



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

**A report on**

**Playtots Brynna Playgroup LCDP**

**Church Street  
Brynna  
Pontyclun  
Rhondda Cynon Taf  
CF72 9QP**

**Date of inspection: March 2024**

**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 Playtots Brynna Playgroup LCDP

Name of setting	Playtots Brynna Playgroup LCDP
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Rhian Symons
Person in charge	Lynette Ece
Number of places	32
Age range of children	2 to 5 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	23
Number of children who receive funding for early education	8
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday (term time only) 9:15 to 3:45, offering sessions of: 9:15-12:45/13:00 – 3:45 and a full day care 9:15 am- 3:45
Flying start service	Yes
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	6 February 2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection	Post Registration Inspection
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	05/03/2024

The setting is run by Llanharan Community Development Partnership LTD and has been registered with Care Inspectorate Wales since 2009. The setting operates from a church hall and is required to pack away each day.

There are currently children attending the setting identified as having emerging additional learning needs.

There are no children reported as having English as an additional language.

## 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>Adequate</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>Adequate</b>

## Non-compliance

**We notified the provider that the setting was not compliant with the Regulations, a notice was not issued, but these are identified as areas for improvement, and the RP/RI must address these.**

**Information on all non-compliance is included in the Action and Improvement Summary report, which will be sent separate to the report by CIW.**

## Recommendations

- R1 Refine the use of observation and assessment arrangements to better inform next steps in children's development
- R2 Ensure that fire tests are completed in a timely manner
- R3 Ensure that supervisions and appraisals are carried out in a timely manner
- R4 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. They move freely between the many activities on offer to them in the play environment and follow their interests. Nearly all children express themselves confidently and know that they will be listened to. For example, they use physical gestures and visual cues to indicate to practitioners they want their water can to be refilled when playing outdoors.

Nearly all children arrive happy and eager to start their day. Those who are quiet or upset on arrival are well supported by practitioners and quickly join in the activities on offer to them. Nearly all children are comfortable in their surroundings and are familiar with the daily routines, which helps them feel settled and confident. On arrival, children wash their hands and place their lunch boxes in the designated cubby unit independently before engaging in the activities on offer. Children receive frequent praise from practitioners for their efforts and achievements, which supports them to feel happy and valued.

Nearly all children develop positive and healthy relationships with their friends and practitioners. They engage confidently when exploring the learning environment. For example, they play collaboratively with practitioners, choosing and selecting items to place in their trolley when playing in the outdoor area.

Nearly all children are lively and enthusiastic and enjoy their play and learning. They benefit from a good variety of play opportunities which helps them to develop, learn and use their imagination. Children are motivated to follow their own interests and sustain their play for periods of time suitable to their age and stage of development. For example, they repeat the picking up and replacing of fallen pom poms into a jar when playing with the craft materials, demonstrating perseverance and determination to complete the task.

Nearly all children develop a wide range of skills as they play and engage in the routines of the setting. They have worthwhile opportunities to develop their independent skills, which enable them to complete tasks by themselves. Most children access the toilet and wash their hands independently. At snack time they competently pour their own drinks from jugs and use small tongs to serve themselves slices of fruit and spoon yogurt on their plates.

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

Nearly all children make good progress from their individual starting points. Most develop strong communication skills during their time at the setting. They listen well to instructions and questions from practitioners and respond enthusiastically using a suitable range of vocabulary. Most children enjoy talking about what interests them and can describe what they are doing in their learning and play. For example, they describe accurately what happens to the colour of water when they mix two different liquids together when creating their own potions in the outdoor area.

Many children show an interest in books and enjoy listening to stories being read aloud to them. They understand how to handle books as a reader, turning pages correctly and looking at pictures of characters. They use this information well, and describe and create models of these characters from clay and other materials, for example to make aliens from the story of 'Aliens love underpants'. Most children show an appropriate understanding of the purpose of writing and show strong early writing skills as they engage in the wide range of opportunities available to them. They show maturity and good control of various writing and painting equipment during their play, for example when using a pen to create a shopping list in response to discussions with a practitioner in the kitchen role play area and when painting a picture of daffodils in a vase.

Most children join in enthusiastically with opportunities to sing familiar Welsh songs and rhymes and repeat familiar words and phrases appropriately, for example when singing a song about the days of the week and counting the number of days. A few are beginning to respond suitably to daily questions, such as those about their feelings and the weather.

The wide range of purposeful learning and opportunities available at the setting supports children's numeracy skills well. Nearly all children join in enthusiastically

with a range of number songs and rhymes. Most use mathematical language well in their learning and show a good understanding of a range of different concepts, including number and shape. They show confidence when counting objects to ten and are beginning to understand patterns and order, such as when working out the day and date of the following day. Children's problem solving and thinking skills are developing well, for example when working together to combine different shaped blocks to successfully build a tower, making necessary adjustments along the way.

