



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

**A report on**

**Rhayader Under 5's Pre-School**

**Old Cricket Pavilion  
Rhayader Primary School  
Bryntinion Lane  
Powys  
LD6 5LT**

**Date of inspection: February 2023**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

**This report is also available in Welsh.**

## About Rhayader Under 5's Pre-School

Name of setting	Rhayader Under 5's Pre- School
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Robyn Vaughan, Fiona Abberley, Gemma Davies
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Emma Bevan
Number of places	26
Age range of children	2-4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	22
Number of children who receive funding for early education	13
Opening days / times	08:30 – 16:00 (Monday to 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 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.
Date of previous CIW inspection	02/07/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	24/11/2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	07/02/2023
Nearly all children come from English speaking homes.	

## **Non-compliance**

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Ensure that practitioners focus more clearly on how children make progress in their literacy, numeracy, and ICT skills over time
- R2 Develop the use of observations to better inform future learning opportunities
- R3 Ensure that all required documentation is reviewed, monitored, and kept up to date
- R4 Ensure that leaders manage the performance of all practitioners effectively to identify strengths and areas for professional learning

## **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:

Nearly all children enjoy their time at Rhayader Under 5's Pre School. They have plenty of opportunities to make appropriate choices and decisions about their play. They move freely around the areas, choosing where and what to play with confidently. Nearly all children follow their own interests and engage in activities for sustained and age-appropriate periods. Most children are confident and outgoing communicators. For example, they happily approach practitioners to engage with them in their play and chat easily with them at snack times about things that interest them.

Nearly all children separate from parents and carers readily and are eager to play with their friends. They have warm and stable relationships with practitioners and turn to them for reassurance when they become unsettled or upset to receive support which makes them feel safe and secure. For example, children who were unsettled at arrival stayed close to practitioners until they felt ready to join in and play. Most children are clear and familiar with routines of the setting. For example, they remind practitioners when it is time for snack. Nearly all children are developing a strong sense of belonging and thoughtful reminders of home, such as familiar items in the home role play area, support them to feel settled and comfortable.

Nearly all children are developing their personal and social skills well. They share resources and show kindness with very few prompts from practitioners. For example, they invite their friends to join in activities they know they will enjoy. Nearly all children follow instructions appropriately, such as tidying up at the end of the session.

Nearly all children participate enthusiastically in their play and learning. They move around the indoor and outdoor areas freely and enjoy group activities such as playing with playdough or copying the movements modelled by practitioners as they listen to music.

Most children are beginning to develop their independent skills effectively. They competently and skilfully use knives to cut their fruit at snack time. They pour drinks from jugs into china cups and transfer their dishes to the sink area to wash once snack time is completed. Most children are developing increasingly independent self-care skills. For example, they wash their hands independently and hang up their belongings in the cloakroom and access their lunchboxes at the appropriate time.

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

Most children make suitable progress from their starting points during their time at the setting. Most children's literacy, communication and personal and social skills are developing well. They talk confidently and use a wide range of vocabulary. For example, when playing with the farm a few children describe in detail the animals and farm machinery they have at home on their farm. Most children enjoy playing with their friends and taking on roles in the play. For example, they take their babies for walks and visits to the doctors. Nearly all children enjoy listening to stories and are

beginning to handle books as a reader. They turn the pages of the book and discuss in detail the illustrations. Most children develop their listening and speaking skills effectively. They listen with understanding and carry out instructions well. Most are developing their fine motor skills well. They are beginning to make meaning of their own marks and understand the functions of writing. For example, they form familiar letters and marks when attempting to write their names.

Many children are beginning to develop an understanding of simple Welsh words, instructions and greetings that are used in the setting. A few children count, name colours, shapes, and farm animals in their play. However, there are limited opportunities for children to learn a range of Welsh songs and rhymes to further support their language development.

Most children develop their numeracy skills appropriately. They are beginning to use mathematical language in their play. For example, they discuss the shape and size of blocks and the length of planks that are needed when building a farmhouse. A few children are beginning to understand the terms full and empty as they fill pots and empty them. Most children develop their physical and coordination skills well. They use knives confidently to cut fruit at snack time and use screwdrivers to screw nails into wood in the woodwork area. They balance on beams and enjoy jumping and moving to action songs.

