



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Childcare Inspection Report on

Meithrinfa Blagur Haf Caergeiliog

**Ysgol Caergeiliog Foundation School
Lon Bach
Caergeiliog
LL65 3NP**

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



Date of Publication

16 May 2018

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2018.

You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.

Description of the service

Meithrinfa Blagur Haf is located on the site of ysgol gynradd Caergeiliog and is registered to provide care for up to 57 children up the age of 4. Children are cared for in groups' dependant on their ages.

- The newly renovated building is open Monday to Friday 7.30 am- 6.00 pm throughout the year. 15 places are available to children aged between six months and two years old.
- Playgroup sessions are offered in two adjoining classrooms on the school grounds. 16 places are available to children between the ages of two and half and three and a half year old. There are two sessions available for this age group; 9.00 am -11.30 am & 1.00p.m -3.30p.m. Monday to Friday.
- 26 places are available to children aged three and a half and four years old. This session is available between 9.00a.m - 3.30p.m.

The service at present does not implement the 'Active Offer' in relation to the Welsh language. The registered person is Lindsea Roberts and the person in charge is Melissa Connah.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children attending are happy and settled. They benefit from the routine, and enjoy spending time with staff and each other. All children have ample opportunities to take part in well planned, interesting and varied activities. Staff are eager and dedicated to providing children with positive experiences which they will benefit from. They are enthusiastic in their role and ensure they get to know the children well. The environment is effectively organised and leaders provide stimulating resources which enrich children's experiences. Leaders are experienced and lead the service well. They strive to work in partnership with parents and actively promote good outcomes for children.

2. Improvements

Since the last inspection the service has increased the number of children that can be cared for and extended the opening hours. A purpose built full day care unit for younger children and babies has been introduced. The new provision offers all day care as well as wrap around care for children attending the play group sessions.

The service has recently attended training to implement the 'design to smile' initiative to promote good oral health for the children.

Leaders have started working towards Welsh Governments healthy sustainable schools award.

Since the inspection leaders have provided us with an updated statement of purpose and updated medical consent forms.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made some recommendations in regards to Leadership and Management. These were in relation to record keeping and providing additional resources for the children.

1. Well-being

Summary

The children who attend Meithrinfa Blagur Haf are happy and content to spend time in each other's company and with the staff who care for them. They are active and busy, exploring their environment and take part in activities which promote their learning and development. They are provided with opportunities to complete tasks independently and confidently make appropriate decisions about how they spend their time.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children make their own decisions and are encouraged to influence and take control of what they do.

The children were confident and comfortable to engage in activities of interest to them. We saw some choosing to play with pasta whilst others made marks with chalk. Children had a wealth of interesting and fun activities to choose from, some adult led and others where children could follow their own interest. For example, we saw a child approaching the adult led painting activity, but was then heard confidently telling staff, 'I'll come and do that in a bit, I'm just going to do this first' and then approached the water play area. The child was engrossed in collecting all the letters from the water using the nets available.

The children are aware of the choices that are available to them and they make appropriate decisions.

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

Children have settled well and cope with being apart from their parents.

Children attending the sessions we observed were happy and pleased to be there; some even reluctant to leave when it was time to go home. Babies attending for their settling in sessions were offered consistent care enabling them to feel secure in their new surroundings. They were seen to grow in confidence during the day and as a result of the quality interactions they experienced they were able to enjoy what was going on around them. The children have developed relationships with each other and with the staff. They were all content to play with each other and eager to include others in the activities that were taking place. Children are developing close bonds and friendships and show enjoyment in the things they do.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are beginning to understand their feelings and are sensitive to the emotions of others.

Children were considerate and kind towards each other. Children of all ages played alongside each other well and shared the resources available to them. Younger children shared the farm animals whilst they played in the messy play room. Children were encouraged to extend their play and were provided with pasta, bowls and spoons to facilitate them to do this. One child was seen enjoying filling up his bowl and then tipping the pasta before starting all over again, other children laughed and there was a sense that they knew each other well. Older children showed kindness towards younger children and they were eager to spend time with each other and non-verbal cues were responded to. For example we saw a child who had only recently started happy and smiling when he was able to sit with the older children at the table rather than in the high chair he was initially sat in. We saw a group of children share the Easter resources available and they all chose together which story they would hear before going home. During meal times children were heard politely asking staff for what they wanted and said please and thank you frequently. Children are polite and use good manners. They are beginning to understand the emotions of others and always show kindness and respect.

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

Children take part in activities they enjoy.

