



Inspection Report

Little Stars

**Maesyrhandir CP School
Plantation Lane
Newtown
SY16 1LQ**



Date Inspection Completed

30/03/2023

About Little Stars

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Powys County Council Child Care and Play Services
Registered places	19
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	Manual Insert] 21/05/2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	Manual Insert] Yes
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	Although this service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language there is a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2023.

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.

<u>Well-being</u>	Excellent
<u>Care and Development</u>	Excellent
<u>Environment</u>	Excellent
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Good

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children are highly active and curious learners and enjoy making choices about what they want to play with. They play together well like a big happy family and excitedly make up chasing games around the garden. Interactions between children and those caring for them are exceptionally good. Children are highly interested and keenly engaged in their activities. Children's opinions and interests are extremely valued and acted on. They have high levels of confidence and learn through a range of exceptionally interesting experiences.

Staff focus exceptionally well on the interests of the child, their individual needs and development. They ask questions which promote discussion, and further opportunities for problem solving. They are completely led by children's choices and decisions and nurture the children's play highly effectively. Staff interact positively, demonstrating genuine interest warmth and kindness.

Highly attractively areas are set out and children can move between exciting areas to explore indoors and outdoors. The environment is calm, relaxing, light, bright and well maintained throughout. Staff ensure the garden is exceptionally well equipped with a wealth of natural and recycled resources for children to enjoy. There are good opportunities to visit local parks which provide good opportunities for play and develop skills on different pieces of equipment.

People who run the setting have established a strong leadership where roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. People who run the setting have good leadership and management systems and have established a team of staff who work together superbly well. They support each other in providing highly effective play, learning and care for the children. They have built positive partnerships with parents and close working relationships with the school which helps to support Little Stars and benefit the children and their families.

Children are highly active and curious learners and enjoy making choices. Such as whether to play inside or outside. Children speak and express themselves exceptionally well. They come and tell us their names, ask ours and show us what they like doing. Most children communicate with high levels of confidence about which activities they want to play with and why. For example, some children wanted to balance and jump while others were discovering the properties of clay. Children chat together and their enjoyment is evident when they play. Some are disappointed when it is time to tidy up.

Children are familiar with the daily routine, and this gives them a sense of security. They approach staff with ease for a cuddle or reassurance or to proudly show what they have made in the mud kitchen. Children are forming friendships and interact positively. They help one another to tidy up their resources ready for a story and they show respect for equipment. Children effectively co-operate and share pens and whiteboards chatting all the time about what they are doing. They are keen to listen to a story, making useful suggestions and they excitedly join in with a song about days of the week.

Children are sensitive and caring towards each other and delight in sharing ideas and achievements with staff and their friends. Children show their creative flair when gathered around the outdoor kitchen. They are highly confident when trying new things, such as seeing how quickly rainwater comes down a drainpipe. They make water patterns and play together well in groups or on their own. Children excitedly celebrate the rain with joyous enthusiasm. They discover what it is like to feel rain on their faces and try to catch drops in their hands. They are confident to fill jugs and teapots from water barrels and turn taps off carefully so not to waste resources.

Children are developing their learning highly effectively and enjoy using their senses in the garden. They have fun working together, hammering golf tees into clay with real hammers. Children laugh, knowing that friends are watching and making constructive comments about what they are doing. They concentrate exceptionally well and develop their own ideas and games as they balance and jump carefully off steps onto the soft mats below.

Children are developing independence and skills exceptionally well. They risk assess such as deciding when the rain is too heavy, and they need to go under cover or come inside to get changed. They go to the sink in the room and are keen to wash their hands after a messy activity. Children collect water carefully, deciding which way to go, slowly transporting it across the room to where their friends need more for their clay.

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy exceptionally well, for example re introducing Designed to Smile. They have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and implement the policies effectively. First aid and safeguarding training is current and staff complete accident and incident records to keep parents informed. Staff promote healthy practices and ensure children have excellent opportunities to play outdoors in the garden. They provide a nutritious snack such as rice cakes and cheese with milk or water to drink. Staff conduct fire drills with school to make sure children and staff know what to do if they must leave the premises in the event of an emergency.

Staff focus exceptionally well on the interests of the child, their individual needs and development. They value what the children have to say and their ideas. For instance, staff provided a child with an opportunity to sit on a reassuring knee when they did not want to join their friends in a game. They nurture the children's play highly effectively. Although they have an idea of what the children are going to do, they simply suggest and show approval saying, 'That's a good idea' and let the children decide what to create and how to do it. This approach works highly effectively as the possibilities and learning opportunities are endless. Staff interact highly positively demonstrating warmth and kindness. They stand back and allow the children to take risks and discover for themselves. They ask questions about a garlic press for the clay which promotes discussion, and further opportunities for problem solving. The development of language is encouraged highly effectively saying "These look like little worms and noodles".

