



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

**A report on**

**Llandogo Early Years**

**Llandogo Millennium Hall  
Llandogo  
Monmouthshire  
NP25 4TJ**

**Date of inspection: June 2023**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

## About Llandogo Early Years

Name of setting	Llandogo Early Years
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Rachel Davies
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Not applicable
Person in charge	Rachel Davies, Sian Morgan, Lucy Unsworth
Number of places	24
Age range of children	2 to 5 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	17
Number of children who receive funding for early education	12
Opening days / times	Monday to Thursday, 9:00 to 3:00 Friday, 9:00 to 13:00, Term time only.
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	9 October 2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	December 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	13/06/2023

## 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>Excellent</b>
<b>Care and development</b>	<b>Poor</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>Excellent</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Adequate</b>

## Non-compliance

We identified non-compliance in relation to Care and Development and we have issued a priority action notice to the provider. The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements.

## Recommendations

R1 Review policies and procedures and ensure that all practitioners follow them consistently

R2 Address the areas of non-compliance identified during the inspection

## 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 make confident choices and decisions about how they spend their time at the setting. Children freely move between the many activities on offer in the play environment to follow their interests. All children express themselves confidently. For example, on arrival, children confidently place a mark next to a picture of the choices of fruit available for snack that day, indicating which fruit they would like to eat.

Nearly all children are very happy and relaxed and enjoy their time at the setting. They are extremely comfortable in their surroundings and are familiar with the daily routines. Nearly all children develop positive and healthy relationships with their friends and practitioners. They engage with practitioners and peers confidently when exploring the learning environment. For example, a child asked why there were broad beans in the home corner and was informed that the beans were for popping so they could make a dip. A small group of children discussed at length the different options to open the beans. A child independently suggested snipping the beans with scissors and eagerly went off to locate the scissors to test their idea.

Nearly all children enjoy spending time playing with the practitioners alongside their friends. They show interest and support each other well in their play. For example, while looking at books in the forest area, children pointed out a picture of an aphid to

a practitioner. They proceeded very excitedly to go and look for aphids in the trees, exploring the textures of the bark and discussing what they found. Nearly all children behave extremely well and are very polite. Children are developing excellent social skills and are patient whilst waiting their turn. They say please and thank you to each other independently. Most children enjoy receiving praise from practitioners for good manners and being kind and helpful. Many children describe how they enjoy attending the setting, they especially enjoy the gardening sessions.

Nearly all children are confident to follow their own interest and make independent choices in the resources and activities they want to engage in. As a result, most children are enthusiastic and involved fully in their learning. Nearly all children make very good choices to develop and use their imagination throughout the session and this enables them to have great fun when playing and learning. For example, a child playing in the mud kitchen shared how they were making 'pirate soup.' The child was extremely focused for an extensive period, collecting water using an ice-cream scoop to fill a drink dispenser. They show persistence as they use the tap to pour the water into their bowl of petals and leaves they had previously collected from the woodland grounds.

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

Nearly all children are happy and curious and engage well with the learning opportunities available to them. Nearly all children make at least good progress from their individual starting points, particularly in developing their communication, problem solving and social skills. For example, they co-operate with one another successfully when they create potions in the mud kitchen, taking care to add their secret ingredients such as nettles.

Nearly all children make excellent progress in developing their communication skills. They listen intently to practitioners and their peers and respond confidently. Most children talk enthusiastically about their play using a rich range of vocabulary highly effectively. For example, while exploring how teas from across the world are made, they discuss the importance of 'sieving' and why they need to filter out the tea leaves. Whilst playing with the blocks, children use sophisticated ideas and language to develop their personal and social skills and imagination very well. For example, they invite others to play by asking who would like to play on their aeroplane and telling others that they need to put their seatbelts on. One child uses a wheelbarrow and tells the other children that it is for the bags, children led this play independently.

Most children develop their early reading skills very successfully. For example, when reading a book alongside practitioners, children predict what they think will happen next in the story confidently. The children's love of books is evident as they choose stories to read independently and to share with practitioners, turning pages correctly as they look at the text and pictures.

Most children develop their early mark making skills successfully, such as writing their names in tea leaves and creating a simple label for their creations in the dough

area. A few children help to create a shared story about dragons in the role play area reminding the practitioner to use a capital letter for the names of the characters.

Overall, most children are developing an effective understanding of the Welsh language and respond to instructions well. A few children are beginning to use Welsh vocabulary independently in everyday situations, for example at snack time asking for an apple or blue plate in Welsh.

Most children are developing their physical skills well. They use a range of equipment skilfully to develop their strength and balancing skills, and walk confidently over different textured surfaces whilst outdoors. They consider carefully the risks associated with climbing high and jumping off large boulders and explain how they can keep themselves safe. Nearly all children develop their fine motor physical skills successfully when making marks using a wide range of resources and by using pipettes and hammers correctly.

Most children make good progress in their mathematical development. They explore measuring successfully and use mathematical language naturally in their play. For example, when creating potions in the outdoor area most children can say if their containers are full or half full. Most children count and recognise numbers up to ten confidently and use this effectively when counting the number of children having different fruits for snack.

