



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

A report on

**Building Blocks Day Setting
Ynys Lane
Croesyceiliog
Cwmbran
Torfaen
NP44 2LH**

Date of inspection: February 2019

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Building Blocks Day Setting

Name of setting	Building Blocks Day Setting
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Joanne Boycott, Kathleen Boycott
Responsible individual (if applicable)	N/A
Person in charge	Joanne Boycott, Catherine Green, Rachel Jennings
Number of places	60
Age range of children	0-12 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	0
Number of children funded for up to five terms	16
Opening days / times	7.30am to 6.00pm
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	No
Date of previous CIW inspection	22/06/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection	01/01/2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	06/02/2019
Additional information	
There are no children with English as an additional language.	

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	Adequate
Learning (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Adequate
Care and development	Adequate
Teaching and assessment (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Adequate
Environment	Adequate
Leadership and management	Adequate

Non-compliance

We have advised the registered person that improvements are needed in relation to Employment of Staff – (Regulation 29 (3) (a)) in order to fully meet the legal requirements. A notice has not been issued on this occasion, as there was no significant impact for children using the service. We expect the registered person to take action to rectify this and it will be followed up at the next inspection.

We have advised the registered person that improvements are needed in relation to Keeping of Records – (Regulation 30 (1) Schedule 3 6) in order to fully meet the legal requirements. A notice has not been issued on this occasion, as there was no significant impact for children using the service. We expect the registered person to take action to rectify this and it will be followed up at the next inspection.

We have advised the registered person that improvements are needed in relation to Fire Precautions – (Regulation 38 (1) (a)) in order to fully meet the legal requirements. A notice has not been issued on this occasion, as there was no significant impact for children using the service. We expect the registered person to take action to rectify this and it will be followed up at the next inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve children's listening skills
- R2 Improve opportunities for children to develop numeracy and everyday Welsh skills
- R3 Use information from evaluating activities to identify next steps in learning effectively
- R4 Improve toilet and nappy changing facilities to ensure that children's privacy is respected fully
- R5 Identify specific development targets that focus effectively on improving outcomes for children and monitor and review progress against these regularly
- R6 Review policies and procedures to ensure they meet requirements in the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn and CIW will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Wellbeing: Adequate

Most children make confident choices and decisions about the resources they want to use and where they want to play. For example, they express their views about what they like to eat readily. Practitioners in the baby area respond promptly to children's babbling and encourage them warmly to make more noises. Occasionally, at the start of the day, a very few children do not follow their own interests well enough.

Nearly all children settle well when they arrive at the setting. Most children form positive attachments with practitioners and other children. For example, children approach practitioners for reassurance and support, or just for cuddles, readily. Most children are confident to seek out toys and start playing happily. However, occasionally, at the start of the day a very few children do not settle happily enough. Most children transition smoothly through the setting and settle well in their new environment.

Nearly all children behave well. Most co-operate appropriately with each other as they play, such as when they share toys in the tots play kitchen or negotiate what they want to watch on the television in the out of school club. Many have developed close bonds with each other and with practitioners as they have attended the setting for many years. Most children follow the daily routine well with appropriate support from practitioners. Many sustain their concentration effectively in group tasks, such as engaging in circle time. The majority of children take good care of equipment and put toys away readily in the correct box for use next time.

Many children engage well and show interest in the activities provided for them. Many children are happy, smiling and enjoying themselves. Most children move confidently and happily in their designated areas, choosing what they want to play with from a number of interesting resources. During a circle time activity in the intermediate group, nearly all children join in singing of songs and discuss the weather happily. However, occasionally children do not engage fully in activities because they are distracted by noise from other groups and there is insufficient support from practitioners. Nearly all children show great enjoyment when playing outdoors.

Most children develop a good range of skills to help them become independent. For example, they learn to put on an apron during craft activities. Most children persevere well in learning to do things for themselves. For example, most children eat food with appropriate cutlery successfully. They are developing skills well, such as putting on their own coats, and gaining confidence taking off their shoes and putting them on the shoe rack. At meal times nearly all older children serve themselves confidently from tureens of food.

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

Most children make appropriate progress in line with their age and stage of development during their time at the setting.

Many children speak confidently and make themselves understood using simple phrases in their play and when responding to adults. They talk with enthusiasm about activities, such as describing models made from blocks. Many children enjoy singing songs and rhymes and join in readily. A majority of children listen and follow instructions during their play. However, this is not sustained for group activities, when they do not focus well enough on what adults say and are easily distracted by what is happening around them. Many children show an interest in books and handle them as readers confidently. Most children enjoy stories read to them and ask relevant questions about the pictures. A majority of children are interested in mark making and enjoy activities such as drawing with muddy water on paper. A few write their names independently, such as on money envelopes for Chinese New Year.