Children were interested in what was available to them and benefited from the wealth of activities. Children jumped up and down when they heard what the selection of activities available for the them to choose from was. A child later came to show us how they had successfully decorated a bunny, very proud of all the glitter he had used and, the amount on his clothes. Children enjoyed using the dressing up items in the themed corner and spoke enthusiastically about what they were doing. A child who wanted to wear a princess dress was supported to do so by staff. After snack time children ran to the story corner and excitedly waited for the story 'puss in boots' to be read to them.

Children participate well and are eager to talk about what they are doing.

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

Children are confident and independent.

Children were enabled, and were seen, to confidently follow their own interests. They made appropriate decisions as to how they spent their time. For example, one child was overwhelmingly happy with their achievement in finding all the hidden numbers out in the garden, with no support from staff. When returning indoors the child grinned from ear to ear and confidently told staff and other children how well she/he had done. Later in the day when the weather had improved some of the children went out to play; one child preferred to stay indoors and eagerly joined a staff member in imaginary play pretending to bake birthday cakes. A helper for the day was nominated in each room and a badge was worn by the chosen child. The children were committed and dedicated to ensuring they completed the tasks allocated to the best of their ability. We saw them helping to clear the

tables and use the dustpan and brush to clear the floor, giving them a sense of pride, responsibility and ownership over their environment, as well as a sense of achievement when the task had been completed.

Children are gaining a sense of pride and building on their self-esteem. They make good progress, are confident to complete tasks for themselves, try new things.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Overall, staff are confident and familiar with their duties and responsibilities regarding promoting children's well-being and safety. They know the children well and treat them with respect. The staff plan activities and endeavour to ensure that they have a positive impact on the child's learning.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff promote children's health but some changes are required to ensure staff always follow correct procedures.

Staff are experienced and familiar with their roles. Staff had been provided with regular opportunities to discuss any concerns they may have about a child's wellbeing and we saw evidence of how staff strived to provide appropriate support to children to enable them to reach their full potential.

We found the record keeping of accident and incidents to be inconsistent. There was no clear process being followed and some records seen were incomplete. This was discussed with the registered person. We found there was no clear record of how information had been shared with parents; we were informed that usual practice would be to contact parents by phone. We recommended that a record should be made when a telephone conversation had taken place to provide a clear account of when information had been shared and a signature obtained if possible.

The majority of the staff had attended training in paediatric first aid and staff shared with us the process that was followed when giving a child medication. The medication was appropriately stored and labelled; however, we found that staff and parents did not sign to confirm when medication had been administered to their child. Leaders implemented changes immediately after the inspection and introduced new forms to record clearly when medication had been given and this was then signed by staff and parents. Fire drills had been held on a regular basis to ensure staff were totally proficient in the processes to be followed if the building needed to be evacuated quickly. Staff supported children to spend time outside in the fresh air, enabling them to be physically active. The school chef and kitchen staff provided healthy freshly cooked meals and followed a weekly menu available to parents. Food that was transported to the new building was checked to ensure it was at the correct temperature before it was served to the children.

Staff successfully promote a healthy lifestyle and strive for good outcomes for children.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The staff are kind and gentle towards the children.

There was obviously a close bond between the staff and the children in their care. Staff responded to children in a caring and considerate manner. For example, we heard staff taking the time to talk to children about matters that were important to them and they shared their achievements. Staff made expectations of behaviour clear and routine was given top priority. The staff and children knew how the day was arranged and this meant the day flowed well with children and staff moving effortlessly from one activity to another. For example, whilst the children enjoyed their lunch we heard a child asking, is it ok for me to eat the jelly now, I have finished all my lunch. Staff congratulated the children for eating all their food. We later saw one child proudly showing his empty bowl to those around him. Staff did not always respond appropriately with challenging situations when they were unfamiliar with children's individual preferences and this led to staff failing to congratulate some children for their achievements. This was discussed with the registered person and person in charge and we recommended additional support be offered to staff during meal times.

On the whole, staff are approachable and sensitive to the children's needs. They ensure that the children receive information about what is expected of them.

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

Staff plan a variety of play and learning activities which enable children to develop a range of skills.

Staff and individual room leaders ensured themes and activities had been well planned and evaluation forms were regularly completed and used to plan for future activities. Learning corners were interesting and reflected the current theme, for example, there were Easter themed activities available as well as activities linked to the transport theme. We saw children being supported to create their own number plates in keeping with the transport theme. The new unit staff were in the process of working on their new wall display and they encouraged children to choose whether they wanted to complete the painting activity. The person in charge had detailed personal information about the individual children in her care and this was very evident in how she responded to children and how she also supported staff to fulfil their roles well.