Most children develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills purposefully. They use cameras confidently to take photographs of their work and have a good understanding of how to use ICT to do research. For example, after finding some minibeasts in the forest, the children researched them on the internet and looked at them under a microscope.

Most children think creatively to solve problems. When deciding to create a home for dinosaurs, they choose materials independently giving a clear reason for their choices such as when choosing a carpet to keep the dinosaurs warm in their home. Nearly all children develop very strong creative skills, for example after reading a book about sea creatures they created them in the dough area and one child made a narwhal with a very long nose. Nearly all children choose the activity they want to do from the moment they enter the setting and demonstrate perseverance and resilience, for example when designing and making a vehicle in the woodwork area and deciding on what tools and size of screws to use to ensure that the wheels stay on their vehicle.

### **Care and development: Poor**

In the main, practitioners understand and implement most policies and procedures to promote healthy lifestyles, physical activities, personal safety and well-being. However, they do not always understand fully their roles and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe and healthy. Practitioners do not always complete medication and accident records in full. Practitioners do not ensure that they follow all safeguarding policies and procedures effectively. Serious risks in relation to the safety of entrances and supervision of children in communal areas have not been

identified or addressed to ensure children are always safe from harm. This is placing children's health and well-being at risk and a priority action notice has been issued. The responsible person must take immediate action to address the issues. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children do not meet requirements and give cause for concern. Overall, children's health needs are considered well. However, practitioners do not always follow the procedures for record keeping sufficiently.

Practitioners offer a range of healthy and well-balanced snacks, which are prepared in line with good hygiene practices. Parents/carers provide children with lunch boxes, which are stored appropriately. There are suitable procedures for dealing with children who have allergies, intolerances and preferences. Practitioners implement these procedures consistently. Children have access to drinking water in areas where they play. For example, when children play outdoors practitioners remind them where their water bottles are, encouraging them to hydrate. Practitioners promote children's physical development well through providing access to the rich and varied outdoor environments available to them.

Practitioners interact extremely well with children. They act as good role models, speaking with each other and with the children respectfully, while building positive relationships with them. Practitioners are kind, patient and offer reassurance to children when needed. They use a positive approach to guide children towards the behaviour expected. Practitioners praise and reinforce positive behaviour frequently, in line with their behaviour management policy. For example, two children supported each other to climb onto a rock. The practitioner observed closely from a distance, and then acknowledged them for their excellent teamwork, praising their efforts and supporting them to develop a sense of empowerment.

Practitioners know the children very well. They carry out regular observations, which support their understanding of each child's individual needs. Practitioners use this information effectively when planning opportunities to provide a wide range of skills and experiences to support children's learning. By offering variety, and ensuring that activities are exciting and engaging, practitioners allow nearly all children to extend their learning and follow their own interests.

Practitioners support children with additional learning needs well. They seek advice and guidance from other professionals, implementing and reviewing identified targets to support the child.

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

Nearly all practitioners have a very good understanding of child development and how children learn. They have high expectations of themselves and the children and know children's individual strengths and needs extremely well. They use this knowledge, as well as observation and assessment arrangements, highly effectively to plan a wide range of stimulating learning experiences that encourage children's curiosity. This develops children's independence, problem-solving and thinking skills sophisticatedly across all areas of learning. Practitioners take advantage of all opportunities for learning. For example, when children find a beetle under a log in the

forest school, practitioners encourage them to think about why it was there. They use the momentum from this moment to allow children to explore and learn about different minibeasts making the most of the opportunities to develop children's communication, thinking and creative skills.

Nearly all practitioners use questioning very skilfully to enhance children's thinking and problem-solving skills and are very effective in understanding when to intervene and when to step back to give children time to work things out for themselves. For example, when children make vehicles in the woodwork area, a practitioner allows the children time to explore the reasons why a wheel does not stay attached to the vehicle and then to investigate the use of other tools and different sizes of screws and nails.

An outstanding feature of the teaching is the way in which practitioners model language. They develop children's use of a rich vocabulary to a high standard. For example, they discuss how sieves are designed to allow water to be filtered and large particles to be extracted to make drinking tea more pleasurable. Practitioners promote the use of Welsh well for children. They speak clearly and take every opportunity to introduce new vocabulary to children purposefully, encouraging them to respond to simple words and phrases in Welsh.

The setting's planning process ensures that well-considered activities enable children to develop a wide range of skills progressively in all areas. Practitioners ensure that most activities are child-initiated and come from the interests of children, including from regular contact with parents and carers who send photographs and information of their children's interests at home to the setting. For example, after a recent visit to Nepal by a child, children's understanding and knowledge of other cultures was enhanced by further research of the country. Practitioners adapt their provision skilfully to respond to these interests, engaging the children in play and learning in a creative way.

