A report on

Croco-Doco-Dile Playgroup

The Old Clinic
Llanidloes Primary School
Llangurig Road
Llanidloes
Powys
SY18 6EX

Date of inspection: October 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Croco-Doco-Dile Playgroup

Name of setting	Croco-Doco-Dile Playgroup
Category of care provided	Full daycare
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Fleur Griggs
Person in charge	Emma Machen
Number of places	42
Age range of children	2-4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	25
Number of children who receive funding for early education	25
Opening days / times	Monday – Friday 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
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 making a significant effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards being a bilingual service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	September 2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection	2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	14/10/2025

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

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Strengthen written documentation regarding safeguarding matters to ensure that information is appropriately recorded and retained for future reference

R2 Ensure that risk assessments record all possible risks and the steps taken to minimise the impact and that they are applied in practice

R3 Ensure that practitioners' interactions with children promote their thinking skills and develop their learning and development successfully

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 have worthwhile opportunities to make choices and decisions about how they spend their time at the setting. They choose where and with whom they want to play. Nearly all children express themselves confidently, as they know that their wants, needs and emotions will be listened to.

Nearly all children are happy, relaxed and enjoy their time at the setting. Nearly all children develop positive, healthy relationships with their friends and practitioners, whom they frequently approach for support and enjoy spending time playing alongside. Nearly all children develop a strong sense of belonging. They are greeted warmly by practitioners, ensuring that they feel happy to begin their day at the setting. They are extremely comfortable in their surroundings and are familiar with the daily routines. Nearly all children behave exceptionally well, they use good manners, show respect to each other, and share resources well. They enjoy receiving praise from practitioners for being kind and helpful.

Nearly all children have beneficial opportunities to develop, learn, and use their imagination. They are curious and engaged learners who value the chance to explore their environment and become fully immersed in their play. Nearly all children enjoy exploring their interests freely, for example, carefully selecting and picking ripe tomatoes from a plant to add to their pumpkin soup. Nearly all children support each other in their play well. They help each other to collect planks of wood and blocks to make a bridge, showing great delight at their achievements.

Nearly all children are developing a wide range of skills as they play and engage in a rich and effective environment. They benefit from a carefully considered layout, which provides many opportunities for them to become independent, enabling them to do things for themselves. Nearly all children are given time to practise skills such as washing their own hands before snack time, when using the toilet independently and when pouring their own drinks. These experiences help to promote children's self-help skills and build their self-esteem successfully.

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

Nearly all children enjoy their time at the setting and are keen to learn. They have positive attitudes to new experiences and explore the learning opportunities with confidence and enthusiasm. Most children make good progress from their differing starting points in many areas of learning. They demonstrate perseverance and concentration when following their interests, such as when filling and emptying pots of playdough.

Many children are confident speakers and make themselves understood using simple phrases in their play and when responding to adults. They talk with enthusiasm about activities that interest them, such as describing the different food they prepare for dolls. Many children enjoy singing songs and rhymes and join in with repetitive phrases confidently. They listen and follow instructions carefully, such as when using a hose to water

the plants in the garden. Many children enjoy books and stories and join in with familiar sections that practitioners read to them. They enjoy looking at books in other areas, such as books on dinosaurs and leaflets about local activities. Many children are interested in mark making and engage in activities such as painting, chalking, and writing on clipboards enthusiastically. A few practise writing the first letter of their names confidently.

Many children are developing appropriate early number skills. For example, they count the number of children present and objects as they play and explore. Many children are beginning to use mathematical language confidently as they play, such as naming full and empty pots and small and big pieces of a Russian doll.

Many children are developing appropriate problem-solving skills as they play and explore. For example, they work out how to mix paint to make different colours and how to use sand to stop trains from travelling along a track.

Many children are beginning to develop a suitable awareness of the Welsh language. They sing simple Welsh songs happily and respond to their names when called. They name fruits and colours with some support and respond by pointing when asked what they would like to drink at snack time.

A majority of children retrieve and listen to messages recorded for them by practitioners successfully. A few children use a tablet computer to take photographs outside, and a very few use a calculator and torch as they play appropriately.

Most children are developing their physical skills appropriately. They enjoy being physically active in the outdoor area. They use climbing frames, balance on obstacle courses, and push wheelbarrows competently. These activities promote their coordination effectively. They use small tools confidently, such as tongs to pick up fruit and accurately push pins into pumpkins.

