



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

A report on

**Mathern Day Nursery
The Old School
Mathern
Chepstow
NP16 6JH**

Date of inspection: February 2020

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Mathern Day Nursery

Name of setting	Mathern Day Nursery
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Amanda Gore
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Amanda Gore
Person in charge	Amanda Gore
Number of places	48
Age range of children	6 weeks to 4 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	24
Number of children funded for up to five terms	0
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday, from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round with the exception of bank holidays.
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	No – 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 children who use, or intend to use their service. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government’s ‘More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care’.
Date of previous CIW inspection	03/09/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	01/11/2013

A report on Mathern Day Nursery
February 2020

Dates of this inspection visit(s)	04/02/2020
Additional information Nearly all children come from English speaking homes.	

Summary

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

Non-compliance

We notified the provider that the service was not compliant with the following regulations:

Regulation 30, Schedule 3, 6, Keeping of records: because the provider must maintain a daily record of the children's and staff's times of attendance

Regulation 20 (7) (a): to ensure children's privacy is respected

Regulation 25 (a): to ensure unnecessary risks to children's safety are identified and eliminated in order to fully meet the legal requirements.

Regulation 21(2): to ensure children always have access to drinking water

A notice has not been issued on this occasion, as there was no immediate or significant impact for children using the service. We expect the registered person to take action to rectify these matters and it will be followed up at the next inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Improve planning to provide engaging learning experiences that support all children to progress well

R2 Review and update risk assessments to ensure children's safety

R3 Ensure that all policies and procedures, including induction and recruitment, comply with national minimum standards and regulations and meet practitioners' and learners' needs effectively

R4 Improve monitoring systems so that they lead to measurable improvements in children's learning and care

R5 Address the issues of non-compliance identified during the inspection where no notice was issued

What happens next

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

Main findings

Wellbeing: Adequate

Nearly all children across the nursery speak and express themselves appropriately. For example, babies use emerging speech and gestures to make their feelings known and express their enjoyment. Pre-school children talk confidently during their play, such as to say what they like and dislike. A majority of children make suitable choices. For example, they choose which books they want to look at and decide whether they want milk or water, apple or banana at snack time. In the pre-school, children follow their own interests confidently and know that practitioners will respond to their ideas and suggestions. However, younger children do not develop their ability to make choices and decisions well enough.

Most children are happy and feel secure. They are eager to come into nursery and settle quickly. They chat with staff when they arrive, or go straight off to play. Children who are upset respond well to support from practitioners and become calm quickly. Nearly all children develop close bonds with practitioners. For example, babies seek out practitioners and look for their approval when they play, and toddlers enjoy sitting with practitioners to hear a story. However, a few toddlers do not feel comfortable and relaxed enough to make the most of nap time. This is because the setting does not have a well-developed key person system. Across the nursery, most children form suitable friendships. For example, pre-school children chat to each other happily while they wait for their lunch.

Most children behave well in line with their age and stage of development. Most children interact and play co-operatively with each other successfully. For example, they share the equipment in the sand tray outside. They are respectful and kind to each other and are beginning to take turns and share with friends. For example, pre-school children wait patiently for their turn to roll a ball and speak about how they are feeling.

Most children enjoy the activities provided. For example, older toddlers paint on tin foil enthusiastically and show a keen interest in water beads. Most toddlers dance to music, clap and use musical instruments in 'boogie time' successfully and develop their co-ordination skills appropriately. However, they do not always sustain their interest and concentration well enough or learn to persevere successfully. This is because the daily routine is not flexible enough to allow them to follow their own interests effectively. Many pre-school children are confident learners and engage purposefully in most activities. In Spanish lessons, nearly all pre-school children showed very good listening skills, following instructions to get into a circle, repeating new words and joining in with songs. Most children develop effective independence skills. For example, they stand at the sink ready to wash their hands independently following nappy changes.

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

Most children make good progress from their starting points. They enjoy their learning and achieve well in their activities. They develop effective personal and social skills, learn to persevere and co-operate well with each other in their play.

Most children listen well to instructions. Many speak clearly and converse with each other effectively. For example, they discuss how to cook a cake in the role play area. They talk confidently to an adult such as to describe the features of a bird they see in a picture. Most children develop a good range of early reading skills well. They talk about the contents of a story appropriately, show interest in pictures, hold a book the right way up and turn pages one at a time effectively. Many enjoy mark making with a range of equipment. Around half make circles and lines with writing implements effectively and write a few letters in their name confidently.