Most children are beginning to develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills appropriately. For example, they understand how to programme a sequence of moves to make their toy travel across the floor. Most children develop creative skills appropriately through art and craft activities and choose the materials and resources they want to use. For example, they make flowers from scraps of coloured paper to enhance their block play farm. A few children enjoy investigating how paint mixes to form new colours using their hands to combine the colours on paper.

### **Care and development:**

All practitioners are caring, nurturing and supportive. They interact with children in a kind and thoughtful manner. They use praise and encouragement, along with a range of positive behaviour strategies, to manage children's interactions well. Practitioners support children to share and take turns and consider the impact of their actions on others. They are consistent in their responses and nearly all children are happy and confident to approach them with ease. This supports children to develop a strong sense of well-being and self-confidence. They ensure that snack and lunchtimes are valuable opportunities to develop social and independence skills. For example, they encourage children to choose their own food and drinks and eat alongside them while engaging them in conversation and modelling good manners. As a result, practitioners create a positive and happy atmosphere at the setting.

Practitioners know their responsibilities to keep children safe and follow the setting's policies and procedures appropriately. They understand their responsibility to safeguard and protect children from harm and report issues that are of concern. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Accident and incident records are maintained, and information recorded appropriately. However, practitioners do not monitor these records

frequently enough to identify any emerging trends and therefore eliminate any possible impact to children.

Practitioners practise good hygiene procedures and follow the setting's policies and procedures in relation to hygiene, health and safety. They are knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities in relation to promoting children's health. For example, they support and encourage children to get fresh air and encourage healthy snack choices.

Practitioners support children's development appropriately. They are beginning to understand when to intervene to develop and extend children's play and when to step back to allow children to use their own initiative. Practitioners strive to foster positive, working relationships with parents and provide regular feedback on children's well-being and progress. Children with additional learning needs are well supported by caring practitioners who seek to understand and nurture them. Practitioners make useful observations of children's likes and dislikes and use this information to inform their practice as well as to share with specialist services on how they are progressing.

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

Practitioners know their children well. They take notice and respond appropriately to their needs and interests. They have a good understanding of the importance of giving children time to explore and play and how this helps them to learn, formulate their ideas and develop their skills.

Practitioners have a good understanding of child development and are beginning to gain an understanding of the Curriculum for Wales. They consider the interests of the children appropriately and use these as a starting point to help them to plan experiences and activities. For example, following an interest in farms, they add farm vehicles and farm animals to the construction area for children to play with. Practitioners are beginning to gather useful information on children's learning and development from observing their play. They are beginning to use these observations to assess where children are and how they can use this information to enrich future experiences. However, overall practitioners do not use these observations well enough to plan future activities and experiences that will deepen and extend children's learning.

There are worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their physical and creative skills. Practitioners encourage children's mark making skills effectively, providing a range of resources throughout the environment where children can draw pictures and attempt to write their names.

The setting supports the development of children's literacy skills appropriately. Practitioners provide good opportunities for children to build on their language and communication skills through listening to stories and talking about images on photographs. Most practitioners model the Welsh language appropriately. However, there are limited opportunities for children to learn a range of Welsh songs and rhymes during their time at the setting. Practitioners build on children's mathematical understanding suitably. They join in and model counting to 10 when children are

counting the number of blocks needed to make their model. A few practitioners use children's play as opportunities to recap on previous learning, for example when playing with coloured streamers they make large shapes in the air for children to copy and name. The setting has recently purchased resources to support children's digital skills, which is beginning to have a positive impact. For, example, children discuss how they will programme a battery-operated bot to move across the floor. Overall, however, practitioners do not always consider well enough how children will make progress in their communication, numeracy and ICT skills throughout their time at the setting.

Generally, practitioners are suitable language role models. Most practitioners play well alongside children and use questions to challenge thinking and to check for understanding. However, at times they do not always judge when it is best to stand back and observe children's play and when it is appropriate to interact. As a result, practitioners can sometimes dominate the play and ask too many questions, which does not allow children time to think and formulate their own ideas.

Practitioners help children to develop a sense of awe and wonder through observing the signs of nature around them. For example, they encourage children to look at closely at how water has frozen into ice and how it feels as it melts.

