



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru  
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales



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

**A report on**

**The Mill Childcare Centre  
5 Lon Parcwr  
Ruthin  
LL15 1BX**

**Date of inspection: February 2016**

**by**

**Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)**

**and**

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

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

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement, and the setting complies with relevant regulations
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement and/or examples of non-compliance
<b>Poor</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and/or significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children

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**Publication date: 28/04/2016**

## About the setting

Name of setting	The Mill Childcare Centre Limited
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered Person(s)	Not applicable
Responsible Individual (if applicable)	Ffion Mai Rees Roberts
Person in charge	Gillian Mary Kensall
Number of places	118
Age range of children	6 weeks to 12 years
Number of children funded for education	5
Opening days / times	7.30am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday
Language of the setting	Welsh and English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	15 April 2014
Date of previous Estyn inspection	November 2011
Dates of this inspection visit(s):	23 February 2016 and 24 February 2016
<b>Additional information</b>	

## Report summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	Good
Learning	Good
Care and development	Good
Teaching and assessment	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership and management	Good

### Non-compliance

**We notified the provider that the service was not compliant with the following Regulation from The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010;**

Regulation 31(2)(a) and (b) – Provision of information. This is because the responsible individual had not notified CSSIW of the changes in the persons caring for the children.

## Recommendations

- R1 Develop children's understanding of the wider world
- R2 Make better use of assessment to plan more systematically for each individual child's next steps in learning

### **What happens next?**

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

## Main findings

### Wellbeing

Good

Nearly all children communicate and express themselves well. They approach practitioners confidently to seek help or support and know that practitioners will respond promptly. Children make their own choices about what they want to do and with whom they want to play. Most children contribute to ideas, such as deciding to play out the Captain Hook story on the pirate ship.

Children enjoy coming to the setting and are eager to participate in the activities set out for them. Nearly all children cope well with separation from their parents and settle quickly into the daily routine. They have close bonds with their key worker and as a result they feel safe and secure. Nearly all children are content and happy. They form friendships from an early age, such as young toddlers giggling together in the play tent or chasing each other outdoors.

Most children remain on task during the sessions and demonstrate appropriate resilience and perseverance, for example when building a house in the construction area in order for it to fit around big daddy bear. Many children show care and concern for each other and are willing to share toys and co-operate well when using resources and participating in activities, for example taking turns to find an item in the 'what's in the bag' activity. Most children respond positively to adult instruction and, for example, help tidy up after free play. Children are busy and stimulated and, as a result, standards of behaviour are consistently good.

Nearly all children are happy and content. Most older children listen to adults during group times, such as when listening to a story, as well as during registration when they are informed of the planned activities available to them. Nearly all children are engaged and interested in the activities, for example looking for worms in the mud tray and being excited when they find one. They are eager to share their achievements and smile broadly when they have completed a task, such as when successfully building a tower of blocks.

Most children are becoming independent, such as when learning about and practising good oral health. Older children wash their hands after going outdoors to play and, with a little prompting, help to zip up their coats before going out to play. Most children show good self-esteem, such as when they display good manners or succeed in completing a task. Nearly all children are developing well as they participate in a range of play and learning activities. They gain confidence as they feel safe in their environment and happily organise roles for their peers and practitioners during free play activities. Nearly all children develop appropriate language skills, both in English and Welsh, and are able to express themselves well.

### Learning (only applies to funded children)

Good

Most children make good progress from their differing starting points. They acquire new knowledge and skills enthusiastically and try out new experiences confidently. Most make beneficial progress with their communication and personal and social skills, using these well in their play and in their interactions with adults. They co-operate happily with others and take turns willingly when sharing equipment.

Most children's literacy and communication skills are developing well. Most children listen attentively and talk enthusiastically about their activities and many begin simple conversations spontaneously. Many follow a range of instructions with understanding and enjoy sharing a book with an adult and sustain an interest in stories. A few children that are more able handle books appropriately and show awareness that the text and pictures 'tell' the story.

Many children respond positively to opportunities to develop early writing skills, using a variety of mark-making equipment, both indoors and outdoors, for example when using a light box to trace and make early writing patterns and different sized paintbrushes to paint pictures of bears.

