



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

**A report on**

**Little Stars Pre-school - Clyro**

**c/o Clyro C.I.W. School  
Hereford  
Powys  
HR3 5LE**

**Date of inspection: October 2023**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

## About Little Stars Pre-school - Clyro

Name of setting	Little Stars Pre-school - Clyro
Category of care provided	sessional
Registered person(s)	Letitia Jones
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Sarah Arrowsmith
Number of places	19
Age range of children	2-4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	12
Number of children who receive funding for early education	11
Opening days / times	8.00 – 3.30, Monday-Friday
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.'
Date of previous CIW inspection	March 2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection	First inspection
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	17/10/2023
This is the first inspection of the setting by Estyn.	

## Summary

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Well-being</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Learning</b> (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	<b>Good</b>
<b>Care and development</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and assessment</b> (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	<b>Good</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## Non-compliance

**No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.**

## Recommendations

- R1 Develop individual planning and recording systems to support children's emerging additional needs
- R2 Ensure that information from observations clearly identifies next steps for children's learning and development
- R3 Ensure that staff appraisals identify meaningful targets that support staff development and contribute to the setting's overall improvement plans

## What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

## Main findings

### Well-being: Good

Nearly all children settle well on arrival at the setting and happily separate from parents and carers. They develop warm, close relationships with practitioners and each other, which has a beneficial impact on their well-being. They are beginning to talk about their feelings, which helps them to know they can tell someone if they feel worried.

Most children are happy and active in their play. They engage well with the activities and experiences that are available to them. They move confidently around the indoor and outdoor environments and have a strong say in what and where they want to play. This supports them to become curious and independent learners. They show pleasure and pride in the things they do. For example, they smile with delight when successfully completing a hopscotch square.

They spend extended periods of time engaged in self-chosen tasks, which supports them to develop their skills of concentration and perseverance, for example when mixing and experimenting with mud in the outdoor kitchen. Nearly all children are confident communicators and know that practitioners will listen and respond to them. They express themselves through verbal and non-verbal communication well, for

example sitting next to a practitioner when they want a story read to them or discussing how many muffins they had made. They develop warm relationships with practitioners and each other, which has a beneficial impact on their well-being.

Nearly all children behave well. They are beginning to play collaboratively and help each other when needed, for example reminding others when it is circle time or filling up the water jug for their friend to use in the mud kitchen. Children know and follow the routines of the day well. This helps them to develop a strong sense of belonging and community.

Nearly all children develop and learn well through the wide range of motivating opportunities provided for them. They develop confidence to make choices and seek help when they need it. They develop independence and self-help skills successfully. For example, they manage their own coats and bags and see to their own personal needs.

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

Nearly all children are happy and curious and actively explore the learning opportunities available to them. They make good progress from their individual starting points, particularly in the development of their communication and personal and social skills. For example, they discuss which characters they will be when taking on roles in the role play area and co-operate with each other when sharing ingredients to make cupcakes. Most children demonstrate high levels of perseverance and concentration as they play, such as when filling, carrying and emptying containers of water in the garden.

Most children communicate confidently with one another and with adults. They discuss and share their views on things that interest them effectively, such their favourite flavours of cakes. They listen attentively and ask questions that help them to develop their understanding. For example, they ask practitioners how to measure their heights with tape measures. Most children enjoy singing familiar songs and rhymes and join in with accompanying actions with much enjoyment. They listen to stories and handle books appropriately, retelling their favourite stories using illustrations as a guide. Many children develop their mark making skills effectively, for example when they make large marks on the interactive white board.

Most children use mathematical language during their play and exploration well. For example, they talk about heavy and light pumpkins and full and empty cups of water. Many children are interested in numbers and count items around them reliably. They count items of food at snack time and the number of children who are in the session.

Many children use information and communication technology (ICT) skills in their play and exploration effectively. They use digital cameras to photograph things around them and operate the function buttons on an interactive white board skilfully.

Many children solve problems as they naturally occur during their play and exploration. For example, they find effective ways to use blocks to make a rocket on

the floor and discover that they need to use small cups to fit inside a model microwave.

Most children develop their physical skills well. They are agile and enjoy yoga sessions and dancing to music. They ride wheeled vehicles and balance on equipment outside competently. Many children use their hands to mould dough and pour drinks from jugs successfully.

Most children join in with actions when singing Welsh rhymes and songs enthusiastically. They respond to simple questions and instructions in Welsh and count objects around them and name the colours they see when playing.

Many children's creative skills are developing effectively. They paint and print with leaves and pumpkins and dress up in a variety of costumes when engaging in role play with friends.

### **Care and development: Good**

Leaders have developed useful range of policies and procedures that support practitioners to keep children safe and healthy. As a result, practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities to protect children. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners implement the setting's policies and procedures in relation to hygiene, health, and safety effectively. They conduct regular evacuation drills so that children know what to do in an emergency and all practitioners have suitable paediatric first aid training. Practitioners supervise children well and maintain an accurate record of the times children attend and who is looking after them. They follow appropriate procedures in relation to accidents, incidents and the administration of medication. They promote healthy lifestyles for children, providing healthy snacks and milk or water to drink. Practitioners ensure that children have access to the outdoor play area for most of the day so that they benefit from fresh air and physical exercise. They also provide regular opportunities for children to visit the school field and hall to give them the experience of playing and running in larger spaces.

Practitioners are kind, caring and supportive. They create a relaxed, calm atmosphere, and communicate respectfully with children and each other. Practitioners develop positive relationships with children, praising them for doing things well and for trying. They interact purposefully with children and are good role models. As a result, practitioners create an environment that promotes children's self-esteem and enables them to learn to manage their own behaviour and interactions successfully.

