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

Llandudno Junction Playgroup

Ysgol Awel y Mynydd
Sarn Mynach
Llandudno Junction
LL31 9RZ

Date of inspection: January 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

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About Llandudno Junction Playgroup

Name of setting	Llandudno Junction Playgroup
Category of care provided	Sessional Day Care
Registered person(s)	Llandudno Junction Playgroup
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Lynn Lever
Person in charge	Lynn Lever
Number of places	24
Age range of children	2 – 4 years old
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	21
Number of children who receive funding for early education	7
Opening days / times	Term time only, Monday to Friday 9.00 – 13.00 and 13.15 – 15.15
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	27/02/2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection	14/05/2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	21/01/2025
5 children have English as an additional language. No children are fluent Welsh speakers.	

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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	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1. Implement a robust system for recording incidents, actions taken as a result and their outcomes

R2. Further develop the use of observations to plan children's next steps in learning and to measure progress over time

R3. Ensure that leaders share information regularly with parents regarding their individual children's progress at the setting

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 about how they spend their time at the setting. They choose what to play with from the plentiful resources available to them. They move freely between different areas, transporting toys and resources to support their play. Nearly all children are confident to talk and express themselves, knowing that what they say is valued. For example, children are excited to share news with their friends and practitioners, and smile with pleasure as they are responded to with interest.

Nearly all children are happy, confident and enjoy attending the setting. They cope well with separation from their parents and carers. For example, most children arrive with smiles on their faces, come into the setting eagerly and greet practitioners warmly. They form strong positive emotional attachments to practitioners whom they are familiar with. Many children eagerly invite practitioners into their play, for example when inviting them into the role play hair salon to have their hair styled. Nearly all children are familiar with the routines and expectations of the setting, and this adds to their sense of safety and well-being.

Most children are beginning to form friendships at the setting. They play contentedly alongside each other or with their friends and are learning to co-operate and share. For example, they chat happily and giggle together as they build a tower of foam bricks outside. Nearly all children show respect for others at the setting. For example, they wait patiently for other children to finish washing their hands so they can wash their own. They show respect and care for resources and toys and use them appropriately. For example, children lift drawers out carefully with both hands and place them on the floor gently to investigate their contents.

Nearly all children are enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. They enjoy both adult led activities and free play. For example, children listen attentively and join in enthusiastically when discussing the weather with practitioners in a group, and later follow their own interests, seeking out toys and activities that interest them.

Many children are developing their independent skills well. For example, they independently access the toilet facilities and wash their hands, with encouragement from staff where needed.

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

Nearly all children engage with learning enthusiastically. They choose activities and make decisions about the resources they need confidently. For example, they choose craft materials to create pictures of their favourite animals.

Nearly all children's communication and literacy skills are developing effectively. They use their oracy skills appropriately. For example, they describe countries and oceans they recognise when playing with a world globe. Nearly all children listen intently to practitioners and respond confidently. Many children show a good standard of vocabulary, for example, when discussing the weather. Nearly all children are learning to express their feelings. For example, they use a range of language to describe their emotions whilst sharing a story.

Many children develop their early mark making skills successfully. They write party invitations using a choice of crayons, pencils and pens, and share these invitations proudly with friends and practitioners. Nearly all children demonstrate their skills as early readers, for example turning the pages of a book to find pictures of cold weather animals in the reading corner.

Nearly all children enjoy singing and join in with Welsh songs and rhymes. They understand and respond to simple instructions and daily greetings in Welsh appropriately.

Nearly all children develop their dexterity and hand eye coordination successfully. For example, they pour and scoop sand into ice cube trays, and thread breakfast cereal onto a pipe cleaner to create a food chain for the birds. Nearly all children develop their gross motor skills successfully through daily activities in the outdoor area. For example, children share the use of the balance and pedal bikes and show good strength and balance while using the scooter.

