



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

A report on

**Playdays Childcare Day Nursery
Crown Building
Brodog Lane
Fishguard
Pembrokeshire
SA65 9NT**

Date of inspection: November 2016

by

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the setting's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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Context

Playdays Day Nursery is in Fishguard, in the Pembrokeshire local authority. The setting opens for five days a week and employs ten practitioners.

The setting's registration allows it to take up to 45 children at any one time. The setting accepts children from six weeks to four years old. At the time of inspection, the local authority funded six children.

Nearly all children speak English as their first language. Currently, the setting identifies very few children with additional learning needs.

The proprietor is the manager and the setting is a limited company. She took up her post, along with the deputy manager, in September 2012. The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in November 2015. This is the setting's first inspection by Estyn.

Summary

The setting's current performance	Good
The setting's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Many children make consistent progress and demonstrate effective literacy and numeracy skills
- Nearly all children are polite and behave well
- The planning of learning experiences is appropriate
- Teaching engages children well and contributes positively to children's outcomes
- Practitioners' assessment practices move children on to the next steps in their learning efficiently
- Practitioners co-operate effectively as a team and they know the children well
- Practitioners create a nurturing learning environment
- Well-resourced learning areas support children's learning successfully

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The proprietor provides a clear direction to improve the work of the setting
- The new self-evaluation practices are appropriate
- Practitioners are keen to develop professionally and training is purposeful
- The use of external agencies support children and practitioners well
- Sound relationships with local schools support children's transitions to the next steps in their education beneficially
- Structured and well managed use of funds ensure effective improvements in provision
- The proprietor and deputy manager monitor the setting's overall level of provision successfully and challenge practitioners appropriately

Recommendations

- R1 Improve opportunities for children to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- R2 Establish effective and consistent planning systems
- R3 Address the issue that could have an unfavourable effect on children's wellbeing
- R4 Ensure that targets in the improvement plan derive directly from the setting's self-evaluation processes

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Many children make consistent progress and demonstrate effective literacy and numeracy skills. This is evident when they complete everyday and more complex tasks successfully.

Many children express their feelings and emotions well during role-play with toy animals under the circus' 'big top' area. They sustain sensible discussions with adults and each other about books and the different types of animals that exist around the world, such as elephants and crocodiles. They also co-operate well in active play when throwing quoits and beanbags at numbered targets placed at different distances during circus tasks.

Most children speak clearly and make sure that adults and other children understand them when responding to during activities. They listen to instructions from others and implement them effectively. This is particularly evident when they identify numbers while playing number games and when they place different coloured pegs in a board to create different patterns.

The majority of children show interest in books and enjoy their content when discussing characters and events confidently with adults and peers. They handle the books in the indoor reading area as natural and relaxed readers. Many sit quietly and follow stories read to them well. They respond sensibly to the content of the story. For example, they discuss their feelings clearly, on how certain animals, such as crocodiles, make them feel.

A minority of children use sophisticated language purposefully in spontaneous and structured play. For example, when twisting and turning windmills to spin and climbing ladders in turn to access the slide. They identify positions as 'first' and 'last' when ordering each other into positions after races, and state that some children arrived at the finish line 'before' and 'after' others.

Many children make marks effectively. They enjoy writing experiences and use a variety of media such as paint, chalk, pencils and pens. A few children begin to form letters of the alphabet and numbers independently and in a reasonably recognisable form when copying their names and words to add to a display on the autumn. The majority of children explain the purpose of writing in the correct context when scribbling and drawing lines on chalkboards. A minority of children recognise their own and other's names accurately during registration tasks.

Most children use mathematical language purposefully and in relevant contexts. Many children count, recognise and name numbers to ten confidently and a few count to 20 and beyond. A few children recognise numbers up to 100 and can mark them correctly as 'found', with highlighter pens, during number games.

Most children choose relevant equipment and materials to solve mathematical problems effectively. They number paving slabs accurately on the outdoor path with adult support and count numbers from one to fifteen confidently, when counting how many children sit in a circle. With support, a very few children understand clearly how to rank positions from first to third. Many children also understand differences in height as they discuss the dangers of falling from the climbing frame. They also group different types of objects by colour, size and shape correctly. They compare two and three-dimensional shapes well when creating clown faces and building towers with blocks in the construction area.

Nearly all children are developing their use of Welsh appropriately, considering their linguistic background. Many children understand what to do when directed in Welsh and a few use Welsh occasionally without adult prompting. Most children sing nursery rhymes and songs in Welsh enthusiastically.