Many children engage in creative activities happily. They enjoy printing with seed pods and wearing hats to sing and dance on a stage.

Care and development: Good

Leaders ensure that practitioners have a wide range of policies, procedures and documentation to guide them in their roles. Practitioners complete relevant records for accidents and incidents and there are suitable systems for the administration of medication. A range of risk assessments are in place that consider the environment and activities to help maintain safety. However, these do not identify all potential hazards, and practitioners do not always apply them effectively in practice. For example, procedures for using the fire pit lack sufficient detail on the safety measures to be followed. Nearly all practitioners undertake relevant safeguarding training. They are confident in their duty to report any concerns and act accordingly to ensure safeguarding matters are addressed promptly. However, they do not ensure that written records in relation to concerns are appropriately recorded and retained for future reference. Therefore, the setting's safeguarding arrangements for safeguarding children are not robust enough and do not meet requirements and give cause for concern.

Practitioners follow and promote thorough hygiene and cleaning practices consistently as part of their infection control processes. They wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when undertaking key tasks, such as changing children's nappies and when preparing food. Practitioners help to embed highly effective hygiene routines in children, such as washing hands before mealtimes and after using the toilet.

Practitioners provide a range of healthy snacks and lunch is brought from home as a packed lunch. Practitioners ensure that mealtimes are organised, enjoyable, sociable, and safe. They implement effective procedures to deal with children who may have allergies, intolerances, and food preferences. Practitioners ensure that children experience the benefits of getting out into the fresh air daily by accessing the outdoor play space and carrying out visits in the local community.

Nearly all practitioners interact exceptionally well with children and build positive relationships with them. They are kind, caring and patient and work hard to ensure that children feel valued and enjoy their time at the setting. As a result, children approach them with great ease and confidence when directing their own play. They have a sound understanding of child development and its impact on children's behaviour. As a result, they skilfully tailor their approach to ensure children are guided to the behaviour that is expected of them.

Practitioners know children's individual needs exceptionally well, including those with additional learning needs (ALN). They seek beneficial advice and act on guidance from professionals when required. Practitioners carry out regular observations of children's play and this helps them to follow their development and identify next steps. They follow children's interests well and respond to their likes and fascinations, adding interesting resources and activities to the environment. Practitioners are beginning to embed the Welsh language with children of all ages through singing songs and using simple Welsh vocabulary during activities and routines.

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 undertake useful observations of children, which helps them understand their individual strengths and needs well. They use this knowledge to plan beneficial learning experiences for all children. Practitioners provide a wide range of rich, stimulating, and engaging learning experiences that promote children's curiosity successfully. When observing children during their play practitioners respond thoughtfully to their interests and ideas. They make meaningful adaptations to the environment, such as providing tea bags, cups and teapots to a role play area to encourage children to re-enact a familiar story.

Practitioners allow children sufficient time to become engrossed in what they are doing. They model language well and provide commentaries on what children choose to do effectively. However, practitioners do not always make the best use of their interactions with children to extend their learning and thinking skills.

Practitioners plan a wide range of learning and play activities that enable children to develop their communication skills progressively across most areas of learning. They talk to children

about what they are doing and give them time to share their feelings and views. Practitioners provide books alongside activities, such as cookery books, which they share with children enthusiastically. Practitioners encourage children to engage in purposeful mark making experiences such as writing shopping lists, to help develop their early writing skills. Practitioners support children to speak Welsh during whole group sessions effectively. For example, during snack time they ask children what they would like to eat and drink. They use a few phrases and words, such as colour names, numbers and give praise in Welsh as children play.

Practitioners provide beneficial opportunities for children to develop their understanding of number. They support children to count real objects such as toys and fruit and recognise numerals as they play, for example, when finding numbers hidden in a sand tray. They provide worthwhile resources that help children explore concepts such as weight, shape, and measure, including large weighing scales and building blocks.

Practitioners are beginning to introduce suitable opportunities for children to develop their digital skills, such as accessing a pre-recorded message for them to listen to or taking photos with a tablet computer.

Practitioners provide beneficial resources to promote children's physical skills, such as paintbrushes and spoons to stir their concoctions and large climbing equipment outside.

Practitioners plan a variety of experiences to promote children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development effectively. They offer meaningful opportunities for children to learn about their Welsh identity and culture through celebrating St David's Day and tasting traditional Welsh foods. They provide informative displays of families and local features, which helps children develop a strong sense of belonging, alongside celebrations of festivals from around the world. These support children to understand and be aware of cultures and beliefs that may be different to their own.