Nearly all children develop strong physical skills in their learning and play. They use their fine motor skills effectively when pouring water from their china tea pot to serve tea and when using knives to chop potatoes in the role play kitchen. Nearly all children also develop their gross motor skills well, including using rakes and hoes to smooth soil and bark. Many develop their digital skills appropriately by using a limited range of equipment. For example, they use cameras confidently to take photographs of others at work.

Nearly all children make strong progress in developing their creative skills. They participate in a wide range of creative activities and experiences available to them. They enjoy singing, moving and dancing to familiar nursery rhymes and songs, and enjoy watching others perform, for example when watching another child demonstrate his tap-dancing skills in his tap shoes. Most children enjoy creating paintings and models from clay and other materials independently. They take inspiration from others and use their new skills well in their play, for example when creating different sounds and rhythm using the African drums following a visit by a musician.

### **Care and development: Adequate**

Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of the setting's policies and procedures to promote healthy lifestyles and how to keep children safe. They complete relevant records for accidents and incidents. There are suitable systems for the administration of medication. However, practitioners do not always complete these records in full or ensure that practices are in line with the setting's medication policy. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

Practitioners understand their roles, responsibilities and are generally cautious when dealing with any safeguarding matters. They are confident in the steps to take if they have concerns and have a suitable understanding of the procedures to be followed, but this is not always consistently implemented in practice. Therefore, overall, the setting's safeguarding arrangements are not robust enough as they do not consistently follow procedures when recording incidents and injuries. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action. As a result, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children do not meet requirements and give cause for concern.

Practitioners offer a range of healthy and well-balanced snacks and water is freely available to children. There are suitable systems to manage allergies and intolerances. Practitioners follow good hygiene practices in line with infection control guidance, for example wiping tables before children sit down to eat and washing their

hands when handling food. They encourage children to develop good hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before eating.

Practitioners interact with children well. They act as good role models, speaking with each other and with the children respectfully. They are kind and patient and offer reassurance to children when needed. They understand the behaviour policy well and use a positive approach to guide children to behave as expected.

Practitioners know the children well. They carry out useful observations, which support their understanding of each child's individual needs. Practitioners use this information appropriately when planning experiences to support children's learning. They allow children time to extend their ideas and follow their own interests in their play. For example, practitioners make sure that children can return to activities they like. Practitioners support children with additional learning needs well. They seek beneficial advice and guidance from professionals and implement and review individual targets regularly to ensure that children's needs are met.

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

Practitioners provide a wide range of interesting and beneficial range of learning and play experiences that meet the needs of children well. They have developed a sound understanding of the Curriculum for Wales, which is reflected in the rich learning environment and their approach to allowing children to learn through discovery and play. As a result, practitioners take into account the children's stage of development, their interests and their opinions when planning the experiences available to them.

Practitioners use the indoor and outdoor learning environment well to encourage children to explore the different learning areas and to discover for themselves. They ensure that many of these experiences are always available to children to provide worthwhile opportunities to reinforce their learning. This ensures that children are exposed regularly to a range of useful learning experiences that support their development across the curriculum. Practitioners' knowledge of the new curriculum also ensures that they plan well for the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills through the wide range of experiences on offer. These activities encourage them to use their skills to explore, solve problems and be creative. This has a positive impact on children's development at the setting.

The improvements made to the outdoor learning area ensure that practitioners make excellent use of the environment to provide a wide range of beneficial learning experiences for the children. As a result, children are free to choose when and where they want to play and learn. In addition, practitioners make good use of the local area to support children's understanding of the natural world and the community, for example when visiting the local shop to buy ingredients to bake their cake and when tending to their allotment where they learn to grow vegetables. The setting also encourages regular visitors to the setting to enhance learning, including an African drum musician, a storyteller and a yoga teacher, who provide worthwhile practical experiences for the children. This has a positive impact on their literacy, physical and creative skills as well as supporting their understanding of their community and the wider world.

In general, practitioners provide a suitable range of opportunities for children to hear and use the Welsh language, for example by singing familiar songs, listening to stories and answering familiar questions. They also encourage children to celebrate their heritage through learning about Welsh traditions and celebrations, such as 'Diwrnod Santes Dwynwen' as well as learning about the mining history of the local area. Practitioners also provide worthwhile opportunities for children to learn about different places and cultures. For example, as preparation for their African drum session, children learnt about life of a child in Africa through a story and a range of connected learning experiences.

Practitioners know their children well through the setting's key worker arrangements. They provide positive encouragement for children to participate in learning and play experiences, knowing when to intervene to support and develop children's learning and thinking skills. This supports children's independent learning skills well and allows them to follow their own interests and to explore. In general, practitioners model play well and engage children in activities successfully. They use effective questioning and prompts to extend children's engagement, language development and thinking skills, for example by encouraging them to describe the scent from their potions and when discussing flowers, insects and minibeasts at the allotment. Practitioners plan activities that celebrate everyone's differences. For example, celebrations of Chinese New Year with children promote children's understanding of difference. Practitioners observe and record children's development appropriately and share these with parents and carers effectively. However, they do not always use this information well enough to inform the next steps in children's development.