Nearly all children listen to music with enjoyment and respond enthusiastically to nursery rhymes and familiar songs in both English and Welsh. They play harmonicas independently and move rhythmically to different types of music.

Most children develop good thinking skills, which has a positive effect on their learning and the standards they achieve. For example, they work intelligently with others as they explore differences in textures when walking barefoot over them.

Most children are beginning to use technology effectively when using electronic tablets and through tasks involving electronic toys, cameras and compact disk players. However, their use of educational apps to develop their ICT and fine motor skills is limited.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children are polite and behave well. They respond with respect to adults and each other. Nearly all children listen carefully to adults, for example when they experiment with windmills in the outdoor area. Following the use of the toilet, messy play and outdoor activities, nearly all children wash their hands thoroughly, with adult prompting.

Nearly all children show motivation and interest in their learning and most children demonstrate good levels of engagement during tasks. They enjoy the activities in the areas of learning and many share and work sensibly with other children. Most children demonstrate positive attitudes to new experiences, such as when feeling the cold, hard ground following frost.

Nearly all children relate well to adults and visitors when they arrive at the setting and when they leave. Many children are confident and independent learners. This is especially evident when many of them explain sensibly to each other, without adult involvement, the purpose of mark making and how to order positions from first to third after races.

Most children are beginning to understand that they have rights as individuals. They realise that they have an option of expressing personal opinions and preferences, such as when deciding to move from one area of learning to another independently.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Adequate

The deputy manager and the practitioners plan well together to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which reflects the ethos of the Foundation Phase successfully. The planning targets children's needs and interests well and provides stimulating opportunities for them to learn independently. The new planning processes provide flexible and interesting activities, which motivate children to learn through practical tasks. Practitioners allow children to contribute their own ideas to the planning and they balance adult-led and child-led activities effectively. Learning experiences are engaging and practitioners ensure effective progression in children's learning. However, the planning processes are new and have not had time to embed into the setting's daily practices. The setting is still improving and refining the processes.

There are beneficial opportunities to develop children's literacy, numeracy and thinking skills. Literacy and numeracy tasks are now prominent in all areas of learning and challenge the children to perform at their best consistently. The tasks build systematically on children's current knowledge and understanding in a lively and engaging way. Examples include rich opportunities for role-playing under the 'big top' in the circus and discussing how to complete clown faces from different shapes on paper plates. Building on this enthusiasm, children mark paving slabs with chalked numbers in the outdoor area.

The new planning format ensures regular challenges to support the development of children's problem solving skills. For example organising themselves in suitable positions to throw quoits over numbered poles successfully, creating effective body positions to make windmills spin in the wind and walking with poise along balance beams with others without falling off.

Practitioners plan to develop children's physical and creative skills successfully. They allow children to explore and experiment on climbing frames and practise circus skills with a variety of equipment. This promotes children's understanding of danger and how to use equipment sensibly to entertain others.

The setting's provision for developing the Welsh language is satisfactory. Practitioners model single words and phrases correctly. They encourage children to use Welsh through singing songs and the use of simple phrases involving numbers and colours. The setting promotes children's awareness of Welsh traditions and celebrations successfully. These activities include celebrating Saint David's Day, Saint Dwynwen's Day and baking traditional cakes and bread.

The provision for developing children's ICT skills is adequate. It offers suitable opportunities to use an electronic tablet, cameras, electronic toys, microphones and a compact disk player. However, practitioners do not challenge children to develop their early ICT skills systematically through offering ICT opportunities that support literacy or numeracy skills often enough.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits to enrich children's learning experiences. Visits to the local library, the town's shops, walks to the post office to post letters,

trips to feed animals and riding on the local buses add interest to the curriculum. Visitors, who include members of the emergency services, a road safety officer, parents with pets, actors and supermarket workers teach the children suitably about the roles of people in their community.

Practitioners provide interesting learning experiences that encourage children to treat people from all cultural backgrounds with respect and tolerance. This includes celebrating the Chinese New Year and Diwali each year. These planned experiences develop a better understanding of the world for children.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have up-to-date information regarding child development, with many of them attaining additional qualifications over recent years. They are knowledgeable about the requirements of the Foundation Phase and the outcomes expected for children at specific development stages.

Adults greet children positively as they arrive and they continue with this enthusiasm throughout the sessions. Practitioners manage children's behaviour positively and safely. This encourages children's participation and enjoyment in all activities successfully. Practitioners collaborate well and they have high expectations for all children. They challenge them effectively during tasks, guiding the children skilfully towards a task's objective.