Staff know the children and their individual needs exceptionally well, often using Makaton. They chat about homes and families and create a learning journey for the children. Staff follow planning in the moment and have a sound knowledge of how children learn and develop using schemas. They evaluate children's progress and plan targets highly effectively. Staff encourage children to learn and invite them to ask and answer lots of questions to develop their curiosity and thinking skills exceptionally well. Staff are highly aware of the stages of children's development and listen very effectively, letting children decide. Staff join in when invited and have their hair brushed and styled with curlers. They show children, when they ask, how to balance on a narrow beam using outstretched arms amid much excitement and laughter. Staff frequently praise children often in Welsh for doing well, or being kind and thoughtful with a sticker which made the children smile and feel proud.

Staff provide an outstanding learning environment which is safe and clean. Doors are kept locked making a secure space for the children with no unauthorised entry. Risk assessments are completed and people running the setting make sure everyone understands their responsibilities in relation to the safety and welfare of children. Staff supervise children highly effectively during their activities and cleaning routines and hygiene practices ensure children are kept safe and well.

A classroom set in its own grounds provides an exceptional space for the children to play and develop their independence. Highly attractively well organised and resourced areas are set out such as an office and Jabadeo space, and children can move freely deciding where to play. Doors are open which lead directly to the garden giving children choice of whether to play indoors or out. There are good facilities including an entrance foyer where children store their coats and bags giving them a sense of pride and belonging. The environment is light and bright with low level windows enabling children to see out and which is well maintained throughout. Storage is exceptionally good with low level shelving made from pallets. This effectively supports for example sand play, holding books, colanders and mashers allowing children to be independent and develop their own play. The result is a relaxing, calm environment with happy, busy children. Furniture of different sizes enables children to work at different levels.

People who run the setting provide children with a rich and stimulating environment with a wealth of natural, interesting, and well-maintained resources such as a plumbing board containing taps, switches, locks and hi viz jackets. Various shaped building blocks including imitation full-size bricks stimulates the imagination and encourages children to problem solve and role play. Staff ensure the outdoors, is exceptionally well equipped with an abundance of resources such as a dolls' house with ethnic and different aged figures, effectively reflecting a diverse community. There is something different around every corner to catch the children's eye and explore such as prewriting stones and loose parts. It is an exciting place to be using a small computer and a phone sitting on a small office chair. Staff raise children's awareness about the world around them and caring for animals with a visit from a donkey. There are good opportunities for children to practice using their senses through indoor and outdoor play and learn about recycling by collecting rainwater in barrels.

People running the setting have written a statement of purpose, which provides parents with the required information about what the setting offers and parents can decide whether it meets theirs and their child's needs. A full range of policies and procedures including risk assessments are updated regularly and there are good systems in place to ensure these are current and effectively reflect the practice of the service such as the Wednesday Wellie Walk.

There is an effective system to evaluate the setting and care provided. People who run the setting consider parental views and children's feedback through observations as part of the evaluation of the setting. They value and quickly implement the ideas and suggestions of other visiting professionals such as Flying Start and Early Education who told us they are very pleased with the practice in the setting and the way in which it is run. Changes are made that benefit the children such as new waterproof suits. There is a good balance of leadership where the provision is continually reviewed and where staff work to their strengths which effectively ensures the setting moves forward effectively. Written confirmation that recommendations from the inspection have been completed, most immediately, show how the setting wants to improve and always reflect best practice.

People who run the setting have established a strong leadership, in a short space of time, where roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Staff are well qualified and attend extra courses to update their knowledge and skills such as Makaton and speech and language courses. This has resulted in a team of staff who work together superbly well and support each other in providing effective play and care for the children. Staff are very happy and feel they are well supported. Staff supervisions and appraisals are noted which allow them to share information and identify potential training.

People who run the setting have excellent partnerships with parents. Parents spoken to are pleased with the setting and say 'Their children are happy. Staff are friendly and they can approach them with anything'. Staff ask for spare clothes and they wash and dry the children's clothes which may get wet or muddy whilst children are playing. This ensures children can play freely and explore and parents do not have extra clothes to wash. Parents are well informed of their child's day and what they have enjoyed, taking plenty of time to chat in a relaxing environment showing keen interest in the lives of the children. Close working relationships with the school helps to support the setting, the children, and their families. Local amenities such as a nearby parks provide effective opportunities for children to access a range of different experiences and learn about the world around them.

Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people’s well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement

Regulation	Summary	Status
------------	---------	--------

N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
-----	--	-----

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children’s well-being.
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children’s well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

Date Published 25/05/2023