



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

**A report on**

**Playdays Childcare**

**Crown Building  
Brodog Lane  
Fishguard  
Pembrokeshire  
SA65 9NT**

**Date of inspection: November 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 Playdays Childcare

Name of setting	Playdays Childcare
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Kelly McDonald
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Kelly McDonald
Number of places	45
Age range of children	0 – 12 years old
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	20
Number of children who receive funding for early education	10
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	12 January 2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection	November 2016
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	20/11/2023

## 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>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 Develop further opportunities for children to solve problems independently

## 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 choices and decisions confidently. They move freely around their play spaces and decide which activities they want to participate in. Children are confident communicators and know their wishes, feelings and needs are considered by practitioners. For example, practitioners respect children's choice not to join in an activity.

Almost all children settle well and are happy in the setting. They are confident to explore their play spaces and interact with practitioners and other children. They know the routines well and this helps to develop a sense of security. For example, children know to line up to wash their hands during snack time. Children are active and express enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Interactions between children and practitioners are consistently good and children co-operate well for their age and stage of development. Most children are respectful towards each other and practitioners, and some children are beginning to show sensitivity towards the needs of others. For example, some of the older children help other children to get changed to go outside. Most children are developing a good understanding of right and wrong and are learning to manage their behaviour well. Children enjoy being praised by practitioners for sharing and being kind to each other. They have developed positive relationships with practitioners and go to them for reassurance and support.

Most children are active and curious in their play and learning and engage well in play-based activities. They join in with adult led activities or follow their own interests. Many children persevere and sustain interest in activities for an appropriate length of

time, such as when threading beads or building towers, which results in a feeling of achievement.

Children enjoy a variety of experiences, including freely chosen, unstructured and self-directed play. This enables them to gain a good range of skills, to become more independent and follow their interests. They enjoy participating in a good range of interesting opportunities indoors and outdoors and are supported in their play by the practitioners around them. Most are confident to take advantage of the age-appropriate opportunities to develop independence skills. For example, when washing their hands, placing snack on to their plate or wiping their own nose.

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

Most children are enthusiastic during activities and make good progress in their learning. They apply a wide range of skills effectively, which improve their knowledge and understanding successfully.

Most listen carefully to instructions and follow them conscientiously. For example, when filling and emptying containers and cylinders with puffed rice. They speak confidently with each other while engaged in extended periods of creative play. Most respond to discussions and share ideas to complete tasks successfully. For example, they work together well to complete jigsaws of three-dimensional shapes intelligently. Many children strive to use Welsh independently, with guidance and encouragement from practitioners. They enjoy joining in with familiar rhymes and singing them together during their circle time sessions.

Most children discuss books sensibly. They engage well with stories and enjoy discussing the events and pictures in the books with their peers. They show interest when describing different characters and consider the results of actions thoughtfully. For example, they respond enthusiastically to the adventures of different dinosaurs.

During their play, most children make purposeful marks using different media such as chalk, paint and coloured pens. They are beginning to develop their early writing skills effectively. For example, they record their recipes well when they mix chives and coriander together in the outdoor classroom. As a result, they enjoy their early writing experiences and explain the purpose of their mark making well.

Most children use mathematical language correctly in appropriate contexts. They have sound numeracy skills and enjoy experimenting with a wide range of mathematical equipment. They count confidently when threading beads and buttons on strings and pipe cleaners. In addition, they discuss and compare the different sizes of the bears and the porridge bowls in the story of Goldilocks and show an increasing understanding of the properties of shapes.

Most children develop physical skills successfully by riding bikes on the yard, balancing and climbing on adventure equipment. They enjoy working together to adapt their ideas, for example when changing the speed of cars as they travel down slopes. These positive attitudes have a good effect on children's learning.

Most children develop digital skills effectively and enjoy the range of purposeful opportunities available to them. For example, they control the direction of electronic toys, communicate by using talking devices and use language and numeracy apps on tablet computers. As a result, they familiarise themselves well and apply their digital skills purposefully.

