Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

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

A report on

Penycae Childcare

Penycae Primary School, Copperas Hill
Penycae
Wrexham
LL14 2SD

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

About Penycae Childcare

Name of setting	Penycae Childcare
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Sandra Williams
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Tim Newbould
Person in charge	Sandra Williams
Number of places	40
Age range of children	2 to 11 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	29
Number of children who receive funding for early education	13
Opening days / times	9.00 – 5.00pm
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service is not making a significant effort to promote the use of Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	9 January 2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection	This is the setting's first Estyn inspection
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	11/06/2024

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Well-being	**Good**
Learning **(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	**Good**
Care and development	**Good**
Teaching and assessment **(only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	**Good**
Environment	**Adequate**
Leadership and management	**Adequate**

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 Responsible Individual must address these. Information on all non-compliance will be included in an Action Improvement Summary, which will be published on CIW's website only.

Recommendations

R1 Address the areas of non-compliance identified during the inspection

R2 Ensure that monitoring procedures are robust enough to identify all areas for improvement

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 choices and decisions around where they play. They select which resources they want to use and who they want to play alongside. Most children have a strong voice and are confident to speak up because they know they will be listened to. For example, if children ask for more milk, ask for help or need reassurance, they are responded to promptly.

Nearly all children feel happy and settle quickly to activities. Many have developed positive relationships with practitioners and know them well. Children excitedly take practitioners by the hand to lead them to their chosen activities and they enjoy receiving cuddles. Nearly all children are familiar with the setting's routine. For example, most children know to wash their hands before brushing their teeth and eating their snack and independently put on their coats before going outdoors. These predictable routines help children feel secure because they know what is coming next and builds their confidence and sense of belonging.

Most children interact well. Many share resources with increasing independence and a few take turns independently. Most children engage in meaningful conversations with practitioners about things that are important to them such as their pets and

favourite foods. Most children are confident and friendly when meeting new adults and visitors, confidently joining in with worthwhile conversations.

Most children show good levels of engagement and are active learners. They concentrate intently on activities that interest them. They benefit from long periods of uninterrupted play and the easy accessibility to gather the resources they need to further their play. They delight in their creative attempts and enjoy seeing their work displayed on the wall for their friends to see. Most children sing songs enthusiastically and participate well during stories and enjoy joining in using familiar props.

Most children are developing a useful range of skills and show a good level of independence. At snack time many children begin to use knives to cut their bananas and pour their own drinks. They tidy away their dirty cups and bowls and with support, discard unwanted food. Most children are curious, engaged learners who benefit from plenty of extended periods of child led play opportunities.

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. They enjoy their learning and show enthusiasm in their activities. Nearly all children develop their independent skills well through the opportunities that practitioners offer them. They are well mannered and polite and take care of their own belongings. They develop effective social and emotional skills and cooperate well with each other as they play.

Most children's communication skills are good. They use appropriate language in structured and spontaneous play and express themselves confidently. A few children use a wide range of vocabulary for example when talking about insects and bugs in the outdoors. Most children enjoy mark making and are developing their early writing skills appropriately. They enjoy exploring making marks using chalks and crayons, and a few begin to understand that marks carry meaning.

Most children's early reading skills are developing well. The majority are beginning to confidently recognise their own name, for example when finding their name during registration and snack time. Nearly all children show an interest in books and enjoy listening to stories or information books read to them by practitioners. They show obvious enjoyment when handling books independently, turning pages in sequence and talking about the characters and pictures with their friends. Most children listen intently and follow instructions carefully, such as those that help them to tidy up the setting and confidently join in with large group activities.

Nearly all children's Welsh language skills are developing well. They enjoy joining in singing songs and rhymes as part of their daily routines. They count and talk about the weather enthusiastically and many understand familiar Welsh words and simple phrases.

Most children develop a worthwhile range of numeracy skills and use these in their play successfully. They talk about sizes of objects and use mathematical language during their play confidently. For example, when playing outdoors they use tape measures to measure the length of the play tunnel, confidently talking and recognising numbers to ten and beyond.

Nearly all children develop their physical skills effectively. They pedal bikes and push wheelbarrows and prams around the outdoor area successfully. They develop their balance and co-ordination through activities such as digging, climbing ladders and balancing along tyres. Many children develop good fine motor skills and make confident choices about the resources they use. For example, they manipulate dough to make shapes and models, and handle a variety of different sized containers when playing in the sand and water areas confidently.

Most children are developing their creative skills well. They have valuable opportunities to express themselves through craft, music and movement. They enjoy yoga sessions and are enthusiastic when playing with mud in the forest area.

