Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Splott Play Centre

Splott Play Centre, Muirton Road, Splott, Cardiff, CF24 2SJ

02920470867

www.cardiff.gov.uk/childrensplay

The inspection visits for this service took place between 13/10/2025 and 21/10/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Cardiff Council Child Care and Play Services
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	75
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	No
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider is not promoting the Welsh language and culture needs of people, and this requires improvement.

Ratings:

Well-being	Excellent
Care & Development	Excellent
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Good

Summary:

Children have lots of fun playing with their friends at the setting. They have an extensive variety of choice and opportunities to develop different skills and become independent. Children develop positive relationships with their friends and playworkers. They speak freely and are encouraged to share their ideas with playworkers who show genuine interest in their views and opinions.

Playworkers provide a highly nurturing and child-led setting and show a genuine passion and commitment to their roles and responsibilities. They work effectively to keep children safe and promote their well-being. Playworkers are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children.

Leaders make sure the environment is welcoming and secure. There is a variety of resources and equipment to stimulate children's play and learning. Leaders have created an inclusive environment where children and their families can play, socialise and relax together.
Leaders are enthusiastic and manage the service effectively. They complete a beneficial self-

evaluation of their service and use this information to identify and make improvements. They ensure all staff have the necessary skills, and knowledge to provide good quality care to children.

Findings:

Well-being — Excellent

Children have an exceptionally strong voice, and considerable freedom to make choices and decisions about their play. They are confident to express themselves and share their thoughts and ideas as they know staff will listen to and highly value their contributions. For example, a child asked if they could create a Halloween wall display. They used a variety of craft materials to make 3-D pumpkins and glittery ghosts. Later in the session we saw them use a staple gun to mount their work creating an attractive wall display. Children's interests are consistently incorporated into activity planning. As a result, their wellbeing is flourishing.

Children are very happy and arrive at the setting eagerly. They excitedly greet their friends, settle quickly and enthusiastically take part in activities. Children make friendships and build positive relationships with playworkers. Therefore, children experience an extremely keen sense of well-being and belonging. Children feel safe and secure as they are very familiar with the routines of the setting. They are given verbal reminders about what comes next. For example, children are reminded when the session will be ending and to tidy up in time for a game of hide and seek in the dark.

Children interact well with playworkers and co-operate well with each other, supporting each other in their play. For instance, they encourage one another when playing pool, complimenting and praising good shots. Children learn the importance of sharing and taking turns from a wide range of activities. We saw them taking turns to practice gymnastics on the crash mats, sharing craft materials and line up patiently for their food. Children express empathy and are sensitive to the needs of others. For example, older children help younger children to put on dressing up clothes and offer comforting hugs when greeting them.

Children have great fun with the activities on offer. They are motivated to lead their own play and activities because the choices on offer are influenced by their interests. Children eagerly enjoy taking part in interesting and stimulating opportunities outdoors. For example, climbing, swinging, rolling each other in large plastic tunnels and practicing jumps, somersaults and flips onto the large crash mats. Indoors children enjoy being creative and we saw them absorbed in their play using a variety of resources such as hammer beads, junk modelling, using collage materials and role playing in the home corner. Through their play children develop their independence skills. They learn to do things for themselves successfully and to problem solve effectively, develop creativity, to experiment and be imaginative.

Care & Development — Excellent

Playworkers have a thorough understanding of their child protection responsibilities. They are confident about the process to follow if they have any child protection concerns. Playworkers are fully aware of the safeguarding policy. They know they have a duty to report concerns to the designated safeguarding officer and their individual responsibility to report concerns directly to children's services if needed. Staff consistently implement procedures which encourage healthy lifestyles, physical activities, personal safety, and well-being. For example, they offer a range of healthy foods and snacks, remind children to wash their hands before eating and ensure children sign in and out of the setting on arrival and leaving. Playworkers are skilled in teaching children how to keep safe whilst taking risks in their play, considering their own wellbeing and of others. For instance, when playing on the crash mats children wanted to change the angle of the trampette to increase the challenge. A playworker enabled the children to try this out but judged the angle to be unsafe so changed the trampette back. Children also told us they love to jump from the tallest part of the climbing frame onto crash mats, but it wasn't safe to do it today as it was ''*a bit wet and the mats would slip''.*

Playworkers know the children extremely well, are responsive to their individual needs and support them accordingly. They are skilled at knowing when to intervene or when to allow children to resolve conflicts and differences themselves. For example, when rough and tumble play got overzealous, a playworker paused to see if the behaviour would escalate before intervening. Consequently, the children resolved their differences without help. Playworkers praise children for their efforts recognising their achievements and raising children's self-esteem. They have worked together with children to make a list of rules to ensure the sessions are fun and safe for everyone. Working this way, in partnership, gives children a sense of ownership and promotes mutual respect.

