Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Pili-Pala Day Nursery

Mountain Hare
Twynyrodyn
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 0LH



Date Inspection Completed

12/03/2025

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About Pili-Pala Day Nursery

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Person	Helen Southern
Registered places	49
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	21 December 2021
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use the service.

Well-being	**Excellent**
Care and Development	**Excellent**
Environment	**Good**
Leadership and Management	**Excellent**

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children are very happy, settled and enjoy attending the setting. They form very strong bonds with staff. Children are extremely enthusiastic in their play and learning and have great fun playing with their friends. They have a wealth of choice and opportunities to increase their independence and develop different skills throughout their time at the setting.

Staff are highly professional and committed to their roles. They successfully implement policies and procedures to keep children safe and healthy. They are enthusiastic, and extremely patient, kind and caring towards each other and the children, bringing a sense of fun to all activities. They know children very well and support all children's learning and development very effectively.

The environment is safe and secure. People who run the setting have created an environment that is welcoming, child friendly and provides ample space for children to play and learn with a strong emphasis on the outdoors. A good range of toys, equipment, and resources both indoors and outdoors promote children's play and learning

Leadership and management of the setting is excellent. The management team is very strong and passionate about providing an outstanding service. They are motivated and regularly review the care they provide. They ensure the staff team are well supported. Leaders form strong partnerships with families to ensure consistent care for the children. They have developed strong links with local organisations and professionals which benefit children.

Well-being Excellent

Children are extremely settled, confident, and happy at the setting. They cope very well with separation from parents and carers as they form very strong emotional attachments with staff who care for them with genuine affection. Children show by their behaviour that they feel secure and relaxed in their care. For example, children seek out hugs from staff when needed and smile happily at them as they chat and play. Children are very familiar with and evidently enjoy the routines of the setting. This gives them a sense of security and belonging. For example, children come eagerly to sit ready for 'bore da(good morning)' time, settle to sleep peacefully, and get ready to go in the garden excitedly.

Children make many choices during their time at the setting. For example, they move easily between the activities and areas in their base rooms and choose what to play with when they are outside. Children express themselves very confidently, knowing staff listen to their needs and wants and value what they say. They chat extremely happily to staff as they play and learn, eagerly inviting them into their play. Children's voices are very strong. Their likes, dislikes and interests are listened to and used in both spontaneous and longer-term planning of activities.

Children are beginning to develop very positive, healthy relationships with their friends and staff in line with their age and stage of development. They play happily alongside each other or together. For example, children make each other laugh as they chat and wave at each other and co-operate as they play together and share toys and resources. They eat together calmly at mealtimes, enjoying the social interactions. Children are respectful to staff, and readily do what staff ask of them whilst also being able to have fun and joke with them.

Children are very enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning, following their own interests with the toys, resources and activities available each day. For example, some children concentrate and are absorbed in drawing with chalks while others smile with obvious delight as they ride their bikes around the outdoor area. Children join in very enthusiastically with singing and are eager to answer questions and share information within the group. Children of all ages and abilities are consistently able to find and choose activities which stimulate them and promote their development.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop their independence skills. For example, babies are supported to learn to feed themselves and young children are extremely well supported to develop their independence in moving from nappies to using the potty and then the toilet. Children enjoy many opportunities to develop their skills at the setting, for example learning to ride bikes independently and challenging themselves physically on the outdoor play equipment.

Care and Development — Excellent

Staff are extremely committed to their roles and implement the setting's policies and procedures to a very high standard to keep children safe and healthy. They have a very strong understanding of safeguarding issues, the setting's safeguarding procedures and their responsibilities to keep children safe and report any concerns. There is a strong key worker system in place, although all staff ensure they get to know children well and have an excellent knowledge of children's allergies, dietary requirements, and medical needs. Staff at the setting are experienced and confident to manage a range of health needs. They are very confident in recording accidents, incidents and pre-existing injuries and share this information with parents. Leaders at the setting regularly review these records and act promptly to take actions to address any issues. They follow procedures for the administration of prescribed medication and complete medication records thoroughly. Staff manage sleep at the setting very safely, ensuring children are monitored regularly and not left alone. Staff are vigilant and attentive in their care of any children who become unwell at the setting and take prompt action to ensure the correct procedures are followed. Staff work hard to ensure that mealtimes are enjoyable, relaxed, sociable and safe. They follow robust procedures to manage children's food allergies, individual dietary requirements, and prevent the risk of choking. Leaders plan menus that ensure children enjoy eating healthily. Staff ensure children have daily access to outdoor play experiences throughout the day, offering children the benefits of physical exercise and fresh air. Staff consistently follow thorough hygiene and cleaning practices as part of the infection control process to help keep children healthy and safe.

