



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

**A report on**

**Playdays Nursery  
The Spinney  
Fronhir  
Knighton  
Powys  
LD7 1HT**

**Date of inspection: January 2020**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

## About Playdays Nursery

Name of setting	Playdays Nursery
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Hannah Price
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Not applicable
Person in charge	Lehanne Healy
Number of places	26
Age range of children	3 months to 4 years old
Number of children funded for up to two terms	0
Number of children funded for up to five terms	20
Opening days / times	8:00am to 5:30pm
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a setting that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people /children who use, or intend to use their setting. This may be because the setting is situated in a primarily English speaking area and the provider does not currently intend to offer or promote a Welsh language service. We recommend that the setting 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	14/03/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	This is the first Estyn inspection

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Dates of this inspection visit(s)	21/01/2020
Additional information	

## Summary

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Wellbeing</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 Improve the balance between child-led play and adult-directed activities
- R2 Ensure that children have access to a wide range of resources that facilitate a wide range of learning and play opportunities

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all children make effective choices about food, drink and where and what they play. They are confident that practitioners will listen to them and respect their wishes. Most children engage positively in their choice of activities and show a suitable level of motivation and perseverance when working independently and with peers during a free play period. For example, almost all children choose where they play during free play, whether they want milk or water to drink and whether they want more food at snack time.

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 a cuddle when they first enter the service. Children settle quickly and go directly to the free play activities of their choice. One of the youngest children selected a book, and sat on a staff member's lap joining in and engaging with the staff member whilst she read the book. Children develop a good sense of belonging and know the setting routine well.

Nearly all children interact well together and are developing friendships. They co-operate and are beginning to be considerate to each other, such as saying please and thank you at snack time. They are beginning to understand taking turns and sharing with their friends. For example, two children who wanted to play with a train together decided that they would have a go for a set period of time and then swap. Another example was when one child became upset when they did not have a spoon, so another child offered theirs.

Many children sustain their concentration effectively in group tasks, such as listening and participating during circle time. They are confident to initiate their own play and become engrossed in their activities. For example, a group of children enjoyed setting up and playing with the train track, although these may be restricted at times due to lack of space. Many children take good care of equipment and engage willingly at tidy up time.

Many children are becoming independent. For example, they wash and dry their hands with minimal support. Nearly all children develop independence skills at snack time as they choose their own toast and fruit confidently, use small tongs successfully and try to pour their own drinks. However, appropriate cutlery was not used at lunchtime. Younger children are encouraged to feed themselves and support is given as and when needed. Children attempt independently to put on waterproofs, coats and wellies for outdoor play and access the toilet independently.

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

Nearly all children make good progress from their individual starting points and most achieve good standards in relation to their stage of development.

Most children's speaking and listening skills are good. Nearly all children make themselves understood and most speak clearly when chatting about their favourite fruits at snack time. Most listen carefully and respond accurately to what they have heard. For example, they follow instructions to find their coat and boots to go outdoors.

During story time, nearly all children pay close attention and express enjoyment when naming the animals in the story. Nearly all look at a book that they choose for themselves. They handle books correctly and turn the pages carefully. Many children choose to share a book with a friend during free play. They look carefully at the pictures and talk about how it relates to real life. For example, they notice toys in a bedroom and comment that they have the same train track at home. Nearly all children recognise their name independently. They return their toothbrush to the holder independently and find their placemat at snack time.

Nearly all children develop their mark making skills successfully and many use mark making resources independently. Most children make very good attempts at writing their name and a few children write recognisable letters clearly. Most enjoy drawing pictures of things that are important to them and speak clearly about their work.

Most children develop their numeracy skills well. Nearly all join in with number action songs and express enjoyment. They count backwards from five to one during songs and rhymes. At circle time, nearly all count beyond ten and many identify accurately how many boys and girls are present. A few find a number tile to represent the number of boys and girls. Most use numbers up to ten accurately and a few use first, second, third, fourth, fifth accurately when ordering the animals in the story of Chinese New Year. Nearly all children sort according to one property of an object, such as shape or size. Many use language to describe position accurately during their play. For example, when playing with the building blocks they talk about putting blocks on top and next to each other.