Most children are developing a worthwhile range of mathematical skills successfully and use mathematical vocabulary in their play skilfully. For example, they talk about the size of the beak on the bird that they have made. Most count correctly to at least five, such as when they count how many cereal rings will fit onto a string bird feeder. A few are beginning to develop a sense of time appropriately, for example when they discuss what day it is today and what day it will be tomorrow.

Most children join in successfully with Welsh songs about greetings. A very few talk in short sentences about the weather. However, children's use of Welsh words and phrases throughout the day is at an early stage of development.

Nearly all children's physical skills are developing effectively. They pedal and balance successfully when riding a range of scooters and bikes. They dig and plant in the nearby allotment, and run and play with hoops on the field. Most develop a range of fine motor skills successfully, for example when they pick up bird seed with tweezers.

Many children are developing relevant information and communication technology (ICT) skills suitably. For example they know how to take a photograph with a tablet computer.

Most children develop valuable problem solving skills effectively. For example, they discuss where to put bird feeders so that animals cannot eat the contents. Most children develop creative skills successfully. For example, they make pictures and patterns using their fingers in sand, and they make confident choices about which resources to use to make models of birds.

Care and development: Adequate

All practitioners understand how to respond to child protection issues and there are appropriate procedures in place to support these. Practitioners implement the setting's accident and medication procedures effectively, complete relevant records consistently and make sure that children's individual health and dietary needs are met. However, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children do not meet requirements and give cause for concern. This is because practitioners do not

always follow appropriate infection control measures when they clean changing mats, and toilet facilities in the pre-school do not provide children with sufficient privacy. There are appropriate procedures for keeping children healthy. For example, the setting provides nutritious and wholesome food for children and practitioners teach them good handwashing habits from a young age. However, practitioners do not ensure that drinking water is readily available at lunch times and children's drinks and cups are not always easily accessible.

Nearly all practitioners manage interactions appropriately in line with the setting's useful behaviour management policy. They are consistent in their approach giving clear age-appropriate instructions during daily routines. As a result, most pre-school children have a good understanding of what is acceptable behaviour in the setting. Most practitioners praise children's good behaviour and achievements regularly and this develops their self-esteem and confidence well. In most rooms, many practitioners make suitable use of opportunities to help children learn good manners at snack time.

All practitioners know the children's individual care needs well. They use valuable information gained from parents effectively during the settling in period. This establishes a caring atmosphere and ethos throughout the setting. Practitioners plan effectively to meet the learning needs of the pre-school children. Practitioners working with younger children meet as a team to plan a range of activities that promote children's development suitably. For example, they provide painting activities that develop children's fine motor skills, and encourage children to begin to count and recognise simple shapes. However, practitioners do not always understand how to make the most of activities to help children progress consistently and they do not use information from observations well enough to plan for children's next steps in learning effectively. As a result, the activities and resources they provide do not always engage babies' and toddlers' interest well enough or support them to make systematic progress. They do not always support children's play well enough such as by explaining why the doll goes on the bed instead of into the basket. Occasionally, practitioners are too quick to move younger children on to different activities before they are ready to finish. This limits younger children's opportunities to persevere and immerse themselves thoroughly in their play.

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

Practitioners' planning takes very good account of most foundation phase requirements. They provide high quality activities that are well thought out, interesting, engaging and relevant. Practitioners plan learning experiences based on outcomes of previous learning skilfully and systematically. They meet children's needs successfully, such as by providing extra challenges for more able children. They use a range of resources to develop children's skills across most areas of learning imaginatively. They identify where children would benefit from additional support and act effectively to help them progress.

Practitioners know the children well and take good account of their particular interests and needs. They include children's requests very effectively in activities. For example, they set up bird watching activities outside in response to children's particular interest in these.

Practitioners develop children's literacy and numeracy skills well in meaningful contexts. For example, they use a factual book to discuss how to look after birds in winter time while children make bird feeders. There is a suitable focus on developing children's ICT skills. However, practitioners do not always provide sufficient ICT resources for children to practise and develop their skills. There are valuable opportunities for children to develop their fine and gross motor skills both indoors and outdoors, using a good range of resources.

Practitioners encourage children to understand and respect different cultures from around the world well. They provide meaningful opportunities for children to learn about their Welsh heritage. For example, they wear traditional dress as part of their St. David's Day celebrations. However, they do not focus specifically enough on improving children's Welsh language skills. Regular visits out of the setting, for example to the village cenotaph, Mathern Mill and the village hall, reinforce children's awareness of their local area successfully.

Through a beneficial range of learning experiences, practitioners promote children's social, moral, and spiritual development effectively. They encourage children to share equipment and take turns. As a result, children learn to co-operate well with others. Practitioners encourage a sense of awe and wonder successfully for example, when they watch chicks hatch from their shells.