Playworkers ensure children can work out and control their play, by following their own instincts, ideas, and interests. They are sensitive to how their own interventions may affect children's self-directed play. Playworkers ensure children have freedom to move from one activity to another varying their play between indoors and outdoors. As a result, we saw children engrossed in a wide range of play experiences; working individually on craft activities to collaborating with one another to play hide and seek and wheel their friends around in a pull along trolley. Playworkers intervene skilfully to promote further challenge, for example offering tips to improve the height of children's jumps by changing their positioning on the trampette.

Environment — Good

Leaders ensure the setting is safe and suitable for the children and staff. They make sure playworkers implement a wide range of policies and procedures to promote children's health and safety at the setting. There are suitable risk assessments in place for the building, outdoor space, and some high-risk activities, such as fire play and cooking. We saw staff complete daily safety checks and visual risk assessments for all areas before children arrived. Leaders ensure all routine safety checks are conducted for the building such as electrical and gas safety tests. Regular fire evacuation drills are also undertaken and recorded so that staff and children know how to evacuate in case of an emergency.

Leaders and playworkers ensure that children have a rich environment in which to play and learn. The main playroom is welcoming and child friendly, with ample space for children to move around and play freely. Playworkers organise the environment very well to provide areas that are attractive and give children independent access to a wide range of activities and experiences. Indoors, they provide a variety of tabletop activities such as art and craft, junk modelling and imaginative role play areas such as a home corner and dressing up. Children can access more resources independently as leaders store a range of equipment at child height in clearly labelled boxes. Leaders enable children to move freely between the indoor and outdoor area. They enhance the outdoor area with a range of inviting and challenging resources such as a large climbing frame, tree swings, large plastic tubing, trampette and crash mats. Both indoor and outdoor areas support children's imagination and give valuable opportunities for children to develop their skills successfully.

Leaders ensure resources are of good quality. They replenish resources as needed and use funding from grants to buy added resources based on children's interests. This supports a play environment that is fun and stimulating for children. Leaders provide suitable furniture and equipment that are safe and suitable for the children using them. There are a range of commercially produced and re-cycled resources, and some resources promote wider cultural awareness and diversity. Leaders have identified the need to purchase more equipment and resources to encourage more risk and elemental play such as earth, water, fire and air.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders are dedicated and want to offer the best play opportunities and care possible for the children. They actively seek advice and support from outside agencies to support them in their role. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they are following current guidance. Leaders have written a statement of purpose that reflects current practice and includes all required information. This allows parents/carers to make an informed decision on if it is the right setting for their child. Leaders store information on children and staff securely. However, they do not keep details of children's registered doctors. Leaders keep records of visitors to the setting and staff rotas evidence which days playworkers are working. However, leaders do not keep a daily record of staff's arrival and departure times.

Leaders carry out an annual quality of care review of the service provided. This review considers the views of parents, children and staff and sets targets for the forthcoming year. For example, to source external funding to further enhance and develop the outdoor area. There is a suitable complaints policy available for parents and a separate child friendly policy which clearly outlines how children can raise a complaint.

Leaders manage the team and resources effectively. They ensure the correct ratios of playworkers to children. Leaders have robust recruitment procedures and ensure playworkers keep required training such as safeguarding and first aid up to date. They conduct regular and beneficial supervisions and appraisals with playworkers, enabling them to reflect on their practice and encourage continual professional development. In addition, they encourage playworkers to reflect on their practice after each play session, holding evaluative debrief meetings. Playworkers told us they feel supported by management and are very happy working at the setting.

Leaders have built effective partnerships with parents/carers. We spoke to several parents during the inspection, who praised the setting highly. They told us they attended the setting when they were children themselves and wanted their own children to benefit from the fun and positive experience they did. Leaders also develop strong links with support agencies and wider community. For example, working in partnership with action youth groups such as Ministry of life, Breakthrough Wales, and Cardiff youth service out of hours counselling.

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.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

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)
Standard 5 - Records	Keep a written record of the name and address of the registered medical practitioner with whom each relevant child is registered.
Standard 5 - Records	Keep a daily written record of staff's arrival and departure times.

Best Practice

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Recommendation(s)
Provide further resources to promote wider cultural awareness, diversity and inclusion. Provide further reousrces to encourage more risky and elemental play.

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