Practitioners encourage children to collaborate with others across literacy and numeracy tasks. This involves mark making on chalkboards, investigating changes in the weather and sorting super hero dolls. Practitioners use questioning purposefully to develop children's thinking and communication skills. This is apparent when children discuss the characteristics of winter, noting that the ground becomes hard after frost and that water changes to ice when frozen.

The setting's key worker system is successful. It allows children to move freely and confidently between different learning areas. This affects children's learning well. Practitioners complete daily assessments consistently on recording sheets, which align efficiently to the setting's new planning process. They encourage children to assess their own learning and they discuss sensibly with children what they need to do to improve their work. This guides future planning to target individual children's needs effectively.

The systems for assessing and recording children's achievements are accurate and useful. They provide a secure starting point for every child. Practitioners assess individual children's outcomes regularly as they mature at the setting, supporting their transition to the nearby schools successfully.

The setting informs parents and carers regularly about their children's achievements. At the end of their time at the setting, practitioners present an informative book on the children's progress to parents. This is based on their daily comments about individual children's outcomes over time.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing are effective. These arrangements support children's learning well and contribute purposefully to their overall development. The setting has efficient arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking and practitioners ensure that children begin to understand that fruit and vegetables are part of a sensible diet.

There are valuable opportunities for children to reflect and say thank you each day during times when they sit together collectively. This creates calmness as children listen to adults, take turns to wash their hands and say thank you for their food during snack time. As a result, nearly all children are polite when eating snacks and serving milk and water around the dining table. The helpers of the day have an opportunity to help purposefully when informing the kitchen of how many children need snacks.

The setting offers positive opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners use group sessions well to focus on the consideration of each other's feelings. This includes allowing individuals to talk in turn and to share equipment, fruit and popcorn sensibly. By doing so, they foster values such as honesty, fairness and respect successfully. Practitioners reinforce the importance of these values daily, reminding children that they should act responsibly at all times, both inside the building and out of doors.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to re-cycle paper, cardboard, plastic and food. Junk modelling is also an active part of the setting's planning. Children and practitioners compost food in the garden area. This develops the children's understanding of sustainability successfully.

The setting is a safe environment and practitioners take good care of children when they arrive and when they are collected. This includes a thorough signing in and out system which practitioners supervise. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Practitioners use positive behaviour strategies, which ensures that children feel happy and safe in their company. Children often ask practitioners for help and support, which practitioners provide willingly.

The setting records children's learning needs accurately when they join and during their time at the setting. Practitioners review children's progress regularly and identify their starting points thoroughly by following the guidelines of the Foundation Phase profile. As a result, the setting identifies and supports children with additional learning needs purposefully. Practitioners work with appropriate agencies as necessary, in order to provide support as soon as possible.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a caring community that has a warm, family atmosphere. Practitioners encourage children to treat others with care and to show them respect, whatever their gender, race or background. The setting is an inclusive community and all children have equal access to all learning experiences, both inside the building and out of doors.

The setting's learning environment is clean and orderly. All areas of learning have a good range of resources to support children's learning effectively. The setting maintains the building efficiently. However, the inspector brought an issue that could have an unfavourable effect on pupils' wellbeing to the attention of the proprietor during the inspection.

Attractive and informative displays enhance the learning environment and celebrate children's achievements well. Most teaching areas are of an appropriate size for the number of children registered at any one time. The setting utilises available space well by using different areas intuitively, such as developing small group areas in the corner of the room, which allow children opportunities to read on beanbags.

Practitioners provide flexible learning spaces, which allow children to make independent choices in their own learning. The well-organised outdoor area includes growing and planting areas, climbing equipment and an open area to ride bicycles during robust play. Practitioners use facilities in the local area purposefully, such as utilising the town's amenities and local transport regularly.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

In a relatively short period the proprietor and deputy manager have established a clear vision for the setting based on a clear understanding of the setting's needs. It derives from quality assurance processes used for the day care provision, which is an established system. This gives a clear direction to the setting's work. The proprietor sets high expectations for the provision offered and children's standards.

The leaders monitor that the daily provision for the children is interesting and engaging. They promote new developments purposefully and motivate practitioners to make improvements in a supportive manner. This has led to purposeful changes in the planning of learning experiences for the children. The proprietor oversees that risk assessments and adherence to policies and daily procedures are rigorous and robust.