Most children develop their problem solving skills confidently through a range of interesting activities both inside and outdoors. For example, they work out how to build towers with various recycled resources and make choices about the best way to measure what they have created. Nearly all children's mathematical skills are developing well. For example, nearly all children are able to sort flowers, leaves and seeds by placing them in baskets according to size, shape and colour.

Nearly all children develop their digital skills appropriately through the beneficial opportunities for them to use and explore digital resources. For example, during outdoor visits, children use digital cameras to take photos of what they have seen. On their return to the setting they share and talk about their pictures. Many children use tablets independently to play digital games, where they recognise shapes, draw pictures and play matching games.

Nearly all children make good progress in developing their creative skills both inside and outdoors. For example, they create natural wreaths using autumn leaves and create colourful firework paintings from recyclable materials.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They have regular safeguarding training, ensuring that they have a clear understanding of safeguarding issues, and their own duty to report concerns. Practitioners carry out fire drills regularly so that children and staff are clear what to do in an emergency. They keep

good records including evacuation times and any improvements to the procedure that may be needed. Practitioners work in line with the risk assessments at the setting and are alert to any emerging risks. Practitioners record accidents, and pre-existing injuries well, and share this information with parents. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. However, written records of incidents are not completed for all children involved, and do not provide sufficient detail regarding the incident and further actions and outcomes. Practitioners promote healthy lifestyles; they offer a choice of healthy food at snack time and ensure that children have access to enriching and enjoyable daily outdoor play experiences. This brings children the benefits of physical exercise and fresh air.

All practitioners are kind, gentle and warm and interact positively with children. They use praise and encouragement to support children's behaviour effectively. They set clear expectations for behaviour and gently encourage children to be kind, show respect for each other and take turns in sharing resources. For example, when children want to play with the same toy, practitioners skilfully suggest another toy or activity to play with, therefore avoiding any potential conflict. Practitioners are skilful communicators and bring a sense of humour and fun into their interactions with children. This creates a warm and calm atmosphere at the setting.

Practitioners are nurturing, sensitive and alert to the needs of children in their care. For example, they respond quickly to reassure any children who begin to look upset. Practitioners are observant and alert for signs that children may have emerging additional learning needs. They follow professional advice and are pro-active in finding ways to support children and plan for their needs. They work with parents, carers, professionals and outside agencies to support children effectively.

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

Practitioners provide a calm and secure environment for children to play and learn. They know children well and have a strong understanding of child development and the importance of giving children time to explore and play. They provide a good range of engaging and worthwhile experiences that support children's learning and development effectively both indoors and outdoors.

Practitioners work together to consider and respond to children's interests. For example, they respond to the children's enthusiasm for animals and especially donkeys. As a result, they find out about people who help animals and adopt a donkey through a charity. Practitioners work together to ensure new skills are introduced to children through real life experiences. For example the setting's guinea pigs provide opportunities for children to explore and understand caring, bathing, feeding and playing within a carefully planned daily experience.

Practitioners model and use positive descriptive language, engaging children in beneficial conversations that develop their language and mathematical skills well. For example, they

discuss size, length and colour of items needed to build bird feeders. They know when to intervene in children's play and when to hold back.

Practitioners develop children's independence effectively. For example, during snack time, practitioners model and use positive descriptive language to encourage children to be independent in hand washing, choosing their snack, waiting their turn, and carrying their plate to the table.

Practitioners develop children's spiritual, moral and social skills effectively. For example, they encourage children to develop friendships based on kindness. They celebrate diversity successfully by studying customs such as Chinese New Year and playing with artefacts that reflect the people of the world around them. Leaders arrange visits to the setting from local community figures such as police community support officers. This supports children in their understanding and curiosity about their community and the people who help us.

Practitioners use observations and assessments to identify children's learning during designated focused observation weeks. The information recorded in these individual observations is detailed and gives practitioners a useful picture of an individual child's achievement. However, practitioners do not consider well enough how they use these assessments to plan children's next steps in learning and measure their progress over time well enough.