The setting provides an appropriate range of activities and celebrations that support children to learn about Wales and its culture. They plan for children to participate in activities such as making Welsh cakes and dressing in traditional clothes for St David's Day, and they take regular walks around their local area. Practitioners provide suitable activities for children to learn about other cultures and their traditions and celebrations.

### **Environment:**

The setting is based in a recently built building in the grounds of the local school. It is surrounded by woodland, and they have access to their own forest school area directly outside the premises. Leaders ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. They have effective systems, including written risk assessments and daily room checks, to reduce or eliminate potential hazards. There is a suitable system to manage access to the setting and practitioners record details of visitors consistently. The setting is well maintained and clean, with effective cleaning routines to help prevent cross contamination. For example, tables are sanitised before and after children eat. The toilets and changing facilities are accessible and clean and provide the appropriate privacy and dignity for the children.

The setting is welcoming and attractive and provides a rich and happy environment for play and learning. The indoor area is spacious, and children move freely from one activity to the next. Furniture is at a suitably low level, allowing children to use and access it independently. There is a wide range of resources available for children, which they access independently and move from one area to the other as they play. There is space for practitioners to play alongside children in small groups and in pairs. For example, children and practitioners can curl up with a book on the cushions in the book corner or they can build large models from wooden blocks. Practitioners use the space flexibly and consider the needs of the children, particularly those with additional learning needs, well. For example, they have

provided a quiet 'den' area for those children who may need time by themselves in a cosy, nurturing and more enclosed space.

The environment is decorated with examples of the children's recent artwork. This gives children a sense of belonging and helps them feel proud of what they have achieved. The setting has direct access to an enclosed outdoor area, which is used daily. Practitioners provide children with a wide range of opportunities that support them in learning about the world around them.

The setting has a wide range of good quality, child-friendly resources that are suitable for the age and stages of development of the children. Practitioners enhance indoor areas of learning well. For example, they provide homely items such as photo frames and a china fruit bowl in the home corner along with a selection of pots and pans in the kitchen area. Practitioners support children's awareness of different cultures by making appropriate resources available such as dolls and books about different people and their traditions and celebrations.

### **Leadership and management:**

There is a warm and welcoming ethos at the setting. The newly appointed leader has quickly established a strong sense of teamwork with staff and, as result, practitioners work effectively to support each other. Despite being new to post, the leader has worked swiftly to implement beneficial changes throughout the setting. The committee members and Registered Individuals have created a strong partnership and consequently the leader feels well supported in her new role. Leaders have created a clear vision, one where children are happy and engaged in their learning and become increasingly independent as they develop new skills. This is shared well with staff and parents.

Leaders identify the strengths and areas for development at the setting accurately. They are beginning to make good use of a range of evidence to inform them in their self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. The statement of purpose is clear and provides an accurate picture of the setting, allowing parents to make informed decisions around the suitability of the setting for their child. Generally, the setting has effective policies in place. However, leaders do not ensure that the completion of the quality-of-care report is reviewed and implemented in a timely manner.

Leaders ensure that staff have clear and up-to-date job descriptions that contain clear information relating to their roles and responsibilities. They ensure that safe recruitment procedures are in place and that there are a suitable number of practitioners with relevant and appropriate qualifications and experience. There are appropriate appraisal and supervision procedures in place for the setting leader. However, the wider systems for practitioners' supervision and appraisal are not in place. As a result, practitioners do not have beneficial opportunities to reflect on their own practice and identify the targets for improvement.

Leaders make effective use of grants and other funding to improve the setting. For example, they purchase beneficial resources to improve their outdoor provision. The recent addition of the outdoor sand pit is having a positive impact on developing children's well-being and physical skills.



Leaders work well with parents and carers and keep them suitably informed of their child's progress and development. The setting provides beneficial information for parents on how they can access free resources in the local area, which children can bring into setting to use when they are playing outside or going for local walks.

Leaders have developed strong links with a range of partners, including the local advisory teacher, to support and enhance children's learning and development. Practitioners access beneficial professional learning opportunities, particularly those related to the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales. Leaders work closely with the local authority's early years additional learning needs team and external agencies to ensure that children with additional learning needs are well supported and that their needs are met. There are suitable transition arrangements with local schools to support all children to move confidently to the next stage of their education.

## 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))

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