Staff are outstandingly kind, caring and patient, genuinely showing interest and care in all that they do. They work extremely hard to ensure that every child feels individually valued, accepted and loved. They ensure children enjoy their whole day at the setting, bringing warmth and fun into all activities. They encourage children to express their feelings and emotions and are extremely responsive and nurturing, meaning children approach them with great ease. Staff manage interactions and behaviour very skilfully, using gentle tones, clear boundaries, distraction methods and plenty of meaningful praise for children's efforts and achievements. They are excellent role models.

Staff support children's learning and development extremely well. They have a very thorough knowledge of children's individual needs. Regular observations and assessments allow staff to monitor and track children's progress and plan effectively for children's progression. Staff are very skilled, and many have undertaken additional training to enable them to support children's learning further. For example, some staff are trained in the delivery of a method of using visually engaging objects to build children's abilities to focus on tasks and join in with group activities. Staff are extremely proactive and work outstandingly with a range of partners and outside professionals to effectively support children with additional learning needs. Staff promote the Welsh language through the use of phrases, words and songs with the children.

Environment — Good

The environment is safe and secure. The entrance is locked, staff ensure only authorised entry to the setting and maintain a visitor's log. The rear gardens are securely fenced. Gas, electrical and fire safety equipment certificates for the building are up to date. There are general risk assessments in place at the setting, these are effective and no unnecessary risks to children's safety were seen during the inspection visit. Risk assessments have recently been reviewed to include newer authentic 'real-life' items that have been added to the setting. Staff are vigilant and skilled in identifying any emerging risks in the environment. The setting is registered with the food safety department at the local authority. Records show that fire drills are carried out regularly and insurance certificates are up to date.

The environment is welcoming, and very child friendly. Rooms are bright, colourful, and attractive to children. They provide ample space for children to play and learn and are decorated and furnished in a way that gives a home from home feel for children. Base rooms are well organised according to age groups and laid out in a manner to support children's curiosity, learning and development. The setting has good quality furniture and resources to support children's independence. For example, child sized tables, chairs, and low-level toy storage units. There are a suitable number of children's toilets and nappy changing facilities available. Children eat their meals in a dining area which is set up to provide them with a sociable eating experience. The outdoor area has been developed to provide a wide variety of outdoor opportunities for play and learning and is used frequently throughout each day.

There is a plentiful range of attractive, purposeful toys, resources, and books within base rooms. These are easily accessible to children during free play, encouraging their independence. There is a mix of natural and man-made materials with many attractive wooden resources that support children's development well. Real life and multi-cultural items promote children's awareness of equality and cultural diversity. The outdoor area has a very wide range of interesting resources which invite children to play. Toys, resources, furniture, and equipment at the setting are in good condition, clean, and well maintained.

Leadership and Management — Excellent

Leaders at the setting have an exceptionally strong sense of purpose. They seek to provide a warm and rich setting where every child is valued and supported to achieve the very best outcomes, and all children feel truly at home. The warmth, energy and commitment within the leadership team is shared with staff, giving a consistently positive and nurturing feel across the setting. There is an extensive range of policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed. Leaders are organised, they keep written records consistently and store them securely.

Leaders continually look for ways to improve and develop practice. They have well developed and established systems to ensure regular feedback from parents, children and staff which supports the quality of care review and planning for improvement. Leaders at the setting have fully engaged in the inspection process swiftly acting on any recommendations and suggestions to improve outcomes for children.

Leaders follow robust recruitment processes to ensure there are enough suitably qualified staff. Staff files are up to date and checks are carried out to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. There is a clear system in place to ensure that staff's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are current. Staff are well-qualified, and leaders invest significantly in developing their staff team. Staff told us that they feel valued and supported by the management team and know they can approach leaders at any time to discuss issues. They told us they are very happy to work for the setting and look forward to coming to work each day. Staff morale is good, this is evidenced by low levels of staff turnover. Leaders ensure that staff receive excellent opportunities and support for further training, for example, staff have had training which supports them develop children's communication skills. There are effective systems in place to ensure staff receive regular meaningful supervision and appraisals which support professional growth and development. Working relationships between the person in charge and the responsible individual are consistently strong and supportive and there is regular and effective communication.

Leaders and staff have established very strong relationships with parents, ensuring they work together with families to deliver the best outcomes for children. For example, they work with families to plan the transition to toilet training. Feedback received from parents evidences that they are extremely satisfied with the level of care their children receive and the strong, supportive relationship they have with the setting. Leaders have very strong working relationships with a range of professionals, ensuring that when there are concerns about children's progress or development, they share information and work with parents and professionals to support children. Leaders work outstandingly well with other professionals and organisations to share good practice, ideas, and suggestions and support children. For example, they attend other settings and invite professionals to their setting to demonstrate how they engage with children with a range of needs.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

National Minimum Standards

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

Standard	Recommendation(s)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

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