Job descriptions are clear and this ensures that practitioners understand their responsibilities. Regular discussions and staff meetings allow practitioners to share information on the development of individual children effectively. This enables practitioners to work well as a team and fulfil their duties successfully. Leaders have successfully created an environment where children and practitioners feel appreciated, and therefore give of their best.

The setting focuses well on local and national priorities. They develop children's literacy and numeracy skills effectively, as well as developing the provision in the outdoors purposefully. However, the provision for children's ICT is still developing.

Improving quality: Adequate

The proprietor and deputy manager know the strengths of the setting well and the majority of the areas that need improving. Leaders have recently established consistent arrangements to monitor children's standards and the daily provision. The effective collaboration and information collated on a regular basis, along with staff meetings, contribute to these practices purposefully.

Leaders use relevant and regular information about the setting to ensure improvements to its provision, for example refining the assessment process. The self-evaluation process is beginning to take account of the views of the dedicated practitioners, parents and carers, the local authority and the Wales Pre-school Providers Association.

However, self-evaluation is new to the proprietor and deputy manager. They started the process when the setting's provision for funded three year olds began last year. As a result, the leaders have not had enough time to embed the self-evaluation practices fully into the day-to-day life of the setting. The self-evaluation report suggests that the setting's use of the local authority's self-evaluation guidance is a developing area. The report does not contain enough detail as to how and why certain areas need improving further.

Current areas for development include improving children's outcomes in Welsh, establishing a thorough and effective planning system and providing further opportunities for children to express their opinions effectively. The proprietor and deputy manager set appropriate targets against suitable timescales and they prioritise them sensibly. The proprietor allocates sufficient funding to meet the targets. However, the targets in the improvement plan do not generally derive directly from the setting's self-evaluation.

Partnership working: Good

The setting works effectively with a range of partners to improve provision and raise children's standards and wellbeing. The impact of local partnerships on children's outcomes is positive, this includes the setting's established links with nearby schools. This supports children's transfer arrangements well. The arrangements for transferring assessments and personal information benefit the children as they settle quickly in their new schools.

The setting uses community links successfully to support and enrich children's learning. This includes participating in the town's activities, such as entering competitions in the town's annual show and performing with others in the town's carnival.

Practitioners work and liaise with a broad range of other partnership groups, which make a strong contribution to improving provision. These include agencies that support the setting with business and financial advice, first aid training, food hygiene courses and safeguarding training.

The setting's partnership with the local authority and Wales Pre-school Providers Association is also beneficial. A positive relationship with the local authority's

advisory teacher and the Wales Pre-school Providers Association officer enhances the provision and children's standards in both everyday tasks and administrative practices. However, it has not had sufficient time to impact on self-evaluation and planning for improvement.

Practitioners take active steps to involve parents and carers in the setting's life. The setting informs them regularly about all aspects of the setting's work. Practitioners encourage them to offer their own opinions on matters to improve the setting, such as opportunities for children to experience town life and fundraising activities.

Resource management: Good

The proprietor and deputy manager focus directly on improving all aspects of the setting's work by deploying practitioners intelligently and allocating resources effectively. They rotate practitioners through different roles systematically to ensure that practitioners' skills develop purposefully to cater for the needs of all children at the setting.

Leaders enable practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge well. Consequently, a purposeful learning community exists, where effective collaboration between practitioners and other partners support all aspects of the setting's work. This includes effective practices with local schools to provide a care facility for parents at other times of the day.

The performance management systems are thorough and ensure interesting learning experiences and sound teaching practices. The setting manages resources creatively to support learning. It has a timeline of improvements in place to develop the building. This includes improving the fabric of the building, developing innovative role-play areas and providing better outdoor resources. The setting also utilises the town's amenities to support outdoor learning and community links successfully.

The proprietor uses the budget well and prioritises spending against set timelines and responsibilities efficiently. Such practices create purposeful, regular and consistent improvements. The setting ensures that the use of funds has a direct impact on the overall provision and on raising children's outcomes.

The setting provides good value for money, due to the progress children make from their start points, the effective provision and the purposeful leadership.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received was fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

Reporting inspector – delete as appropriate

Nicholas Jones	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Glossary of terms

Areas of Learning	<p>These are the seven areas that make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity • language, literacy and communications skills • mathematical development • Welsh language development • knowledge and understanding of the world • physical development • creative development
CSSIW	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	<p>This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnerships conditions of registration.</p>
Foundation Phase	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.</p>
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
Local authority advisory teacher	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
Mudiad Meithrin	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.</p>

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.