Through regular observations, practitioners identify next steps in children's learning appropriately and there are effective systems in place to monitor children's progress over time.

Practitioners keep parents and carers well informed of their child's progress through regular updates on social media and useful on entry and exit written summaries that detail children's development and achievements.

Environment: Excellent

Leaders provide a safe, well-maintained, and exceptionally welcoming environment. Leaders liaise with the school in which the setting is based to ensure that required maintenance checks are completed in a timely manner. There is a secure system for entering and exiting the setting and visitors are routinely recorded. Practitioners undertake regular beneficial fire and lock down drills with children to ensure that they are all confident in the procedures.

Leaders organise the play areas superbly well, ensuring that they support children's well-being, curiosity, and independence highly effectively. Neutral wall colours, natural materials and soft lighting create low a calm atmosphere that helps children feel settled and ready to

learn. High-quality low-level furniture and resources support children's independence well, enabling them to follow their interests and direct their own play easily. Practitioners successfully facilitate and supervise younger children to access the bathroom which is positioned away from their main playroom.

Leaders provide a range of open-ended authentic resources and toys which are of excellent quality. Real-life, natural, re-purposed and recycled items are used to enhance all areas of the environment, which stimulate children's senses and imagination, enhancing their play experiences. The use of large and small loose items such as pinecones, leaves, crates and planks of wood is available throughout the setting. This enables children to use these items freely to elaborate their play promoting creativity and curiosity.

The outdoor environment offers a range of exceptionally rich play opportunities and learning experiences for children to develop their physical, imaginative and communication skills. For example, practitioners make beneficial use of a log circle for children to sit and talk to each other and enjoy having stories read to them. Children move freely between both the indoor and outdoor environments as they wish throughout the session. This enables them to follow their interests in the environment where they feel most comfortable. The outdoor environments are suitably sized, and house small, covered structures providing shelter to enable the space to be accessed in all weather conditions.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting to provide a happy environment, where children's voices are valued and they develop their independent skills successfully. Leaders have high expectations of practitioners, and they work together diligently to maintain and constantly improve all aspects of the provision. They share a clear focus on ensuring the best possible experiences for the children in their care.

Leaders have developed a clear statement of purpose that provides an accurate picture of the setting, and they ensure that a suitable range of relevant policies and procedures are in place. However, not all safeguarding procedures relating to the recording information are followed correctly.

Leaders have developed appropriate self-evaluation processes that feed effectively into the setting's improvement plans. They identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement successfully and set appropriate actions that bring about the desired improvements. They ensure that actions focus well on improving provision and outcomes for children, such as providing a sheltered area outside to extend opportunities for children to play and explore whatever the weather. Leaders make very good use of grants to enhance provision and extend learning experiences for children. For example, they have provided book bags and gardening resources for children to take home, purchased an oven to prepare healthy food with the children and funded trips to a pumpkin patch.

Leaders have effective arrangements in place to supervise and monitor practitioners performance. They work together, to reflect on roles and responsibilities and identify appropriate targets for improvement. Leaders organise valuable professional learning where needed. For example, practitioners have received worthwhile training that helps them to identify and respond to children's immediate interests. As a result, they have developed a

stronger understanding of how to create learning environments that spark children's curiosity effectively.

Leaders have established and maintained strong partnerships that contribute positively to children's learning and development. There are worthwhile relationships with parents and carers. Practitioners communicate with them effectively through social media to share upcoming events and photographs of what children have been doing. They have an open-door policy to enable parents and carers to share concerns and learn about children's progress and achievements regularly.

Leaders make good use of the beneficial advice and guidance from partners, such as the local authority's advisory teacher, who has supported them to develop provision and practitioners' skills. Leaders act on advice and guidance from healthcare professionals to ensure that children with additional needs receive appropriate support. For example, leaders have had the ceiling lowered inside and a step removed from the garden to ensure all children access all learning opportunities successfully.

The setting has valuable links with the local community. Recent activities such as visits to the library, church, and local café along with visitors to the setting help children to gain a better understanding of the world around them.

Leaders have developed beneficial relationships with the local school, where children attend events such as sports days and assemblies. There are effective arrangements for transition, which ensure that children have a positive experience when moving on to their next stage in their education.

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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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.

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