Children's numeracy skills are developing well. Most count to five confidently in English and Welsh. Many have a good understanding of positional language and are beginning to use appropriate mathematical terms when sorting and comparing objects. For example, when sorting objects linked to their shape, they can sort by colour or size. Many understand the concept of 'bigger than' or 'smaller than' when talking about the story of 'The Three Bears'.

Children's competence in using a range of skills in information and communication technology (ICT) is progressing well. Many use remote controlled toys independently and use buttons and switches to change the direction of this equipment confidently. This supports the development of their problem solving skills well, and many persevere appropriately if their first attempt is incorrect.

Children's Welsh language skills are good. Many children respond appropriately to the words and phrases used within everyday routines. They recite familiar rhymes and songs readily, and are beginning to use Welsh spontaneously in their play. For example, many children understand and use the Welsh words they have learned for colours and numbers.

Nearly all children enjoy physical activities and many show good co-ordination when pedalling bikes and exploring the climbing frame.

<b>Care and development</b>	Good
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Practitioners support and promote children's health and wellbeing and encourage them to take care of themselves. For example, children wash their hands after going out to play as well as learning about and practising good oral health. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well, for example by giving children plenty of opportunities to play outdoors as well as offering a healthy choice of food and drink. Practitioners keep children safe as nearly all practitioners fully understand their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding. Children are treated with respect. For example, their personal care is managed discreetly and in line with their individual needs. Practitioners follow appropriate procedures when administering medication, with most of them holding an up-to-date first aid certificate.

Practitioners work in line with the setting's behaviour management policy and apply consistency in their approach to managing acceptable behaviour. Positive strategies that enforce acceptable behaviour are well utilised ensuring that sessions are not

disrupted and children remain busy and occupied. All practitioners model good behaviour by showing respect, and nearly all use positive language when speaking to the children.

Practitioners know the children well as a successful key worker system has been established. As a result, practitioners ensure that children settle quickly into the daily routine and that they are provided with responsive care in a nurturing environment that enables them to grow and develop. Practitioners ensure that they plan for activities encompassing all areas of play and learning. They learn about their own as well as different cultures to a good degree. For example, older children make Chinese lanterns and drums to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Practitioners use their observations effectively when planning the next steps of the children's development; however, keeping written records of these for each individual child is at its early stages. Nearly all practitioners speak Welsh and English confidently and children naturally learn both languages throughout their time at the setting.

The setting has good procedures to support children with additional needs. Practitioners work closely with parents and support agencies when additional needs are identified. Where needed, individual learning plans are actioned in partnership with parents.

Children learn and grow as they participate in stimulating activities that maintain their interest and imagination. For example, they can look for worms and creatures in the designated areas outdoors or act out a pirate scene on the pirate ship.

<b>Teaching and assessment (only applies to funded children)</b>	Good
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Practitioners work well together to plan a wide range of learning activities that interest and engage the children well. The curriculum is based firmly on the Foundation Phase principles of learning through quality first-hand learning experiences. Practitioners have positive working relationships with the children and use effective strategies to manage children's behaviour and keep them engaged in learning.

Recent changes to planning have placed a strong emphasis on the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills across all areas of learning. This is beneficial in developing children's early mark making skills and knowledge of number and shape in particular. Effective planning for the use of the outdoors supports children's literacy and numeracy skills well.

Children are encouraged to be independent, to think for themselves and to experiment with new experiences. Practitioners involve children appropriately in contributing ideas for themes and are flexible in adapting learning experiences when children show a particular interest in an activity. Planning provides good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills, for example when using the climbing frame and slide, pedalling bikes and playing ball games.

Practitioners make beneficial use of a wide range of visitors and walks around the local area to enhance children's learning experiences. For example, visits to the library promote children's enjoyment of reading successfully. Involvement in the 'farm to fork' scheme and visits to a local supermarket support children's understanding about where food comes from well.



Practitioners use the Welsh language well during whole-group carpet time and through activities. This encourages children to respond in Welsh and is beneficial to children's acquisition of and enthusiasm for the language. Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions through celebrating St David's Day and learning Welsh songs.