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

Practitioners implement suitable procedures to keep children safe and healthy. They attend appropriate training on paediatric first aid, safeguarding and food hygiene and are aware of their responsibilities in relation to these. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Accident and incidents are recorded efficiently and evaluated to identify any patterns. Practitioners use an appropriate system to record pre-existing injuries and medication administered. The setting's policies and procedures promote healthy lifestyles well. For example, the cook prepares healthy and nutritious meals. Practitioners implement suitable procedures to promote good hygiene, limit the spread of infection and minimise risks. For example, they carry out daily safety and cleaning checks on the indoor and outdoor area, minimising risks where needed.

Practitioners manage interactions well and are sensitive to the needs and experiences of individual children. They promote consistent expectations of behaviour and work in line with the behaviour management policy. Practitioners praise children for positive behaviour consistently and remind them of expectations when required. This is done in a calm and quiet manner to diffuse situations quickly and appropriately. For example, they use distraction techniques, offer alternative options, and use stickers to highlight positive behaviour. As a result, children respond well to staff, which has a positive impact on their behaviour.

Practitioners work effectively to support children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs. They provide good opportunities to develop their independence. Practitioners give children an opportunity to respond to their questions or requests and only offer help after encouraging children to try for themselves first. Practitioners make good use of opportunities to further develop children's skills and support them consistently well in their play and daily activities. For example, they encourage descriptive language such as 'crunchy' and 'hard' to describe the texture of the fruits during snack time. Practitioners regularly observe and assess the children, providing parents and carers with regular updates on their development. They use this information appropriately to plan a range of learning and play experiences to meet the needs and interests of the children. Practitioners support and provide care effectively for children with additional learning needs. They recognise when children may have additional needs, such as emotional and behavioural difficulties or speech and language difficulties, taking appropriate action in a timely manner and making good use of support services.

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

The practitioners' diligent teaching methods motivate children to engage fully in their learning. This has a positive impact on the development of their skills, knowledge and understanding. Practitioners provide activities that encourage children to take risks and develop their social and collaborative skills successfully. For example, they challenge children to compare different leaf patterns in the outdoor classroom and to make soups and sandwiches while cooking at the mud kitchen.

Practitioners promote and encourage interesting discussions with children while they take part in learning and play experiences. For example, they challenge children to roll and cut dough before blending the different colours together and use handprints in paint to represent spiders. Practitioners intervene appropriately during activities. However, they do not always provide enough opportunities for children to solve problems independently of adult support.

Practitioners plan a broad and interesting curriculum, which takes account of children's interests well. They adapt their planning purposefully to maintain children's interest and enthusiasm effectively. This ensures that children learn through a variety of practical challenges, such as painting the colours of a volcano and creating dinosaurs using paper plates.

Practitioners plan interesting opportunities to develop children's literacy skills and question them skilfully during their play. For example, they provide children with good opportunities to discuss how water freezes to create ice and to discuss the different marks they make with coloured pens on whiteboards. They develop children's Welsh oral skills appropriately and provide suitable opportunities for children to sing traditional Welsh rhymes. Practitioners develop children's numeracy and digital skills effectively. They challenge children purposefully to sort and count horse chestnuts and pinecones in the investigative areas and to take accurate photographs with electronic tablets and cameras.

Practitioners use their observations of children's achievements effectively to record their progress and to plan the next steps in their learning. This also helps them to provide parents and carers with beneficial information about their children's achievements in a variety of ways.

Practitioners encourage children to experiment and take risks in their play, which develops their physical skills successfully. For example, they challenge children to climb on adventure equipment, ride bikes and to balance on stepping stones and planks of wood. As a result, practitioners engage children fully in their learning. They also provide effective creative activities, such as enabling children to experiment with different rhythms using percussion instruments while dancing and singing.

