Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Afan Playgroup

Cymmer Afan Primary School, Margam Street, Cymmer, Port Talbot, SA13 3EE

07811 215188

The inspection visit took place on 07/10/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Cathryn Evans
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	21
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	Yes
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:

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

Summary:

Children have many opportunities to make choices and decisions. They are happy, settled and cope well when separating from carers. Children interact strongly, in line with their development, with each other and adults. They are engaged and participate in a range of play and learning activities. Children are developing their independence skills well.

Staff implement policies and procedures to promote children's safety and well-being. Staff listen and communicate with one another and the children well. They observe and record children's development and next steps, linking children's ideas into planning. Staff and leaders are effective at supporting children with additional and emerging needs.

Leaders ensure the environment is safe, secure, and generally well maintained. They have systems in place to act upon hazards and monitor them. Fire drill records have been developed following the inspection to provide more detail. The setting has a range of opportunities for children, in the indoor and outdoor environments. The outdoor area is a real benefit to the children who access this daily.

Leaders are knowledgeable of the national minimum standards and regulations. Minor improvements are required to ensure consistency, particularly in relation to policies being reflective of current legislation and practice. Staff tell us they are supported and happy at the setting. There are strong links in the local community, with the onsite school and other professionals.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children have opportunities to make clear choices and decisions. They express themselves well. For example, when arriving at the setting, they say how they are feeling and are supported by staff with putting their picture on the *"syt wyt ti?"* board. Children have options at snack time, when self-serving what they would like. They are beginning to pour their own drinks and choose from 'llaith or dwr'. Children engage confidently with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) involving us in their play. For example, asking *"you like a turn?"* when sharing resources with us during outside play.

Children are happy and cope positively when separating from their parents or carers. Even children who are relatively new, settle well. Children have mostly positive relationships with each other, and staff know them very well. They know the routine at the setting. For example, helping to tidy up before outside play, and washing hands before snack. Those who do get upset are supported by adults promptly, normally when sharing or turn taking is encouraged.

Children clearly enjoy their time at the setting. They are active, engaged and interact with each other and adults well. We saw children play in parallel and begin to cooperate when sharing resources. For example, when playing in the sand pit, water tray and block play. Some children are beginning to support their friends and show sustained interest in activities. We saw children who had finished their painting, offer wet wipes to a friend to wipe their hands. Children call one another and staff by their names. We saw one child say goodbye to their friend when it was time to leave. They successfully sit together at the table whilst having their snacks and listen well to instructions.

Children are engaged and interested in their play and learning. They access a range of opportunities at the setting, both indoors and out. We saw children explore books, puzzles and painting activities, as well as the vast outside equipment, with interest. Children show intrigue. For example, we saw children explore leaves with a magnifying glass. They learn to use scooters and ride on cars, as well as manipulate pouring and tipping in the sand pit to make sandcastles.

Children are developing their independence skills well. They wash their hands and access the toilet independently if able, those who need support are helped by staff. They are beginning to serve themselves at snack time and feed themselves competently. Children are developing their self-help skills successfully, when pouring their drinks and brushing their teeth. They are learning to take responsibility for their belongings, support staff with tidying up and empty their plates when they have finished snack.

Care & Development — Good

Staff implement policies and procedures to promote safety for children. Staff spoken to during the inspection, have a suitable understanding of their role in protecting children and confidently answer safeguarding scenarios. A safeguarding poster is readily available in the playroom to support staff, if needed. All staff have current mandatory training, including, safeguarding, first aid, and food hygiene. A varied healthy snack is provided by the setting, whilst parents provide a packed lunch for children who attend wrap around care. There are suitable systems in place to meet allergy and dietary needs. Cleaning and hygiene practices are good. Staff clean tables and support children in accessing the bathroom, washing hands prior to meals and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is worn when serving and preparing foods. Nappy changing practices are followed effectively.

Staff understand and implement the behaviour management policy effectively. They use positive reinforcement, encouraging children through praise. We heard staff say, *"good job- you are such a great helper!", "well done, da iawn"* and *"amazing, good sitting"*. They encourage children to use 'indoor voices' and 'walking feet', to promote a safe and engaging environment. Staff effectively support children in their interactions. For example, when greeting children, staff ask how they are feeling and support them in engaging in activities of their choice. They know the children very well and are responsive to their needs. Staff always promote good manners, role modelling Welsh regularly. The close-knit team work effectively to support one another and the children. They listen and communicate successfully. Interactions demonstrate warmth, kindness, and patience. Staff give children cuddles and comfort, supporting them in their chosen play, engaging and interacting at children's levels.