The setting offers a worthwhile range of learning experiences to foster children's spiritual, moral and social development successfully. Practitioners promote a sense of awe and wonder through the exploration of the outdoor area, where children enjoy looking at the birds through binoculars and in caring for some large South African snails. The setting promotes recycling and saving energy appropriately. It is developing opportunities for children to have an understanding of the wider world through a link with another nursery in South Africa. However, this is at an early stage of development.

Practitioners use stimuli well to capture and sustain children's attention, for example when using puppets and storytelling sacks to engage children's interest in a book. There is a good balance between child-led and adult-directed activities. Practitioners use questioning effectively to develop children's thinking and to extend their learning. Occasionally the pace of learning is too slow, particularly in large group time, and the children become a little restless as a result.

The setting has effective arrangements to track the progress of children. Key workers carry out observational assessments of children regularly and use these appropriately to inform future planning. However these are not always used systematically enough to inform 'next steps' in learning for individual children.

<b>Environment</b>	Good
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Leaders ensure the premises are safe and secure and know they are responsible for ensuring children's welfare and safety. For example, the building is only accessed via thumb print technology to ensure that leaders control who is on site at all times. Leaders regularly review risk assessments for the whole of the premises. Practitioners undertake both written and visual checks of the setting daily, which ensure that the environment is safe for the children. Practitioners supervise the children well both inside and outside, keeping them safe and successfully promoting their wellbeing. Good hygiene practices across the setting help to minimise the risk of cross infection.

Leaders ensure that children benefit from a welcoming environment that is suited to their needs. Children feel that they belong, as leaders ensure that playrooms are set out with suitable resources that enable them to select and explore on their own. Conveniently located resources, such as low level toilets and hand washing basins, enable children to attend to their personal needs either independently or with minimal support from practitioners. Practitioners create colourful wall displays, which children have contributed to, and coat pegs that children can identify as being their own. This enhances the children's sense of belonging. All children spend time outdoors as play and learning areas are conveniently located and easily accessed. Children are able to freely explore and relax within a well-maintained, comfortable and stimulating environment.

Leaders ensure that children have access to a wide range of play and learning resources, both inside and outside, which suit their ages and stage of development. All children have opportunities to explore their choice of play and learning as toys and equipment are set out within their reach. Leaders ensure that resources are in good order and clean. For example, practitioners sterilise teething play items daily and wash highchairs after mealtimes.

<b>Leadership and management</b>	Good
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The leader has a clear vision for the setting as a nurturing, caring environment where children are happy, eager to learn and confident. She shares this effectively with practitioners and parents. As a result, there is a positive sense of teamwork and practitioners and children feel valued. Leaders have a good understanding of the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010. However, they were notified of the need to inform CSSIW of any changes to persons caring for children. The leader keeps the responsible individual well informed about the setting's progress and areas for improvement.

Leaders have high expectations of staff and challenge them to do their best. They ensure that all practitioners have up-to-date job descriptions that make their responsibilities clear. There are enough suitably qualified practitioners to fulfil their roles and to support the needs of all children effectively. Practitioners attend relevant training courses to develop their knowledge and skills and leaders carry out regular supervision reviews and annual appraisals to support staff development effectively. The setting has suitable processes for the recruitment and deployment of staff.

There are sound procedures to ensure the safety of all children and staff and these are reviewed regularly.

Leaders and practitioners know their setting well and collaborate to review the setting's performance and to identify areas for improvement appropriately. For example, they identified the need to provide children with more opportunities to develop their early mark making and number skills. As a result, meaningful activities, both indoors and outdoors, have led to beneficial improvements in children's skills.

Self-evaluation focuses suitably on raising children's outcomes and improving provision. For example, the setting has successfully improved children's Welsh language skills and their enjoyment and enthusiasm for using Welsh as part of their everyday routines. Leaders take good account of the views of parents, and advice from the local authority advisory teacher, when planning for improvement. For example, the setting created a social media page to keep parents more regularly informed about its practice and forthcoming events. The setting's improvement plan contains an appropriate number of priorities and outlines clearly how and when it will address these. Leaders identify the member of staff responsible for leading initiatives and have suitable timescales and clear costings for any resources or training needed.