Most children make good progress in developing their physical skills. They throw and catch a large ball confidently and jump with two feet off the ground when leaping. Nearly all walk across a fixed beam independently, with a few children walking across a wobbly beam with increasing balance. Nearly all develop their fine motor skills effectively and thread small beads onto a string successfully to make a repeating pattern.

Nearly all children use the tablet to take photographs independently. They retrieve the image to show their friends and talk about what they see. Nearly all children use the programmable toy correctly. They express enjoyment when watching the toy move and show delight when it stops in the right place.

Most children develop suitable problem solving skills. They experiment and choose utensils to dig and tip the soil into the wheelbarrow so that it will be easier to move to the muddy area.

Most children develop their Welsh language skills well. Nearly all join in with songs enthusiastically and express enjoyment. Nearly all respond positively to simple Welsh instructions and phrases and use Welsh to name fruits at snack time and to ask for a drink.

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

Nearly all practitioners promote children's health and wellbeing effectively. They offer healthy, nutritious snacks and meals including fresh fruit and vegetables. There are suitable arrangements for encouraging healthy life styles through daily routines. For example, children participate in exercises, brush their teeth and wash their hands at appropriate points in the day. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Nearly all practitioners understand how to respond to child protection issues and there are appropriate policies, information and procedures to promote the welfare of children. However, dignity and privacy are not always respected. For example, the toilet door is left open when children use the facilities.

Nearly all practitioners demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the children's individual needs, abilities and preferences. Practitioners manage children's behaviour well. They use praise and encouragement effectively to help children understand what is acceptable. Nearly all practitioners take appropriate action to deal with any unwanted behaviour and are good role models. They remind children to share toys and 'use kind hands'. Most practitioners use eye contact and calming, soft tones when speaking with children, creating a relaxed atmosphere. They give children appropriate verbal praise and celebrate their achievements effectively.

Practitioners have a good understanding of how to promote child development effectively. They implement the keyworker system well and develop a strong understanding about the children in their care. Practitioners ensure that nearly all children have suitable access to all areas of learning. This is particularly evident in the area for three and four-year-olds. They undertake regular observations of children and evaluate activities, to identify and promote children's development effectively. Staff provide high levels of support in all areas for children with specific needs. For example, practitioners adapt activities to suit the individual needs of each child to support and enhance their learning appropriately. They provide worthwhile opportunities to promote children's awareness of cultural diversity and sustainability through appropriate activities and resources, for example dressing up clothes, books and role-play areas.

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

Practitioners plan a worthwhile range of learning experiences, which engage nearly all children successfully. They make good use of children's interests to plan future activities. For example, they provide plenty of real-life resources in the role-play restaurant after they notice that the children enjoy pretending to cook. Practitioners model transactional role-play language well to support the children in their play. They plan visits to enrich the curriculum suitably, such as going to the local shop to buy ingredients for cooking soup.

Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of the ethos of the foundation phase. They plan beneficial opportunities for children to learn through first-hand experience during free play. This is particularly effective in the outdoors where children explore the mud kitchen and the digging area independently.



However, on occasions, the balance between activities focuses too much on those that are adult directed at the expense of those led by the children.

Provision for literacy and numeracy across the curriculum ensures that children make good progress in developing these skills. Practitioners provide suitable opportunities for children to develop their communication and reading skills. For example, older children develop their phonological awareness skills when they are ready.

Practitioners model good reading behaviours and respond quickly to requests from children to read stories during free play. As a result, most children enjoy looking at books and handle a book as a reader. Practitioners are good language role models and use questioning well to challenge children. For example, they ask children what might have happened to the water in the mud kitchen when children notice ice in the water tray. They offer a good range of exciting materials both indoors and outdoors to encourage children to experiment with mark making resources. As a result, children make effective progress in their early writing skills including when writing their name to sign in.

Practitioners prepare worthwhile opportunities to develop children's numeracy skills across the curriculum well. For example, there is a plentiful supply of open-ended resources in the outdoor classroom for children to sort, count and make patterns.

