



Inspection Report

Little Stars Wrap Around

**Abercarn Primary School
Chapel of Ease
Abercarn
NP11 5LH**



Date Inspection Completed

16/01/2023

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About Little Stars Wrap Around

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Kelly Podmore
Registered places	19
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	5 July 2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	Click or tap here to enter text.No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

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

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

Summary

Children are happy and settled within the setting. They have warm relationships with each other and staff, which helps them feel safe and valued. Children can make some choices about how they spend their time and they confidently move around the environment. Their independence and other skills are not developing as much as they could because of the limited variety of experiences on offer to them and their engagement levels with those activities.

Staff are attentive and know the children well. They are confident in their role and clear policies and procedures support them in this. They plan some adult-initiated activities for children but these require further development for the benefit of children.

The premises are secure and safe. The environment is bright and welcoming. Cleanliness is suitable and levels of maintenance and décor provided by the landlord is adequate for the purposes of the service provided. The environment is resourced by the landlord and is not well-equipped, which managers should consider.

Many areas of leadership and management are effective, but some practice and regulatory matters require further attention. Managers listen to staff and they feel valued and supported as a result. There are suitable policies and procedures in place, and records and documentation are maintained appropriately. Parents speak highly of the care their children receive.

Children are confident and resilient. They move freely around the play room, and can make some limited choices about what they play with based on what is available. They are well aware of their daily routines. Children are given good opportunity to express themselves and talk about the things that are important to them, particularly at snack times when staff make a point of sitting with the children and engaging in conversation. However, their voice and control over their experiences is limited at this setting. For example, when children consistently wanted to return to an activity they had requested early in the session, staff repeatedly told them they could not and had to do a different activity instead.

Children feel safe, content and valued at the setting. They develop warm relationships with other children and staff. Children approach care staff spontaneously to seek reassurance or support and enjoy receiving praise and recognition for their efforts. We saw children laughing and smiling as staff joined in with their play, such as dancing and singing. Children are very confident in the service. They immediately approach us when we arrive, talked with us, took our hand and invited us in.

Children co-operate, take turns and share, and they are developing sensitivity to the emotions of others. They demonstrate a suitable understanding of what is expected of them whilst they are at the setting. Children are learning to negotiate their play and some of the older children are learning to play co-operatively. They are developing a sense of right and wrong and are becoming self-disciplined.

Children enjoy the play-based activities they engage in. We saw children were active and curious throughout the inspection. When the weather allowed, they particularly enjoyed playing outdoors after school, playing football, roleplaying, running and chasing. However, it is difficult for children to hold a sustained interest in activities of their choosing as resources indoors are very limited at the setting. It is also difficult for them to sustain interest in adult-initiated activities because they do not always fit with children's abilities or allow children to be an active participant.

Children have some suitable opportunities to be independent. Many children access the toilet facilities themselves and wash their own hands. They can access resources with ease from storage units in the room, and they are practicing the routine of tidying when activities change. However, when doing the daily adult-directed craft activity, which all children were required to stop their play to complete, they practiced very few skills, instead watching staff complete parts of the activity for them or under direct instruction.

Care and Development**Adequate**

Staff are effective in their roles. They are clear about their responsibilities and effectively implement procedures. Staff have suitable knowledge of how to keep children safe and healthy. Meals and snacks are provided from home but staff support children in their eating, encouraging them to eat their sandwiches before their desserts, helping them with packaging and reminding children to have a good drink. Staff ensure that children frequently wash their hands at appropriate times. Staff know how to raise safeguarding concerns. They speak confidently about safeguarding procedures and know that managers will be responsive to any concerns they raise. There are procedures for reporting accidents, incidents and existing injuries, but the records are not always clear to which category they belong.

Staff interact in a kind and caring manner with children. They provide comfort for children who are unsettled, and children readily approach staff for cuddles. Staff act as positive role models to children and clearly enjoy their jobs. In the main, they are consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour, but they are not always sufficiently mindful of children's age and stage of development. For example, not always recognising that a child isn't yet able to join in with an activity, rather than thinking a child is choosing not to. Staff also use loud voices consistently which is unnecessary in such a small service.

Whilst children are always active, they are not sufficiently positively occupied and stimulated. Staff know children well and provide comfort and reassurance when children need it. However, their understanding of children's individual needs and preferences is not sufficiently robust. Written activity planning is very basic and does not consider how the activity will promote children's skills and development or how staff can support this. Neither the activity provision nor routine indicate that staff consider the need for children to make their own choices, follow their own interests and have time to persevere and extend their play. We heard only limited inclusion of the Welsh language.

