Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Penderyn Sports and Social Association Playscheme

Penderyn Community Centre, Pontpren, Penderyn, Aberdare, CF44 9UX

07973917541

The inspection visit took place on 25/08/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Committee of Penderyn Sports and Social Association
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	30
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 promotes, anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and culture needs of people.

Ratings:

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

Summary:

Children's well-being is promoted excellently at this setting. Children are confident, highly engaged and benefit from extensive opportunities to make choices, direct their own play and develop positive relationships.

Staff provide consistently good care. They keep children safe, manage interactions effectively and create valuable play opportunities that support children's development and meet their individual needs.

The environment is safe and secure. Indoors there are a wide range of activities, toys, and resources to stimulate and support children’s play, development, and curiosity. Good use of local outdoor areas provides interesting opportunities for physical exercise, play, learning and development.

Leaders are experienced, motivated and dedicated to delivering a good quality play provision. They continually look for ways to improve their service. Required policies and records are in place. Leaders ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Parents and carers speak very highly of the setting and the care their children receive.

Findings:

Well-being — Excellent

Children have a very strong voice. They make meaningful choices throughout the day and freely direct their own play from a wide range of accessible resources. We saw children independently select activities including construction toys, craft materials, imaginative play resources, creative activities and outdoor equipment. Staff actively involve children in decisions about their day, including choosing trips off site and deciding what resources to take with them. Children's views are gathered informally throughout sessions and more formally at the end of the run of each playscheme. We saw many examples where their suggestions had influenced future provision.

Children feel safe, happy and valued. We found a calm, relaxed and welcoming atmosphere where children are confident, settled and comfortable in their surroundings. Children form positive relationships with staff, volunteers and their peers. They told us that staff are "*helpful and kind*" and that children are "*nice to each other*". Children know they can seek support from staff if they have any worries. Children interact exceptionally well. They play cooperatively, include one another in their games and demonstrate respect for others. We observed children chatting happily during snack times, working together on construction activities, sharing ideas during imaginative play and supporting one another outdoors. Minor disagreements were resolved quickly and positively with adult support when required. Children showed kindness and understanding towards peers with differing needs and abilities. Staff role model positive interactions and create an environment where children feel respected and included.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning experiences. They are highly engaged in a rich variety of child-led play opportunities, both indoors and outdoors. We saw children immerse themselves in activities, including nature exploration, imaginative play, arts and crafts, physical play and construction activities. Children showed great enthusiasm for the woodland experiences. We saw how children of all ages were delighted by the fairy walk, eagerly looking out for fairies, houses and doors along the way and calling out excitedly to each other and staff when they spotted them. We saw how relaxed and engaged children were when they reached the clearing where the setting based themselves for part of the afternoon. Children enjoyed exploring natural materials, creating their own games and demonstrated curiosity and creativity in the outdoor environment. Children remained engaged for sustained periods and showed high levels of enjoyment throughout the day.

Children develop a wide range of skills and demonstrate strong independence. They freely access resources, help themselves to drinking water, make choices about their play and manage many tasks independently. Children have opportunities to take appropriate risks outdoors, solve problems, negotiate with others and develop confidence as they play with other children across a variety of age groups and from different schools. Children create their own games, adapt resources

to meet their ideas and develop communication, social and creative skills through play.

Care & Development — Good

Staff keep children safe and healthy. They know the children well, understand their individual needs and implement appropriate measures to support their safety and well-being. Staff maintain accurate registers, recording arrival and departure times, and they maintain a clear overview of children attending. Volunteers and staff demonstrate a strong understanding of safeguarding procedures and know who to report concerns to and the actions they should take. In the main, children's records held the required information. However, they did not ask for the details of the child's GP, accident forms did not fully suit the service, and incidents were not being recorded on all necessary occasions. Leaders addressed these matters immediately when we raised them and these systems are now being embedded. Leaders and staff have created and work within risk assessments that are comprehensive and support children to access a wide range of enriching experiences safely, including woodland activities and community visits. Staff promote healthy habits through regular handwashing routines and healthy snack options. However, not all procedures showed an awareness of current Welsh Government guidance around choking prevention and administering of liquid paracetamol. Leaders acted to address this during the inspection. Children access drinking water independently throughout the day.

Staff manage interactions skilfully. They provide clear, positive guidance and intervene sensitively when required. We saw staff reminding children to be considerate of others, supporting children to resolve disagreements fairly and promoting respectful behaviour. Children responded well to their guidance and demonstrated positive behaviour throughout the inspection. Behaviour management approaches reflect the 'playwork' ethos, allowing children freedom to play while maintaining appropriate boundaries and keeping everyone safe. Staff work consistently together to support children and manage any disagreements constructively.