The setting has strong partnerships with parents that make positive contributions to children's wellbeing. Leaders keep parents well informed about the setting through regular newsletters, social media and noticeboards that practitioners update

regularly. An informative end of year report for parents provides valuable information about how well their child is doing. The setting has close links with local schools to ensure that arrangements for children to move onto the next stage of learning are effective.

There are valuable partnerships with the local community. For example, visits to the local shops, the library and garden centre and visits from local organisations, such as the recycling van, enrich children's learning experiences beneficially. The setting has long-standing links and works well with other professionals and childcare support organisations.

## Appendix 1

### Responses to parent questionnaires

denotes the benchmark – denotes N/A.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Cytuno'n gryf Strongly Agree	Cytuno Agree	Anghytuno Disagree	Anghytuno'n gryf Strongly disagree	Ddim yn gwybod Don't know	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		-	-	-	-	-	
My child likes this setting.	10	8 80%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		-	-	-	-	-	
I received information about the setting that enabled me to make an informed choice about whether to use the setting.	10	8 80%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Derbyniais wybodaeth am y lleoliad a wnaeth fy ngalluogi i wneud dewis gwybodus ynghylch p'un ai i ddefnyddio'r lleoliad.
		-	-	-	-	-	
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	10	10 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		-	-	-	-	-	
My child has a keyworker who ensures that his or her needs are met.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae gweithiwr allweddol gan fy mhlentyn, sy'n sicrhau bod ei anghenion / ei hanghenion yn cael eu bodloni.
		-	-	-	-	-	
My child is making good progress at the setting.	10	8 80%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		-	-	-	-	-	
Children behave well in the setting.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		-	-	-	-	-	
Care is good.	10	10 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r gofal yn dda.
		-	-	-	-	-	
Teaching is good.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		-	-	-	-	-	
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	9	8 89%	1 11%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		-	-	-	-	-	
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	9	7 78%	2 22%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		-	-	-	-	-	

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Cytuno'n gryf Strongly Agree	Cytuno Agree	Anghytuno Disagree	Anghytuno'n gryf Strongly disagree	Ddim yn gwybod Don't know	
My child is safe at the setting.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	9	7 78%	2 22%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	8	4 50%	4 50%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	10	4 40%	6 60%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	8	4 50%	4 50%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
The setting is well run.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.

## Appendix 2

### Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from Estyn and CSSIW's websites ( [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales)) ( [www.cssiw.org.uk](http://www.cssiw.org.uk))

## Appendix 3

### Glossary

<b>Additional learning needs (ALN)</b>	This term covers a very wide range of needs. We use the term additional learning needs in relation to children who have needs besides those of most of other children in the setting, for a number of different reasons.
<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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"><li>• personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li><li>• language, literacy and communications skills</li><li>• mathematical development</li><li>• Welsh language development</li><li>• knowledge and understanding of the world</li><li>• physical development</li><li>• creative development</li></ul>
<b>Care Council for Wales</b>	This is the Sector Skills Council for Social Care, Early Years and Child Care in Wales.
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	The statutory curriculum for all three to seven-year-olds in Wales, in both maintained schools and non-maintained settings
<b>Flying Start</b>	Services that deliver free, part-time childcare for eligible two-year-olds to help give them the best start in life and prepare them for school. They also provide increased levels of support from health visitors and parenting programmes to give young children the best possible start in life. These programmes have been running since January 2007.
<b>Funded non-maintained settings</b>	Settings funded by the Welsh Government to provide part-time education for three and four-year-olds. They include playgroups, private day care providers and independent schools.
<b>Key person or key worker system</b>	This is a practitioner who is assigned to each child so they always have a trusted, familiar person available to them so that they feel safe and comfortable. They build positive relationships and regularly talk to parents.

<b>Leaders</b>	<p>This can include the Registered Person, Responsible Individual or Person in Charge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered person – the person who is registered by CSSIW to provide the service; this may be an individual or an organisation</li> <li>• Responsible individual – where the registered person is an organisation, this is a person who is nominated by that organisation to act on their behalf</li> <li>• Person in charge – the individual appointed by the registered person to be in full day-to-day charge of the service</li> </ul>
<b>Practitioners</b>	All persons working directly with children in a setting
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Statutory duty to keep children safe and promote their wellbeing