Practitioners develop children's spiritual, moral and social skills effectively. They promote Welsh culture well, such as celebrating St David's Day and they study the nautical history of the town's harbour and its cannons. They also celebrate diversity and encourage children to learn about different communities and the world around

them. This includes discussing books about children from other countries and by dressing up in traditional dress from different cultures. They also provide opportunities for children to learn about festivals, such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year.

### **Environment: Good**

Practitioners care for children in an environment that is safe and clean. The setting is secure and there is a suitable system for controlling access to the premises. Staff and children's times of arrival and departure are recorded. Leaders ensure that they carry out safety and maintenance checks regularly. For example, checking the garden systematically before children go to play in the outdoors. There are robust systems for identifying risks and to eliminate them, where possible. Leaders complete effective and accurate general and fire risk assessments, which are regularly reviewed and cover a wide range of areas. They practise fire drills regularly.

Leaders and staff provide a variety of child centred spaces where children can play and explore, indoors and outdoors. The lay out of the rooms promotes children's independence as resources are generally accessible, allowing children to select resources without the need for adult support. The reading area provides a suitable space for children who wish to sit and look at a book or have quiet time. Leaders ensure that any outdoor play space is used as often as possible. The large outdoor play areas are well maintained and present interesting opportunities and experiences for the children. Practitioners use the space according to the children's needs and adapt it accordingly. These areas are an extension of the indoor areas and provide suitably challenging and engaging areas and resources for children to explore and use in their play and learning.

Leaders ensure that children have access to a range of resources that sustain their interests well. They provide a good range of resources that are readily available to support children's independence and choice. This includes a good selection of Welsh language and multi-cultural toys and books. Furniture is of good quality, well maintained and is appropriate to the age of the children. Leaders ensure they promote sustainability with the children by providing natural and recyclable materials to use in their play as well as providing mostly wooden storage and play furniture.

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

Leaders use effective strategies that focus diligently on improving provision and children's outcomes. They have a clear vision and work together conscientiously to provide effective care and support arrangements that enhance children's learning beneficially. As a result of their positive attitudes and robust practices, leaders ensure a stimulating learning environment that provides engaging and purposeful experiences for children.

Leaders ensure that practitioners provide children with strong pastoral care. This creates a strong sense of belonging within the setting. The caring and nurturing ethos encourages children to do their best and persevere during learning and play sessions. Leaders and practitioners work together well as a team and attend



appropriate training to improve their teaching and care practices. As a result, they are motivated and eager to succeed. Leaders also ensure that they update the setting's statutory documents, policies, and practices regularly. They follow safe recruitment processes consistently.

Leaders focus on introducing well-planned improvements to develop the provision further. They undertake effective self-evaluation processes, which lead to accurate targets for improvement. This helps them to identify strengths and areas that need attention, effectively. For example, they have focused recently on improving children's digital skills and developing the planning to follow children's interests sensibly.

Leaders ensure that full consideration is given to the views of everyone who is involved with the setting. They hold beneficial discussions with all stakeholders to improve provision and children's experiences, such as the suggestions from support agencies. As a result, leaders have adapted their outdoor area and now make greater use of use natural resources to promote purposeful learning and play experiences.

Leaders have established a range of beneficial partnerships to help support children's understanding of their 'cynffin' (local area). For example, the setting visits the local coastguard station, the nearby harbour and utilises the facilities available on the town's marine walk. Additionally, police officers visit the setting to discuss road safety and farmers visit to allow children to study and feed lambs. Practitioners also work well with many schools to facilitate the process of transitioning children to the next stage in their education. Leaders maintain regular contact with parents and carers about their children's development. They use secure parent communication platforms sensibly and progress booklets to provide them with regular and relevant information about their children's achievements.

Leaders allocate resources efficiently and use the budget carefully by prioritising expenditure against the setting's targets effectively. For example, they have improved the outdoor learning areas by building an outdoor classroom and providing mud kitchens and construction areas.

## 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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Publication date: 25/01/2024