The key worker system was effectively implemented and we saw that individual files were kept for all children recording their achievements and identifying the next steps for the child's learning. Staff effectively implement the foundation phase curriculum. For example multi media resources were used to support children with recognising numbers and counting skills and children enjoyed the opportunity of using the interactive white board

when selecting the correct answer to the questions. Staff supported children to draw their names in the sand.

Staff successfully promote children's development and provide them with positive learning experiences.

3. Environment

Summary

Leaders ensure the environment is well maintained and purposeful for the needs of the children. Hazards are identified and completed risk assessments minimise the risks posed to children. Leaders ensure children have access to a range of toys and resources that are of good quality and are suitable for their ages.

Our findings

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

Leaders and staff ensure the environment is safe, clean and secure. Unnecessary risks to children are identified and as far as possible eliminated.

We saw that the environment, as far as possible, was free from risks to staff and children. Detailed risk assessments were updated annually by the leaders, and staff were responsible for completing daily risk assessments. We saw evidence to show that the whole environment is inspected before the children used any of the play areas. The leaders had ensured that the children were safe whilst they were having their nappies changed, by using a strap to secure them, and we saw that the staff used this proficiently. The door was kept locked at all times, and access closely monitored by staff with a record kept of visitors who had accessed the building. The neighbouring school takes responsibility for cleaning the areas used daily; with staff also taking responsibility for specific cleaning tasks during the day.

The leaders ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities regarding the children's safety and well-being.

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

The buildings and the play areas are welcoming and comfortable.

All rooms used attract the children's interest and stimulate them to explore their environment. The new building used by the younger children provided them with different areas of interest; they could explore safely and take part in specific activities in the additional adjacent room. For example, we saw them enjoying some messy play with foam and appropriate toys in this area. Weather permitting the children have easy access to a large outdoor play area which is fitted with soft flooring to reduce the risk of injury. At present resources are limited here, however this had been identified as an area for future developments. We recommended leaders should consider introducing resources that would offer a varied and rich experience of play, such as opportunities for water play or

climbing. The two main classrooms used by the morning and afternoon play group sessions have been laid out to reflect the ages of the children and the themes being followed. Leaders ensured children's made good use of all the areas available to them and allowed for busier times to be interspersed with quieter times to relax and reflect. For example, some children chose to be busy creating shapes, whilst others went to choose a book in the reading corner and relaxed amongst the cushions. There was enough variety to keep the children occupied, and without them getting in each other's way. All the children had opportunities to play outdoors, due to the recent wet weather, older children returned inside quite muddy and staff told us that they had to supervise where the children had access to. We recommended that leaders could consider making waterproof clothing available for the children to use. This would allow them freedom and full use of the outside play area without concern for their clothing or footwear.

The leaders provide an environment that has been well designed. They ensure that there is enough space to meet the needs of all the children.

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

Leaders ensure children have access to furniture equipment, toys and materials that are appropriate and suitable to their needs. Resources are clean and in good condition.

Leaders provided children with resources that appealed to them and made their time interesting. Items available were colourful and suitable to children's stage of development. For example, babies could choose from floor toys, but were also encouraged to use the baby walkers to support their development. Whilst outside one child enjoyed playing with the baby walker and this supported them to increase their strength whilst walking. We recommended that leaders should consider introducing additional resources to the new unit for younger children, we found there to be a lot of plastic with a limited amount of items and resources offering sensory experiences. A broad range of different materials were available within the play group rooms and staff followed a robust system for ensuring toys were kept clean and well maintained. For example, we saw a list of duties and who was responsible for each displayed in the play rooms. There was a plentiful amount of resources available and the service benefited from their close relationship with the neighbouring school in relation to this.

Leaders support and promote children's development through providing a sufficient quantity of good quality toys.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Leaders and staff are highly motivated and work well together as a team. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined with leaders always available to offer support to staff. Service delivery is consistent, with a close working relationship between staff responsible for the day to day work, committee members and parents.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leaders set appropriate expectations and implement changes when required to fully communicate the direction and aim of the service.

We found that the statement of purpose required updating to ensure it fully reflected how the service operated, the number of weeks the service is open, and the different playgroup sessions available and to clarify the different elements of care offered by the service. Leaders implemented these changes shortly after the inspection and an updated statement of purpose was forwarded to Care Inspectorate Wales. Leaders have a sound understanding of best practice and strive to implement improvements to build on the service and ensure the service continues to progress and move forward. For example; since the last inspection leaders have started work on the Healthy Schools Welsh Government initiative and they are in the process of being certified to implement the design to smile scheme.

Leaders endeavour to implement robust systems to progress the service. They communicate their expectations for the direction of the service and ensure they maintain an up to date statement of purpose that provides an accurate picture of what the service offers.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Leaders regularly gather and take account of the views of staff, parents and neighbouring school.