Practitioners are highly skilled at observing play and intervening to support children's learning and to challenge them further to develop their skills. They are excellent role models. For example, they share books with children, model how to read a book correctly and discuss the story with enthusiasm, developing children's love of reading. They respond very well to children's interests such as providing opportunities for children to make dough models of sea creatures after seeing them in a story. The support for children with additional needs is very good. Practitioners are attuned to the individual needs of children with a clear understanding of the strategies needed to enable them to make strong progress in their well-being and learning. The use of questioning to encourage children to think and solve problems is an outstanding feature of the setting. For example, children are asked how they can make an area in the forest safe for children to use as a jumping and landing area.

Practitioners make good use of the local area to enhance children's learning. For example, after developing the garden area, children visited the local garden centre and learned about growing plants. They use the local church to explore the effects of stained-glass windows. The use of these worthwhile opportunities fosters a sense of



belonging in the local community as well as enhancing children's knowledge about the history and traditions of Wales.

### **Environment: Good**

Leaders make sure that practitioners follow suitable procedures to ensure that the environment is clean and well maintained. Regular fire evacuation drills are carried out at different times to include all children. Maintenance and safety checks are completed promptly. Practitioners ensure that they check and clean resources regularly. However, risk assessments do not identify all potential hazards, and the necessary steps identified are not always fully considered by staff to mitigate risks. For example, sufficient measures have not been put in place to ensure practitioners supervise children appropriately in communal areas and mitigate any risks that might arise at a time when community groups also use the building, for example when children are using the toilets.

The setting has sufficient facilities and good quality, appropriately sized furniture to meet the children's needs. The layout of the play environment supports children to move around freely and develop independence well. Nappy changing takes place in an area that supports children's privacy and dignity. Children who wish to rest or have some quiet time during the day have access to a range of comfortable and well-resourced areas.

The outdoor environment offers a range of rich play opportunities and experiences for children to develop their physical skills, engage in the natural world and imaginative play well. Children have access to a small outdoor area, with a retractable canopy, which provides shade during the warmer weather. In addition, the neighbouring primary school facilitates access to a large playground and woodland area where children take part in highly engaging weekly forest sessions. A well-developed garden area offers valuable opportunities for children to learn about growing plants and taking care of the environment.

The setting has a wide range of toys and resources of good quality. Many natural, real-life and re-purposed items enrich areas of the environment. For example, fern fronds positioned inside tree stumps are placed in the block play area, enhancing children's play experiences. Children access a range of authentic items such as china tableware in the home corner, mirroring real life experiences and promoting curiosity for children. Practitioners keep resources at a low level to enable children to choose independently and pursue their individual interests effectively. As a result, children are familiar with collecting and returning equipment to their appropriate places.

### **Leadership and management: Adequate**

In the main, all leaders have high expectations of themselves, practitioners and children. The setting leader mostly provides good leadership for practitioners and has high aspirations for them, empowering them to lead and make decisions in the best interests of the children. This clear vision and ethos lead to excellent teamwork and collaboration amongst practitioners and creates a stimulating and exciting

environment for children to flourish. However, leaders do not always ensure that all policies are reviewed and updated regularly and do not always ensure that information recorded before children start at the setting is complete.

A strength of the leadership is the clear focus on providing high quality professional development for practitioners. Leaders encourage practitioners to reflect on their own practice through regular supervision and appraisal processes and as part of their own daily practice. There are regular worthwhile opportunities for practitioners to work together and to benefit from learning from each other. Leaders also ensure that all practitioners have access to high quality, valuable training opportunities. This approach to professional development ensures that the quality of teaching is of a consistently high standard throughout the setting and, as a result, children make very good progress in many areas.

Leaders have established effective self-evaluation and improvement planning processes that consider the views of a wide range of stakeholders. Practitioners have good opportunities to reflect on what works well and what could be improved and share this information regularly through opportunities such as staff meetings and informal weekly meetings. Leaders also consult with parents regularly to gain their views on the setting. They use all this information beneficially to plan for improvement. For example, Welsh courses have been provided for all staff. This has improved practitioners' confidence and ability to use Welsh in the setting. Another strength of the self-evaluation process is the way in which practitioners regularly reflect on their own roles, responsibilities, and areas of learning. For example, identifying strengths and interests of practitioners to lead in the forest area has enhanced learning experiences for children.

Practitioners work together very well to identify what works successfully in their individual areas and how to enhance and develop them further to improve the provision for children. This leads to high quality provision that develops a wide range of skills, especially children's independence and understanding of how to take measured risks in their play. However, self-evaluation processes have not identified a few very important areas for improvement, such as the need to improve safeguarding procedures.

Leaders have established highly beneficial partnership links that have a positive effect on the provision and outcomes for children. The setting is a lead Nursery Maintained Setting, for the local consortium, providing bespoke support to other settings in the region. Practitioners work well with outside agencies, including the local authority improvement partner and the leader participated in Welsh Government workshops to co-construct 'A Curriculum for Non-maintained Nursery Settings'. This has had a positive impact upon the overall progress of the setting and the children in their care.

Leaders have established very good links with parents and carers. There are good procedures for the children's transition from home to the setting and from the setting into school. For example, all parents are invited to join their children in the setting whilst they settle. This enables parents and children to get to know the setting's

arrangements and establishes beneficial relationships between parents and practitioners.

## 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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