Many children are developing appropriate early numeracy skills. For example, they rote count up to 16 with help. A majority of children identify numbers to six during their play, such as finding them in a bowl of rice and on cuddly toys. A majority of children use mathematical language effectively, such as recognising they have full watering cans and heavy bricks.

A minority of children use information and communication technology (ICT) equipment competently, such as taking pictures of one another and finding coins with metal detectors.

Many children are beginning to develop problem solving skills appropriately. For example, they work out that throwing balls into tyres is harder if the tyres are moved further away.

Most children's Welsh language skills are at an early stage of development. Many respond appropriately to simple greetings and answer to their names at registration time. They join in with actions for simple rhymes and songs. A few children respond to simple questions posed during their play and identify a few colours, for example noticing money envelopes were 'coch.'

Most children are developing their physical skills appropriately. They participate in movement sessions, demonstrating agility and co-ordination well and negotiate space on scooters and trikes competently. They use small tools confidently, such as using tweezers to pick up small objects. Many children enjoy taking part in a variety of creative activities. They express themselves confidently using paint and dance, and undertake craft activities well such as making masks from paper plates.

Most children develop appropriate personal, emotional and social skills. They play co-operatively and share toys, such as when buying and selling noodles in the outdoor shop. A few children are beginning to consider the needs of others, such as ensuring that their friends have their names on their work.

Care and development: Adequate

Practitioners in the setting understand how to respond to child protection issues and there are appropriate policies in place to support this. However, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children do not meet requirements fully and give cause for concern. For example, the setting does not have a strong enough policy for collecting children from school. Signing in and out procedures in the out of school club are not thorough enough and practitioners do not ensure that all DVDs available to the children are age-appropriate. The medication policy does not set out how practitioners should administer medicines sufficiently clearly, leaving practitioners unclear on expectations. During the inspection, the setting did not comply fully with fire regulations. Two fire doors were wedged open and one had damage to its closure mechanism. However the provider acted promptly to address these issues.

Nearly all practitioners manage children's behaviour well. They use praise and encouragement to help children understand what is acceptable and act sensitively and speedily to address issues as they arise. Nearly all practitioners are good role models and remind children to share toys and be kind to others. Most practitioners use good eye contact and calming and soft tones when speaking with children, creating a relaxed atmosphere. However, the setting's behaviour management policy is not clear enough about the strategies practitioners should use or how they should record and monitor incidents that cause concern such as biting.

Most practitioners know the children well and respond effectively to their individual needs, making good use of the key worker system. The setting promotes children's development well overall. For example, in the baby room, practitioners promote children's individual development successfully such as by buying a new harness so that a child who was unsteady of their feet could explore the garden. There are effective arrangements to encourage children to eat healthily, to take regular exercise and to understand that it is important to brush their teeth. Practitioners also promote children's health and nutritional needs and promote oral hygiene effectively. However, very occasionally, practitioners do not share information well enough to support children when they move from one group to another.

The setting ensures that all children have equal access to all areas of learning. There are appropriate procedures to support children with additional needs. Practitioners act on advice and guidance from outside agencies to ensure that children's needs are addressed effectively.

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

Practitioners plan engaging and stimulating activities that take account of children's stages of development and interests well. Activities reflect foundation phase principles appropriately, with a suitable emphasis on play and learning through first hand experiences. There are useful opportunities for children to make decisions and initiate their own learning. For example, they contribute ideas for activities based on favourite stories read to them.

Practitioners use a suitable range of teaching strategies to encourage and motivate children. They use resources imaginatively to capture children's interests, such as providing food for tasting and themed crockery to celebrate Chinese New Year.

Practitioners plan suitable activities to develop children's speaking and listening skills through their play. However, they do not encourage children to listen well enough during large group sessions, such as singing and story times, or respond effectively to children's contributions.

The setting provides suitable opportunities for children to develop their reading and mark-making skills. For example, there are books on display throughout the learning environment, including books about homes in the role play area. There are useful opportunities for children to develop their mark making skills using paint, pencils and water.

Practitioners develop children's numeracy skills appropriately as part of daily routines, such as counting how many children are present at registration. There are suitable opportunities for children to learn mathematical language in their play, such as when filling and emptying containers in the water tray and identifying big and small dinosaurs. However, practitioners do not plan to develop the full range of numeracy skills well enough.

There are satisfactory opportunities for children to develop simple ICT skills, such as learning to use metal detectors and a digital camera in their play.

A few practitioners use everyday Welsh during whole group sessions to greet and praise children, and encourage children to sing simple Welsh songs. However, they use little Welsh outside group times and as result, children's skills are underdeveloped. Opportunities for children to develop an awareness of Welsh culture and traditions, as well as those of other nations is appropriate.

Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to develop their skills outdoors. For example, there are worthwhile opportunities for children to be physically active, experiment with mark making and use their imaginations in a role-play builders' yard.