We saw evidence of a good response rate from parents when leaders had requested their feedback on their experiences of using the service. The responses received were very positive and they valued the service offered and commented that they felt their children benefited from their experiences and were making good progress. Since the last inspection there have been a number of significant changes and these have in part happened in direct response to requests and discussions with parents. For example, the full day care unit for younger children was introduced following requests and interests from parents. Leaders introduced the new unit and additional element to the service offered with the aim of offering comprehensive care for children and their families with the aim of making families and children feel included and part of the school community. We saw that regular staff meetings were held with opportunities for staff to contribute and feedback on their

experiences. The registered person has recorded objectives for the future and aims to reach these throughout the year. We saw that some objectives identified for this year had already been achieved. For example, the service had recently been part of the Tesco grant scheme and they were now waiting to hear how much funding the service would receive to support them in improving what was available to the children.

Leaders are reflective, there are effective systems in place for regularly gaining the views of children, parents and staff and leaders use the information positively to benefit the service.

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

Leaders define roles and responsibilities and support staff to ensure they fulfil their roles in relation to the service's aims and objectives.

Leaders endeavour to support and enable staff to fulfil their roles to the best of their ability. We saw that the registered person kept a training matrix enabling her to have an overview of staff's training needs and all mandatory training needs were up to date with additional training provided to improve and build on staff's skills. We were told by staff how they felt supported to progress in their roles, and we saw how a number were working towards additional qualifications. Leaders were seen to be visible and available with a clear staffing structure within each room. Individual supervision sessions are offered and staff us spoke to told us they felt supported. Leaders implement a performance management strategy and encourage and support staff to work towards identified targets to enable them to progress and grow in their work. Leaders have supported staff through the recent changes; additional staff have been employed due to the increase in the number of children being cared for and changes in roles and responsibilities have been clarified. We found that staff files contained the required information enabling leaders to appropriately determine workers suitability.

Leaders ensure staff recruitment is timely to ensure children's needs are met. Staff are well deployed to meet the needs of the different age groups.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Leaders have positive relationships with parents, professionals and the wider community.

Leaders communicate effectively with parents, for example, parents of younger children are given a daily diary outlining what their children have achieved and how their needs have been met. Parents of older children are provided with an information sheet giving a brief overview of their child's day. Parents shared information with leaders and staff by completing the relevant forms before their child started, meaning staff knew each child's preferences and needs and endeavoured to meet them. Parents told us they were very happy with the service and a mum commented that her baby had settled very well. The service has positive links with the neighbouring school and this benefits the children. For example, they are familiar with their surroundings making the transition to full time

education seamless. Both settings are able to share resources such as outside play areas and the food is all prepared by the school kitchen enabling parents to select the meals they want their children to enjoy. Parents are regularly invited to attend parent's evenings, they are able to talk about their child's progress and see the work they have been doing. A large notice board outside the play group rooms and the new building for younger children, displays essential notices and information which may be of interest to the parents.

Leaders work in partnership with parents and keep them well informed about their child's care and development.

Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommended that the registered providers could;

- make record of the telephone conversation between the service and the parents to provide a clear account of when information has been shared and a signature obtained if possible;
- provide staff with some guidance to help them deal with challenging situations;
- introduce resources that would offer a varied and rich experiences of play, such as opportunities for water play or climbing;
- consider making waterproof clothing available for the children to use. This would allow them freedom and full use of the outside play area;
- consider introducing additional resources to the new unit for younger children, we found there to be a lot of plastic with a limited amount of items and resources offering sensory experiences

5. How we undertook this inspection

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

One inspector undertook a visit to the service on the 16 March 2018 between 9:15am and 17:45pm. Feedback was given to the registered person over the phone on the 19th of March 2018.

We did the following:

- inspected a sample of documents and policies
- observed practice and completed observations using the SOFI 2 tool to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care being provided by staff
- spoke to the children and the staff
- spoke with parents
- looked at the children's and the staff files
- looked at the resources

Further information about what we do can be found on our website www.cssiw.org.uk

6. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Lindsea Roberts
Person in charge	Melissa Connah
Registered maximum number of places	57
Age range of children	0 – 4 years old
Opening hours	Monday- Friday Room 1 under 2years and 6 months 7.30 am- 6.00 pm Room 2 2 years and 6 months-3 years and 6 months 9.00 a.m-11.30 am/ 1.00p.m-3.30p.m Room 3 3 and 6 months – 4 years old 9.00a.m- 3.30p.m
Operating Language of the service	Both
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	17 March 2016
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	16 March 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	Yes. Elements of this service are also inspected by Estyn.
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This service are working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates an effort to promoting the use of Welsh language and culture.
Additional Information:	