Most children's digital skills are developing well. They use a range of switches and electronic toys with confidence, for example when making pretend phone calls, using torches or pressing buttons to play recorded voices.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners follow appropriate policies and procedures, which effectively encourage healthy lifestyles and promote children's safety and well-being. For example, practitioners regularly encourage children to take part in outdoor play opportunities and eat a healthy snack. They provide well-balanced food and drink options and encourage the children to try new tastes and textures. Practitioners successfully deliver a tooth brushing programme, which helps children improve their oral health.

Practitioners manage children's interactions well and consistently. They follow a clear behaviour policy and foster positive relationships between themselves and the children. Practitioners use positive reinforcement successfully, for example to praise children for following instructions or tidying away resources. Practitioners offer clear explanations that help children develop a sense of right and wrong. They help them to understand how their actions can affect others. For example, they explain gently how they must be careful not to get their friends wet when using a water spray bottle, and to consider how this may make them feel.

Practitioners are nurturing and kind. They are sensitive to children's individual needs and provide good care and support. Practitioners are quick to notice subtle changes in children's behaviours and provide effective support when needed. Practitioners use signing to support children's communication skills well. These signs and gestures alongside spoken words give children extra visual clues and aid their understanding.

Most practitioners have an adequate understanding of safeguarding procedures. They understand their responsibilities to report any child protection concerns and are familiar with the policy. Practitioners effectively complete accident and incident

records and share these promptly with parents. Most practitioners follow appropriate hygiene practices including when serving food and changing nappies. However, the attendance records for both children and practitioners are not maintained well enough and as a result leaders do not always know what time children and staff arrive and leave at the setting. As a result, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding do not meet the requirements and are a cause for concern. Leaders do not encourage a culture of keeping children safe in a wider context, including fire safety and maintaining essential records.

Practitioners have a good understanding of children with additional learning needs. They track their progress effectively and put steps in place so that children can achieve their individual targets and goals. Practitioners are experienced and, when necessary, they seek beneficial support and advice from external agencies to ensure that children make appropriate progress.

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

Practitioners have a good understanding of child development and how children learn. They provide an interesting variety of quality learning experiences that they match well to children's interests and stages of devlopment. Practitioners are responding successfully to the ethos and expectations of the Curriculum for Wales.

Practitioners have high expectations of children and know their individual strengths and needs well. They use this knowledge to encourage them to develop their problem solving and thinking skills through a range of worthwhile resources and experiences. They enthusiastically and naturally join in with the children during their play and model positive behaviours such as turn taking, sharing and talking about their interests.

Practitioners plan well-considered activities that enable children to develop a wide range of skills progressively in all areas. They ensure that the majority of activities are based on children's interests and are child initiated. This allows children to have a voice in what they learn about. For example, following children's interests in planting and growing they provided beneficial opportunities for children to plant and grow their own vegetables in the settings outdoor area.

Practitioners support children to make measured choices in the level of challenge and risk during their play. For example, they provide resources that promote risky play and develop their balance and co-ordination, such as ladders and platforms for children to climb and navigate.

A strong feature of the provision is the high-quality interactions between children and practitioners. They support children's thinking skills by using questions that encourage them to extend their knowledge and understanding effectively. For example, they encourage children to ask questions, make observations and learn about the stick insects they keep as pets. Practitioners provide purposeful opportunities for children to experience awe and wonder. For example, they

encourage children to make careful observations of the insects they find in their outdoor garden, such as butterflies and moths.

Practitioners promote a love for reading well. They read stories to them whenever the opportunity arises and model a strong appreciation for stories and books. They provide children with beneficial opportunities to handle books and stories, including Welsh language stories. Practitioners promote the Welsh language effectively. They provide plenty of opportunities for children to hear Welsh throughout the session. They model simple language patterns clearly and engage children in activities such as counting, introducing a Welsh word of the week and using puppets and models to deepen children's understanding. They model Welsh vocabulary and simple phrases during group activities and incidentally throughout the day. Practitioners enthusiastically encourage children to join in singing a range of Welsh songs and rhymes, which supports the development of their Welsh language skills highly effectively.

During snack time, practitioners encourage children to develop their independence skills successfully. They encourage them to pour their own drinks, butter bread, and support them to clear away their dishes and recycle food waste. They sit alongside children and engage them in worthwhile discussions that are led by children's interests.

Practitioners keep parents and carers well informed about their children's progress through a social media platform and regular conversations. Practitioners use the local area, such as the park and forest to develop children's understanding of the world around them effectively. They encourage children to develop friendships based on kindness and they regularly celebrate different cultures and customs. This supports children's social, cultural and moral development successfully.

