed them do cleaning/shopping, enabled them to work, and allowed them to spend quality time with younger siblings.

Partnerships are very effective.

## **5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection**

### **5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections**

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

- Ensure that staff files are audited to ensure all information is available;
- risk assess the mirrors in the toilets, the outside elevated area and front railings;
- produce a confidentiality policy;
- provide a procedure to follow if staff have any safeguarding concerns, including contacting social services and
- when policies are next reviewed change CSSIW to CIW and that the service is now inspected three yearly.

## **6. How we undertook this inspection**

This was a scheduled full inspection. A failed visit was made on 23 August 2018. One inspector visited the service on 24 August 2018 for approximately three hours. We:

- inspected a sample of documentation and policies;
- observed practice and the care being provided by staff;
- spoke with some children, staff and the person in charge and
- gave feedback to the registered person by telephone on 3 September 2018.

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

[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Open Access Play Provision
Responsible Individual	Kathryn Razey
Person in charge	Julie Crotty
Registered maximum number of places	30
Age range of children	5 – 14 years
Opening hours	10am – 12 mid day, Monday to Friday during most of the school holidays, and 4pm – 5:30pm on Monday.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	14 August 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	24 August 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years' education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	No
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, or intend to use their service. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's More 'Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Additional Information:	