There are worthwhile learning experiences to promote children's spiritual, moral and social development successfully. For example, a sense of awe and wonder is fostered well through opportunities for children to explore the natural environment and notice changes throughout the seasons. Practitioners plan opportunities for children to experiment with new experiences successfully. This is particularly strong in the outdoors where children explore the mud kitchen and the digging area. There are beneficial activities for children to learn about acting sustainably. For example, children have plenty of opportunity to recycle waste food after snack and to compost their fruit peelings.

Practitioners use a robust and methodical approach to ensure that foundation phase skills are taught throughout the year. Practitioners make useful observations of children and use this information well to inform next steps in planning for children to make systematic progress.

Practitioners keep pre-school parents and carers well informed about the progress their child is making. They provide helpful information and ideas to support learning at home effectively.

### **Environment: Good**

Leaders ensure that children are cared for in a safe, clean and secure environment. There is a suitable system to manage access to the main building, and visitors are recorded consistently. The setting is well maintained and there are regular checks on electrical and fire systems. Practitioners review risk assessments of the environment and activities to keep children safe. For example, children were not allowed to access the climbing frame due to the frost.

Overall leaders ensure that the indoor and outdoor learning environments offer an engaging and beneficial range of opportunities for children to be active, independent

and inquisitive. The premises are welcoming and friendly, providing suitable space and facilities to meet the needs of children. The walls of the play areas are decorated with attractive displays, which celebrate the children's current art and craft work. There is a secure outdoor play space that children access for set amounts of time. This provides opportunities for children to be physically active and to develop wider skills allowing or some challenges and supporting them to take risks. For example, children learn about balance when walking along beams, some of which are fixed and some of which are free standing.

Children have access to resources that are suitable for their needs. Leaders store the toys and resources safely and they label drawers clearly. This enables children to choose independently their resources and toys. However, there is a need for the children to have access to a wider variety of resources to help them develop holistically.

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

Leaders work closely with all staff to set a clear and strategic vision for the work of the setting and to create a positive ethos. Leaders and managers set high expectations for staff. They achieve this through good role modelling. The manager provides hands on support throughout the day to ensure that staff feel that they can do their best. As a result, all practitioners feel valued and supported in their work.

The responsible person shares an up-to-date statement of purpose that provides an accurate picture of what the service offers. Leaders ensure that there are effective policies and procedures to support practitioners in their work.

Leaders safely recruit suitably qualified practitioners. They provide regular robust supervision, which focuses on improving performance and identifying future training needs effectively. The manager ensures that there is a noticeable focus on discussions around day-to-day practice, which leaders follow up through regular observation and monitoring. This helps all practitioners to understand what is expected of them. Leaders deploy practitioners effectively and have suitable contingency plans for unplanned staff absences.

There are useful opportunities for practitioners' continuous professional development. Pre-school practitioners have good opportunities to improve their professional knowledge. For example, following recent literacy training, the setting has introduced valuable opportunities for children to improve their literacy skills in meaningful contexts. Practitioners in the toddler and baby room attend training events to improve provision and outcomes for the children in their care.

Leaders have good procedures to review the quality of care, which accurately identify what the setting does well and areas that require improvement. Leaders draw effectively on first-hand evidence of the quality of care provided to evaluate the work of the setting. They promote and sustain improvements effectively. There are robust plans to ensure that all previous targets and recommendations are met. As a result, the setting has a good record of making improvements.

There are valuable arrangements to involve all staff in self-evaluation procedures, especially pre-school staff and managers. This process has led to accurate

identification of strengths and areas for improvement. They ensure that development planning focuses well on improving children's learning and wellbeing. They prioritise areas for improvement successfully and regularly monitor against clear targets and success criteria.

Leaders draw well on advice from external reviews. Partnership working with the local authority is strong and leaders view the support as being valuable in improving outcomes. They respond positively to advice and work with practitioners to secure improvements to the provision in the setting.

Leaders and practitioners have worthwhile partnerships with the local school and settings in the area. They share information and visit each other regularly to discuss good practice. Practitioners view this partnership as beneficial as this has helped them to make improvements to provision and routines in the setting.

Leaders and practitioners nurture relationships with parents well and provide good support for learning at home. For example, the setting regularly updates the social media page with ideas for activities at home. Parents find this support valuable.

## 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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