Environment: Adequate

Overall, leaders follow safety procedures to ensure that the environment is safe and secure. They ensure that there is a secure system in place to manage access to the setting through gates and entrances that are kept locked and visitors are asked to sign the visitors' book so that all adults are accounted for. However, this procedure is not always followed consistently well enough.

Written risk assessments are reviewed annually, they identify most hazards and appropriate control measures are in place to minimise risk. However, leaders do not always ensure that access to the outdoor area is secure as this area is shared with the school. Leaders carry out and record fire evacuation drills. However, these are not conducted regularly enough and required documentation in relation to potential fire risks is not in place. As a result, children and practitioners are not as prepared as they could be to what to do in an emergency.

Leaders ensure that the setting is welcoming and bright with plenty of natural light and decorated in a natural style, which creates a calm and peaceful environment. Areas are adequately clean and appropriately maintained. Practitioners have arranged resources and furniture successfully to ensure that children have adequate

space to move around and play freely. Most resources are easy for children to access themselves, which encourages independence and allows them to follow their own lead. Practitioners ensure that there are quiet areas for children to rest and relax in, as well areas for them to play and be active. Resources are thoughtfully set out and varied and meet children's interests well.

Practitioners ensure that children have weekly access to a forest area and they provide a good range of interesting and stimulating opportunities for children to explore. They encourage children to use the outdoor area, which includes a good range of age-appropriate resources, such as water pumps, bikes and digging opportunities that support children's interests and development well. Practitioners promote managed risk taking successfully, such as allowing children to climb and balance on the apparatus at height and using scissors independently.

Leaders provide children with good quality furniture, toys and resources that are clean and well maintained. They enhance the learning environment well, ensuring that children have access to a wide range of toys and equipment that helps them to be curious and develop a wide range of skills. Practitioners use toys and resources appropriately to teach children about different cultures. For example, they use interesting stories to develop children's awareness of life in another country.

Leadership and management: Adequate

Leaders and practitioners have a clear vision based on creating a welcoming and nurturing environment where children have opportunities to benefit from a wide range of opportunities that reflect and develop their interests well. They share and communicate this vision for the setting successfully through the strong relationships they have developed with the children and their families. The setting has clear statement of purpose, which keeps parents well informed about what the setting has to offer.

Leaders make adequate use of practitioners and resources to support children's learning, play and well-being and there is a strong commitment to teamwork. They ensure that they are meeting the required ratios of adult to child and that children are well supervised. Practitioners work diligently to minimise the impact of a shared outdoor area on children's play and development. Leaders, however, do not ensure that regular staff breaks are factored into the daily routines of the setting. As a result, staff are unable to take their required breaks during their working day.

The setting has a range of policies and procedures which practitioners follow suitably. Practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities and work well to ensure that the setting runs smoothly. However, leaders do not ensure that all important policies and procedures are in place and are adhered to appropriately.

Overall leaders make good use of the funding it receives to make investments in quality resources that provide children with a challenging, stimulating and exciting environment. For example, the purchase of natural and woodworking resources encourages children to develop worthwhile problem solving and physical skills in the outdoors.

Leaders have suitable procedures to evaluate the work of the setting and identify the strengths and areas for improvement appropriately. They consider the views of stakeholders when planning for improvement. At present not all members of staff receive suitable appraisals. As a result, they do not always know what is expected of them, or what actions they need to take to secure improvements and to comply with regulations, such as submitting information to CIW in the required timeframes.

Leaders have developed valuable relationships with parents and share useful information with them about their child's development and progress. There are effective systems in place to share information about daily routines such as snack menus and the Welsh word of the week. Parents and carers feel welcome at the setting and value the regular exchanges of information. Leaders share the latest information with parents and carers about their child's progress through a social media platform effectively. A strong partnership with the local authority teacher has supported practitioners to evaluate the impact of teaching and learning at the setting.

Leaders enjoy a beneficial partnership with the local school. For example, they attend the annual Christmas concert and become familiar with staff and the Head teacher who visit the setting regularly. There are suitable arrangements in place for children to visit the school in preparation for starting on their next stage of their education. This ensures that children make a smooth and successful transition.

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)

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
Poor	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

This document has been translated by Trosol/Prysg (English to Welsh).

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Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	**What each means**
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

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

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
38	The responsible individual must ensure adequate precautions, procedures and documentation is in	New

	place in relation to fire safety.	
29	The responsible individual must ensure all staff receive regular and appropriate supervision and appraisals.	New
30	The responsible individual must ensure all records within Regulation 30, Schedule 3 are appropriately maintained.	New
28	There was no evidence of staff files for the service for one practitioner and one volunteer employed and working in the adjoining school	Achieved

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being.
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

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