Practitioners plan inviting experiences that engage and excite children, for example freezing small animal figures for the children to investigate how they can hatch them from the ice. Practitioners use questions skilfully to prompt children's thinking and consider the most effective way to release their chosen animal.

Practitioners model greetings and simple phrases in Welsh well. This ensures that Welsh Language skills progress appropriately during their time at the setting. They plan a range of activities and experiences that promote the awareness of the culture and traditions of Wales suitably. For example, they plan worthwhile opportunities for children to sing traditional songs and rhymes, eat food related to Wales and participate in traditional Welsh dancing.

Environment: Good

The environment is safe and secure. The site is modern and well maintained. External doors are locked, and practitioners allow only authorised access to the setting. They ensure that a record of all visitors is maintained. Practitioners are alert to emerging risks and complete daily safety checks of the environment to identify and, where possible, eliminate any risks to children's safety. Leaders ensure that risk assessments for all areas and activities are in place and always followed by practitioners. For example, leaders have appropriate plans in place for children to handle and take care of the setting's guinea pigs.

The indoor environment is warm, welcoming and decorated in such a way as to make it inviting to children, providing an effective environment for play and learning. The room is thoughtfully laid out to provide a wide variety of areas and resources to stimulate children's

interest. For example, the home role play area is resourced attractively to invite children to play, and a cosy arched den provides a restful space for children to look at books or relax. The tables and chairs are at children's height and provide a suitable place to eat snack and lunch whilst also serving as a useful space for learning activities. Toys and activities are stored in manageably sized baskets at children's height enabling them to access what they want to play with freely. Toilets and wash hand basins are clean and suitable in number, and children access them independently. The outdoor environment is safe and provides worthwhile opportunities for children to play and learn in the fresh air. For example, the raised bed gives children opportunities to plant and grow vegetables, and a recycled bathtub has been turned into a flowerbed.

The setting contains a large quantity of high quality, interesting and developmentally appropriate resources, ensuring that children have a good variety and choice. There is a mix of natural and man-made materials with many attractive wooden resources. Real life and multicultural items promote children's awareness of cultural diversity and the world around them. Staff regularly check toys, equipment, and resources to ensure that they are clean and in good condition.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting based on developing the well-being of all children by ensuring that they experience a warm, caring and engaging environment. Leaders have a strong commitment to teamwork and shared responsibility across the setting. They have established a positive, supportive and welcoming environment, which ensures a happy setting for both children and practitioners.

Leaders ensure that the statement of purpose is clear and provides an accurate picture of the setting. This assists parents to make informed decisions about the suitability of the setting for their child. The setting's improvement plans include a sensible range of targets and priorities, which allows leaders to improve the work of the setting appropriately. Leaders draw upon reviews, advice and feedback from external agencies and use this beneficial information to help them to inform their setting development plans well. Leaders ensure that key messages from these activities are shared with staff promptly and changes required are implemented as soon as possible.

Leaders implement an effective system for practitioners' supervisions and appraisals that leads to agreed targets. Staff appraisals and supervisions are factual and identify weaknesses and strengths. Leaders ensure that staff are provided with beneficial professional development opportunities to enhance their skills as practitioners. Following their recent professional learning linked to supporting children's language development, practitioners were invited to share examples of the setting's good practice with other settings.

Leaders communicate with parents using the setting's social media page. They share photographs of the children's learning and activities during the day and important administrative information. However, leaders do not ensure that parents receive regular information about progress their individual child makes during their time at the setting well

enough. As a result, parents do not have a clear picture of the progress their child is making at the setting and how they can support this at home.

Leaders have developed a range of effective partnerships in the community that improve the learning and well-being of children successfully. For example, they attend remembrance events where children lay their homemade wreaths which helps foster a strong sense of community belonging.

Leaders manage funding efficiently and are proactive in attaining grants and additional funding to improve the quality of care, play and learning opportunities within the setting so that no children are disadvantaged.

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

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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
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this	N/A

	inspection	

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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