All practitioners have a good knowledge of effective foundation phase practice. They explain ideas and tasks clearly and model activities well. They combine valuable learning tasks with free play effectively. Practitioners intervene in children's play skilfully to extend their learning, for example by looking at a recipe together in the role play kitchen. Consequently, children sustain interest in what they are doing and enjoy uninterrupted learning. All practitioners are well qualified in early years and have attended additional training provided by the local consortium. As a result of recent training, their assessment procedures are effective and practitioners use the outcome of assessments to plan successfully for children to make progress.

Practitioners keep parents informed of their child's progress efficiently such as through parents' evenings and reports. These give valuable insights into what their child needs to do next and how parents can help them at home.

Environment: Adequate

Practitioners ensure that children are cared for in a secure environment. They monitor the arrival and collection of children and visitors closely and effectively. Practitioners understand procedures to follow in the event of an emergency and adapt their practice quickly if they need to. However, current procedures to identify and eliminate risks are not sufficiently robust and this means that a very few hazards in the environment are not dealt with well enough. For example, the setting does not always ensure that all furniture, such as nappy changing tables, is well enough maintained and the setting's protocols for carrying hot drinks are not robust enough.

The premises are warm and welcoming. Practitioners have made worthwhile improvements to the outdoor areas to provide a rich environment for exploration and learning all year round. For example, there is a field with a mud kitchen, an allotment area and inviting areas for children to explore and develop their independence and

curiosity. Practitioners use the space available indoors and outside creatively to accommodate different age groups of children and to offer a variety of worthwhile activities such as sensory play. However, practitioners do not always manage use of the space well enough to allow sufficient time for all children to engage fully in activities and follow their own interests. In parts of the nursery, including the pre-school, paintwork and furniture are showing signs of wear and tear.

Leaders consider the layout of the environment well. They provide coat pegs at a suitable height for children, a low hand rail on the stairs and mirrors at an appropriate level in the baby room. Practitioners display photographs and children's work in different rooms, developing their sense of belonging appropriately. A separate cot room for babies gives them a quiet, restful space to sleep. However, there is insufficient space to accommodate toddlers to sleep comfortably.

In the pre-school room, practitioners provide interesting resources and arrange these well so that children can reach them independently and choose what they want to play with. The setting provides child-sized tables and chairs for older children to use at mealtimes, and there are suitable high chairs for the youngest children. However, practitioners do not provide a good enough range of resources, including both natural resources and equipment at snack time, for the younger children to use.

Leadership and management: Adequate

The registered person has an effective vision for children to develop in a happy, fun and friendly environment. This is set out comprehensively in the statement of purpose. Leaders have established a positive ethos for children, parents and staff. Overall, the registered person manages the setting suitably to ensure that it runs smoothly. As a result, children are nurtured well in an inclusive and welcoming environment. However, the registered person has not outlined arrangements to review the statement of purpose and inform Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) of important changes to staffing. The leader ensures a range of relevant policies and procedures to support the organisation of the setting is in place. However, monitoring to ensure that practitioners follow these appropriately is not carried out regularly enough. For example, leaders do not ensure that practitioners complete children's registers consistently. The setting's safeguarding policy does not reflect most recent Welsh Government legislation and guidance well enough.

The setting has suitable self-evaluation processes and all practitioners are committed to improving quality. Leaders identify relevant strengths and areas for development. They use this information, and advice from the local authority advisory teacher, to prioritise improvements such as increasing opportunities for children to learn Welsh and make decisions about what they are learning. Good use is made of available grants, for example to purchase resources to help foster a love of reading at home. Practitioners have implemented sound strategies for improving the indoor and outdoor environments with the result that children can access a suitable range of resources during their play. However, setting leaders have not moved forward with all priorities for improvement well enough or made sufficient progress with recommendations identified during the last CIW inspection.

Leaders follow suitable recruitment procedures and ensure that new staff have appropriate qualifications and experience. The setting's induction processes are

appropriate but leaders do not always implement these rigorously enough. There are appropriate arrangements for managing staff performance and leaders deploy practitioners effectively. Practitioners are keen to take advantage of training opportunities to improve their skills and outcomes for children. They use information from training well. For example, following recent training in block play, practitioners provided more opportunities for children to develop a full range of skills while exploring blocks both indoors and outside.

The setting's partnership with parents is strong. Practitioners discuss children's individual needs and preferences thoroughly with parents before they begin at the setting, and provide opportunities for parents to attend settling in sessions with their children. They keep parents well informed about their children's progress through careful communication and the setting's open door policy. Leaders support children effectively when they move to different rooms in the setting.

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 evaluate 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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