Staff are highly successful in promoting children's play, learning and development. They provide a diverse and stimulating range of play opportunities that reflect children's interests and support holistic development. The provision demonstrates a strong understanding of the Playwork Principles, with staff facilitating rather than directing children's play. Children benefit from extensive opportunities for imaginative play, creativity, physical activity, exploration and social interaction. Resources are readily accessible, enabling children to independently follow their interests and develop their ideas. Staff meet children's individual needs particularly well. Children are included fully in activities and staff create an environment where all children belong and can participate in ways that suit them. Welsh language opportunities are available through Welsh-speaking staff and volunteers, enabling children to use Welsh naturally during play.

Environment — Good

The environment is secure and provides enough space for children to play and learn. Staff control external doors to ensure only authorised entry to the setting and maintain a visitor's log. Staff complete safety checks of the environment to identify, and where possible eliminate, risks to children's safety. However, leaders have not established a system to ensure that the necessary safety certificates for the building (gas, electrical systems etc.) are undertaken when needed and they receive a copy of those checks from the landlord so they can be certain the building they are using is safe. Fire drills are carried out and recorded. Leaders take appropriate steps to promote children's safety. They complete thorough risk assessments for indoor activities, outings and woodland experiences, enabling children to access adventurous play opportunities while managing risks proportionately.

The environment is highly suitable for the children attending. Leaders have organised the main playroom effectively to maximise children's independence and choice. Children freely access a broad range of resources including construction toys, role play equipment, creative materials and games. Comfortable areas allow children to relax, socialise or engage in quieter activities when they wish. Resources are stored accessibly, enabling children to independently select materials and develop their own play ideas. A significant strength of the provision is the innovative use of outdoor spaces. Although leaders have experienced limitations due to the loss of previously available outdoor areas, they have responded creatively by making extensive use of nearby woodland and community facilities. Staff ensure that children regularly access a large, wooded area, which offers varied terrain, natural features and rich opportunities for exploration. We saw children thoroughly enjoying the woodland environment. We also saw how children enjoyed the trip to the multi-use games area. Outdoor experiences include den building, nature crafts, parachute games, physical play and environmental exploration, providing valuable opportunities for creativity, problem-solving and physical development.

Leaders provide a good range of quality resources that meet the interests and needs of children across the age range. They ensure there are ample quantities ensuring that children can fully develop their play. For example, we saw children immersed in building a wooden railway layout for toy trains to travel on. The large quantity and variety of tracks, bridges and other accessories meant that children could fully develop their ideas and expand their imaginative play. Leaders and staff transport a variety of resources when they visit outdoor environments off site ensuring children have plenty of choice in how they play. For example, whilst some children played sports in the multi-use games area, other children made bracelets nearby. Children are able to access resources independently and we saw them using equipment purposefully and creatively throughout the inspection. Leaders take account of children's views when developing resources and activities, ensuring provision remains relevant and engaging.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders are experienced and passionate about the care they offer. They work hard to provide a high quality service to the local community with very positive outcomes for children. The service operates for a relatively small number of days each year and is managed by a team who also have other employment commitments. Despite this, leaders provide clear direction for the service and have developed policies, procedures and systems that support the safe operation of the playscheme. However, there are occasions where a more robust understanding of the updated National Minimum Standards and regulations are required, such as around updates to healthcare and training responsibilities. Leaders understand their responsibilities regarding notifications and have acted promptly when guidance and requirements have been brought to their attention. The Welsh language 'active offer' is embedded within the setting, with Welsh-speaking staff and volunteers enabling children to communicate naturally in Welsh or English according to their preference.

Leaders are developing effective quality assurance arrangements. The setting has operated on far fewer occasions than normal in the last year due to renovations to the building, and so opportunities to complete a full annual Quality of Care review have been limited. Nevertheless, leaders seek feedback from children and parents and use this information to improve the service. During the inspection, leaders responded positively and promptly to feedback.

Leaders manage staff and volunteers effectively. We found staff recruitment files to be complete, with appropriate suitability checks, references and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks in place. Staff receive supervisions and appraisals, and regular meetings take place to discuss practice, training and operational matters. Nearly all staff and leaders held the appropriate first aid and safeguarding training at the time of the inspection, and training was booked in the near future for staff who still needed to complete training. Volunteers, including young volunteers, are appropriately supported and demonstrate a strong understanding of safeguarding responsibilities.

Parent feedback was overwhelmingly positive and consistently described the service as welcoming, inclusive and well organised. They highlighted the caring approach of staff, strong communication and the emphasis placed on outdoor play and children's voice. Parents told us their children are happy, very eager to attend and thrive at the playscheme.

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 10 - Healthcare	Ensure health care, medication and food safety procedures fully reflect current Welsh Government guidance , including choking prevention and liquid paracetamol guidance.
Standard 24 - Safety	Implement a system to ensure appropriate safety certification for the building is undertaken, kept and made available for inspection.
Standard 15 - Staffing ratios	Implement a system to ensure all leaders and staff maintain mandatory training as stipulated in the National Minimum Standards.
Standard 5 - Records	Ensure the new system for recording accidents, incidents, pre-existing injuries and children's details are embedded in practice.

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)
Ensure improvements are undertake in line with the updated National Minimum Standards and the Regulations.

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