The setting's procedures for assessing and monitoring children's progress are appropriate. Practitioners use assessment information successfully to plan children's first steps in learning when they move from the toddler room. At regular intervals, practitioners monitor children's progress across all areas of learning effectively and develop a useful understanding of what children can do over time. However, they do not use daily assessments to identify next steps in individual children's learning regularly enough.

The setting uses the local area to enrich children's learning experiences effectively. For example, children learn about care and respect for others and their environment successfully when they visit local shops, go litter picking and receive visits from the librarian and from chicks and owls.

Parents are kept well informed about their child's achievements and wellbeing. The setting shares information well through informal daily contact, as well as more formal consultations and a useful written report that identifies next steps in learning effectively.

Environment: Adequate

Children are cared for in an appropriately safe, clean and secure environment, that includes a spacious garden area. There is a robust system to manage access, and visitors are recorded consistently. Practitioners carry out appropriate risk assessments and review these regularly in order to keep children safe. However, they do not always follow these carefully enough.

Nearly all rooms are welcoming and include attractive displays of children's artwork. Practitioners ensure that all children have suitable access to the outdoor space, which comprises a number of interesting areas for children to explore. This includes a covered area where children can access a good number of activities in all weather. Most areas are set up to promote children's independence effectively. In the indoor area, there are sufficient facilities to meet children's needs appropriately. However, the design of the toileting and nappy changing facilities does not promote children's privacy effectively enough.

In general, the premises provide a suitable play and learning environment for children. However, practitioners do not always organise the space or routines well enough to support children fully throughout the day. Downstairs areas are open plan and, at times, high noise levels prevent many children from being able to listen and engage in activities effectively. For part of the day, a section of the main play room is set aside for younger children to sleep, restricting the space available to older children at this time. The area set aside for the out of school club is not organised well enough for children to make worthwhile choices about what they want to do.

Resources are plentiful and generally of good quality and age appropriate. These include well-equipped play kitchens and tables and chairs of an appropriate size for older children in the after school club. Nearly all areas include equipment that children can use to relax, for example wicker seats, settees or cushions. Most toys and equipment are safe and clean. Outside toys and equipment are suitable for a variety of ages, and include interesting natural resources, such as logs and tyres, for children to explore. Leaders purchase additional resources to support children's understanding and enjoyment of new themes effectively. For example, utensils and food help children successfully in celebrating Chinese New Year.

Leadership and management: Adequate

The registered person has a sound vision that focuses on ensuring children are safe and well supported in the setting. This is conveyed to practitioners and parents appropriately in the Statement of Purpose. The registered person and management team are experienced in working with young children and work collaboratively with other colleagues to promote children's wellbeing and outcomes.

The registered person ensures that there are appropriate policies and procedures to support practitioners in most aspects of their work in caring for children. She reviews these regularly. However, not all policies support the setting's practice well enough, such as to manage children's behaviour, administer medication and record children's attendance. As a result, the setting does not comply fully with all regulations and minimum standards.

The registered person ensures the pre-school team has a clear understanding of the requirements of the foundation phase. She addresses their professional development needs well and supports them to attend training events that improve provision and outcomes for children. For example, following recent training on block play, practitioners provide worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their thinking skills.

The registered person has a sound commitment to improving quality. There are appropriate systems for identifying the setting's strengths and areas for development. She consults practitioners, parents and children effectively as part of the self-evaluation process and acts on any ideas appropriately. For example, following a request from parents, the setting provides them with information about the Welsh words children are learning.

Through its self-evaluation processes, the setting identifies suitable priorities for improvement, such as developing outdoor provision. However, the management team does not monitor progress regularly and, as a result, the setting does not always move forward effectively enough. The setting has made appropriate progress in meeting the recommendations from the previous Estyn inspection.

The setting has well-qualified and experienced practitioners. The registered person deploys them appropriately to make good use of their time and expertise in most areas. There are safe recruitment procedures in place. Most practitioners are clear regarding their roles and benefit from annual appraisals and six monthly reviews that provide useful opportunities for them to reflect on their practice. However, the staff supervision process is not yet robust enough to support practitioners fully to meet individual targets, make improvements to their practice or assess emerging training needs.

The setting has an effective partnership with parents. Practitioners inform parents regularly about all aspects of the setting's work through newsletters and social media and provide them with information about children's progress effectively. Parents feel comfortable to talk to practitioners about concerns.

There is a worthwhile relationship with the local authority advisory teacher and practitioners benefit from advice and support with foundation phase provision and from attending regular training events. The setting has suitable links with a few local schools, and practitioners share assessment information with teachers when they visit to support children as they move on to the next stage in their education. There are useful links with the local community, which enhance children's learning experiences well. These include organising regular visits to the shops, the local library and park, and hunting for painted stones in the local area.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (<http://careinspectorate.wales>) (www.estyn.gov.wales)

CIW and Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
Poor	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

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