Staff provide a range of play and learning opportunities, which are mostly child led. Some adult led activities, such as song time at the end of the day is encouraged. We heard staff support children, effectively sandwiching Welsh and English when counting from one to ten. They implement aspects of the Curriculum for Wales. Themed planning is in place, which allows for children's interests and voice to be followed. Learning journeys reflect the differing opportunities the children have. Leaders and staff have systems in relation to planning, observations and next steps. Staff recognise if children have emerging or additional needs, with systems in place to support children and their families. They signpost parents, and access help, advice and resources from several multi-agencies, if needed. Staff promote incidental Welsh through the day. Leaders tell us they have recently completed section one of the 'Welsh Aware' Award and are continuing the development of the Welsh language and culture at the setting.

Environment

Good

Leaders ensure the environment is safe, secure, and generally well maintained. The main entrance is secure, with a doorbell in place. All visitors sign in. There are a range of risk assessments which undergo regular review. Staff complete and record daily health, safety, and cleaning checks. Regular fire drills are complete at different times of day. Following our inspection visit, these now include more detailed information. Appropriate electrical, fire and safety checks remain current.

Leaders ensure there is a varied range of opportunities for children. The indoor play areas provide children with space to freely move, with zoned areas of play. There are suitable toilet facilities and a separate nappy changing area. The environment is bright, light, and airy. The children's artwork and photographs are hung on display, promoting a sense of self-worth. Information is available in the cloakroom area for parents and carers. A range of bilingual displays are dispersed around the setting to aid the use of Welsh. The outdoor play space has varying and engaging resources, across different areas. With a large mud kitchen area, sensory play, raised beds and AstroTurf area. Alongside this, a hard surfaced area allows children to engage in bike, trikes and scooter play. The additional outside shelter has space for children to engage in activities during all weathers, with free flow encouraged during the warmer weather. Wet weather clothing and wellies are available for children to be able to explore the outside in all weathers.

Leaders provide some quality, developmentally appropriate play and learning resources. Much of the equipment is readily available to children, so they can choose their interests independently. Some equipment reflects a natural feel with 'real-life' authentic resources included. They provide resources for all ages and stages of development, which contribute to the children's all-round development. For example, through role play, construction play, sensory and creative activities. There are some resources and learning opportunities which promote children's curiosity about the wider society, celebrating equality and cultural awareness.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leaders have sound knowledge and understanding of the regulations and national minimum standards. Regulatory records are in place. Registers for children and staff are clear. They reflect when staff are caring for children. Leaders ensure there are accurate contracts, and consent forms in place for children attending the provision. Accident records are complete and signed by parents. Medication has not been required for some time. However, a medication proforma record is available if is required. Incidents are logged and recorded. Policies, procedures, and documents undergo review. A cover sheet is signed by staff acknowledging the updates. However, at the time of inspection, not all policies were reflective of the most current legislation or practice. Following our inspection visit, they have been updated. They have appropriate public liability insurances and are registered with the ICO (Information Commissioners Office). Leaders engage positively with CIW, keeping up to date with any changes at the setting.

Leaders have strong self-evaluation systems in place. They seek the views of children, parents, professionals and staff as part of their review. They reflect on what they do well, and how they can improve. Leaders have a vision for the setting, which is shared with others, and they are keen to drive improvement.

Leaders follow effective recruitment processes to safeguard children. The recruitment procedures and suitability checks are all in place, with regulatory information included. Staff have current and up to date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. Staff tell us they have support from the team and leaders, with regular supervision and appraisals complete. However, not all supervisions are formally recorded. Formal and informal meetings, both individually and as a team take place. The strong tight-knit team support one another well. There are systems in place for staff to undertake training. Continual professional development is encouraged and supported by leaders.

Leaders have exceptionally strong partnerships. Professionals and multi-agency working is promoted at the setting. They work hard to support the children and families, enhancing the provision and outcomes for children and parents. Verbal discussions take place regularly at the start and end of the sessions. An online platform is used to share information, as well as the use of newsletters.

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 18 - Quality assurance	Ensure all policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated in line with current guidance.

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)
Formally record all supervisions.

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2026.
You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.