Practitioners are responsive to children's needs and join in with their play sensitively. Practitioners identify children who may need additional support and seek help and advice from external agencies such as the local authority and speech and language therapists. They keep appropriate records for children with identified needs. However, record keeping and strategies used for children with emerging needs are not as well developed, which means that children may not benefit from appropriate

interventions as early as they might. Practitioners encourage children in their use of Welsh effectively through singing songs, counting, and using incidental words frequently throughout the day. Practitioners provide beneficial opportunities for children to learn about different cultures by exploring festivals through a range of craft activities, books and stories.

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

Nearly all practitioners have an appropriate understanding of how young children learn and develop when engaging in play-based experiences. They provide them with a wide range of interesting activities that stimulate their natural curiosity and allow them to follow their interests well. Practitioners ensure that children make choices about where they wish to explore and play. This supports them to develop their independence skills effectively.

Practitioners know children well and develop warm and caring relationships. Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of when to intervene in children's play and when to stand back and observe. They are flexible and supportive in their approach and ensure that children have sufficient time to become engrossed in what they are doing.

Practitioners are good language role models, and they introduce new vocabulary and phrases to support children's language development well. For example, they talk to them about long and short bricks and cold and heavy pastry.

Practitioners promote children's communication skills appropriately. They encourage children to respond to questions and provide thought-provoking comments on what they are doing, such as when discussing how to bake cakes. As a result, most children are confident in communicating verbally with others. Practitioners provide children with plenty of opportunities to look at books and read stories to them with enthusiasm and warmth. There are valuable opportunities for children to engage in mark making activities, including providing access to digital equipment.

Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to hear and respond to the Welsh language. They ask simple questions, promote new vocabulary, and sing songs with children. They also use appropriate words and phrases at snack and circle times.

Practitioners promote children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development effectively. They plan interesting activities for children to become familiar with the world around them. For example, they encourage children to play with resources that celebrate diversity and learn about a range of festivals from other cultures.

Practitioners promote a suitable awareness of Welsh traditions and celebrations. For example, when celebrating St Dwynwen's Day and St David's Day, children taste traditional food such as bara brith and leek and potato soup. In addition, they provide worthwhile opportunities for children to talk about national rugby and football events.

Practitioners share worthwhile information with parents to ensure they understand what their children have learnt and how they have progressed in their development and learning during their time at the setting.

Practitioners are beginning to experiment with approaches to promote the principles of Curriculum for Wales. They are developing a more flexible approach to planning to reflect children's interests and preferences more closely. They collect useful information to support this process through regular observations of how well children are developing and acquiring skills and knowledge. However, practitioners do not use the assessment information well enough to ensure that planned activities for the future meet the needs of children well enough.

### **Environment: Good**

Practitioners provide children with a stimulating and enabling environment that supports all areas of their learning and development and offers appropriate challenge. All areas of the setting are exceptionally clean and well maintained. Suitable risk assessments are in place to keep children safe. Appropriate fire and electric tests are carried out by the school where the setting is based. There are suitable toilet and nappy changing facilities that enable practitioners to promote children's privacy and dignity.

The playroom is large, welcoming, and bright, providing ample space for children to move around and play as well as to gather as a group or find a quiet space if needed. Meaningful displays decorate the walls. They include work children have completed along with things to promote discussion such as pictures of the children's families, the golden rules or faces to help children learn about emotions. Practitioners provide children with access to a wide range of interesting, and developmentally appropriate, resources and equipment, including a suitable range of resources that promote children's understanding of cultural awareness and diversity.

The setting has direct access from the playroom to the outdoor play area. Although this area is small it is well resourced and carefully planned. Children have opportunities to play and learn across all the areas of development. Practitioners provide appropriate opportunities for children to engage in risky play, for example supervised access to woodwork tools and tyres and large planks to develop their physical skills. Practitioners encourage active learning through a wide range of resources that stimulate children's interest and encourage them to use their imagination, for example when playing with natural resources in the outdoor mud kitchen.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The setting has comprehensive procedures that promote a positive and caring ethos where staff, children and families are supported well. Leaders have a clear vision based on providing an environment where everyone is happy, and children are encouraged to thrive in their learning and development. Practitioners work well together and are comfortable to raise concerns and share ideas for improving the provision.

Leaders have developed valuable self-evaluation processes that feed effectively into the setting's improvement plans. They include stakeholders in the process, such as the local authority advisory teacher and parents, and act on their views appropriately, for example making improvements to the noticeboard to make it more visible at the setting.

Leaders identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement successfully and sets appropriate actions that bring about the desired improvements. They ensure that actions focus well on improving outcomes for children, for example improving practitioners' Welsh language skills.

The setting makes good use of grants to enhance provision and children's learning. For example, the setting has provided woodworking activities for children, which has promoted their physical and critical thinking skills well.

Leaders ensure that practitioners have up-to-date job descriptions, which include clear information about their roles and responsibilities, and follow suitable induction processes, which helps new practitioners to feel part of the team. They implement a regular system for practitioners' supervision and appraisal. However, these do not identify targets that support practitioners to improve their practice clearly enough. Leaders ensure a positive sense of teamwork throughout the setting and provide appropriate opportunities for practitioners to attend training, which has a positive impact on their practice.

There are strong relationships with parents. Practitioners communicate with parents effectively through the sharing of beneficial information on the setting's notice board, such as the new songs children will be learning. In addition, they make good use of a social media page where they share photographs of the children's activities along with accompanying explanations of what they have been doing and learning.

Practitioners make good use of the beneficial advice and guidance from partners, such as the local authority's advisory teacher and health professionals. For example, the advisory teacher has supported them in the improvements to the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

The setting has beneficial links with the adjoining school. It uses the school grounds to enable children to be physically active and attend events such as sports days.

## 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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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

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

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