Environment**Adequate**

The environment is safe and secure for children. All visitors sign in and out of the main school building and receive an ID badge. Daily safety checks of the areas used by children are undertaken. However, the risk assessments that back these up are not thorough or robust. Records show that fire drills are carried out in line with National Minimum Standards. Insurance certificates are up to date. The Registered Person assured us that the landlord would have undertaken the necessary routine safety checks for the building, i.e. an annual gas safety check and an electrical safety certificate. However, she had not had sight of them and had no system in place to ensure she has sight of them when they are renewed. There was a significant delay in providing them for the inspection. Failure to assure themselves that all parts of the premises are safe has been highlighted as an Area for Improvement. While no immediate action is required, we expect the provider to take action to resolve the matter.

Managers and staff maintain the environment appropriately and provide a welcoming, child friendly space. Children have sufficient space to play, as well as suitable child sized furniture. Children's toilets are easily accessible, which allows for the development of independence, and they are well stocked with soap and paper towels to promote an infection free environment. However, a communal hand towel is the only hand drying method provided in the adult toilet, which increases risks of cross-contamination. There is a covered outside play area, which children enjoy accessing. The children also have use of the adjoining yard area for larger games when not in use by the school. Walls are decorated very busily by other users outside of the service's operating hours which can make the environment a little overwhelming. Little of it is the children's own work and children have no space to display their own work.

Resources are mostly appropriate for the age of the children and most are of adequate quality. However, the selection and quantity is small and this limits the activities children can undertake. The layout and contents of the environment is largely dictated by others who use the same space at different times to this service. A small selection of resources provided by the other users are stored at low levels and in containers which are of a manageable size for children to handle, helping to support their free choice. We saw children confidently bringing out stored resources of their choosing during the inspection. Books are available in both English and Welsh, but are mostly in poor condition. Almost no natural, sustainable materials or real life items are included. This service has a small cupboard in which to store additional resources in efforts to enhance the provision. Whilst some efforts are made to provide children with a range of good quality resources, these are not sufficient to support their play, learning and development.

Leadership and Management

Adequate

The quality of leadership and management varies at this setting. Managers are experienced and are clearly passionate about providing good quality care. In the areas where they fall short, they must do more to adhere to National Minimum Standards and regulations. There is a detailed statement of purpose providing parents with essential information about how the setting runs. The setting's policies are mostly appropriate, although some have not been reviewed and updated in light of changes to official guidance in recent years. The administering of medication is recorded appropriately, and the registers of children's attendance contained all the necessary information and are completed in a timely manner.

Children and parents using the service are actively involved in defining and measuring the quality of the service. There is a system in place to ensure that a formal self-evaluation of the service is undertaken on at least an annual basis. The Quality of Care report demonstrated that the service consults with parents, staff, children and relevant external agencies in order to review the quality of the service, and uses that information to set an action plan intended to improve the service over the following 12 months.

Managers and staff are generally well organised and we saw that this allowed them to remain calm whilst delivering care. Staff confirmed they enjoy working at the setting. They feel supported, knowing they can approach managers for help and support if needed. All staff benefit from regular supervision and appraisal meetings to reflect on their practice. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that suitable staff are employed to work with children. Appropriate records are checked for new recruits.

Positive relationships with the community are valued at this setting. Staff told us that the relationships they build with parents are important to them and that many families send sibling after sibling through the service, maintaining a strong bond between staff and families. Staff are keen to ensure that parents feel they can approach them at any time. Parents are confident to leave their children in the care of the setting, and all feedback we received from parents was very positive. Staff ensure parents are kept informed of their child's day at handover, and managers ensure they have all the information they need to make an informed choice about using the service.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R1. Ensure children's voice is promoted at all times.

R2. Activity planning must be strengthened to ensure children benefit from sufficiently thought-through and varied activities. The structure of the day should also be reconsidered to reduce unnecessary disruption to children's play.

R3. Further promote the Welsh language within the provision.

R4. Review and enrich the play environment, including ensuring that risk assessments are thorough for each area accessed by children.

R5. Communal hand towels are not suitable for the adult bathroom.

R6. Review and update policies. Date policy versions.

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
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25	Ensure the Registered Person has sight of and records all necessary safety certificates when they are renewed by the landlord.	New
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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.

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