### **Environment: Good**

Leaders provide children with a learning and play environment that is safe and secure. They ensure that it is clean and suitably maintained and effectively record when visitors, children and practitioners arrive and leave the building. Generally, leaders and practitioners put appropriate measures in place to maintain the safety of the environment, including carrying out regular fire drills. As a result, staff and children know what to do in the event of a fire. However, fire tests are not carried out routinely. Practitioners complete daily checks of key areas to ensure a safe and clean environment for children. Leaders provide practitioners with a range of useful risk assessments to follow, which include key daily routines and contribute to the overall safety of the children.

Leaders ensure that children have access to sufficient facilities and good quality, appropriately sized furniture to meet their needs. They have developed the play spaces inside and out to make the most of the space available and enhance the experiences for children. For example, a small room just off the main play space is equipped with a dark den, low level lights, torches and light up balls, to enable children to experience the awe and wonder of sensory play.

The layout of the play environment supports children's freedom and ability to make choices in their play. Practitioners provide space for children to retreat from the busyness of the setting. They have opportunities to look and share books in a quiet cosy area along with opportunities to rest/sleep. Displays decorate the walls and play spaces, which capture children's experiences in photographic form and celebrate children's individual art creations.



Leaders provide an extensive range of toys and resources, which are of good quality. Many real-life, natural, re-purposed and recycled items enrich areas of the environment, both indoor and outdoor. For example, fresh lavender and rose petals are added to the water tray, enhancing children's play experiences. Children access a wide range of real-life items such as china tableware and fresh vegetables in the home corner, mirroring real life experiences and promoting curiosity for children. Leaders ensure that resources are kept at a low level to enable children to choose independently and pursue their individual interests effectively.

The outdoor environments offer a range of rich play opportunities and experiences for children to develop their physical skills and imaginative play, and to engage in the natural world when visiting the settings allotment. Children have access to a small outdoor area directly from the main playroom. There is a suitable range of large equipment to develop children's physical skills, such as ride along bikes, tunnels and climbing beams. A low-level self-erected fence, along with close supervision, offers security for children when they play.

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

Leaders place the care and well-being of children at the centre of everything they do. They are proud of their setting and recognise the importance their work in supporting children and families within their community. Leaders have a clear vision for the setting, which they share well with practitioners, parents and the wider community. They have created a friendly and caring culture where children enjoy attending. Leaders value and support practitioners extremely well, ensuring a strong team ethos where everyone feels appreciated and cared for.

A notable feature of the work of the setting, and the charity it forms part of, is how it supports practitioners to develop and become an important part of the team. For example, a few practitioners have received support from the Llanharan Community Development Project Ltd Charity to gain suitable qualifications to work at the setting after initially working as volunteers. This strong focus on continued professional development has ensured that the setting has created a purposeful learning environment with a strong focus on children leading their play and learning. Leaders implement safe and appropriate processes for recruitment. They ensure that all practitioners have clear up-to-date job descriptions that contain information relating to their roles and responsibilities. Beneficial supervisions and annual appraisals are carried out. However, these are not always conducted in a timely manner.

Leaders consider the impact of poverty on children's well-being and development well, for example by supporting vulnerable families and introducing a uniform bank. In general, they have put in place a range of policies and procedures to support children's care and development and to support the setting's safeguarding culture. However, they do not always ensure that practitioners implement them effectively enough.

The setting's Quality of Care Review provides useful information about the work of the setting. Leaders have developed useful self-evaluation and improvement planning processes to support the setting's work. These are based on first-hand evidence including parental/carer views, reports from partners such as the local authority and practitioners' own evaluations of provision. This allows leaders to

identify important areas for improvement well and to create purposeful action plans to support this. As a result, leaders have succeeded in improving key aspects of the provision over time, which has had a positive impact on the well-being and development of children. For example, leaders have improved the outdoor learning environment, which enhances children's learning and play experiences effectively and supports their independence well. Although leaders evaluate the success of their improvement plans suitably, they do not always match this well enough with the impact on children's learning and well-being.

Leaders have established worthwhile partnerships to support their work and to enhance the provision for children. Practitioners provide beneficial information to parents and carers on the development of their child through an online app and regular face to face contact. Parents appreciate this contact and feel that they can talk openly to the approachable leaders and practitioners about their child's well-being and development, at any time. Leaders work well with headteachers and teachers at the local school to support transition. Teachers visit the setting every term to receive information about the children who are transferring to their schools the following term. Regular visits from other agencies such as the health visitor and the local authority's ALN advisers also support the work of leaders and practitioners well, as well as supporting children's well-being and development.

## 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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