



## Inspection Report

**St Padarn's Playgroup**

**St. Padarns Primary School  
Llanbadarn Road  
Aberystwyth  
SY23 1EZ**



**Date Inspection Completed**

20/03/2025

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## About St Padarn's Playgroup

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	St Padarn's Playgroup
Registered places	19
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is a post registration inspection.
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use the service.

<a href="#"><u>Well-being</u></a>	<b>Excellent</b>
<a href="#"><u>Care and Development</u></a>	<b>Excellent</b>
<a href="#"><u>Environment</u></a>	<b>Good</b>
<a href="#"><u>Leadership and Management</u></a>	<b>Good</b>

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

### **Summary**

Children thoroughly enjoy attending the setting. They feel very safe and secure in the care of staff. Children have lots of fun playing with their friends and staff and have a wealth of choice and opportunities to develop different skills. They show purpose, curiosity and high levels of engagement. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their independence.

Staff are professional and provide a warm and nurturing child-centred setting. They are enthusiastic about their roles, reflecting purposefully on children's progress and recent training experiences. They implement the setting's policies and procedures effectively. Staff are extremely patient, kind and caring towards each other and the children. They support children's learning and development through a wide range of planned and spontaneous activities led by the children's interests and developmental needs. Staff keep highly valuable records of children's progress.

Leaders ensure the environment has good indoor play space for children to move freely and supports children in their play and learning. The outdoor play space is used as often as possible and is an extension of the learning environment. Children have access to a wide range of developmentally appropriate play and learning resources.

Leaders at the setting have a strong vision for the future and ensure they manage their team with effective support and encouragement. They are enthusiastic and ensure they offer a high standard of care to the children. Leaders have developed positive relationships with parents and carers and work closely with them to ensure effective care and support to all children who attend.

## Well-being

## Excellent

Children have many choices and opportunities to make decisions about how they spend their time at the setting. They express themselves effectively, confidently engaging with staff and us as visitors to the setting. For example, they share that they are happy and like coming as they have friends. They know staff listen to their needs and show a genuine and meaningful interest in their play. They are given the opportunity to share how they are feeling at the start of the session which elicits kind and genuine responses from staff.

Children are very happy, settled, and enjoy attending the setting. We saw children smile and heard them laugh throughout our visit. For example, children laughed with excitement as they played catch with a member of staff who pretended to wobble when they caught the ball. They are developing warm and affectionate relationships with staff and clearly enjoy being in their company. We saw children and staff playing together outside as children led play, invented games and directed staff roles. For example, children and staff dug for 'treasure' together and played an imaginative game of making a birthday cake. Children know the staff and daily routines very well, which helps them feel extremely settled and confident in their surroundings. They receive plenty of encouragement and praise from staff when learning new skills, giving them the confidence to play and learn.

Children interact positively with their friends. They are learning to be kind and are becoming aware of each other's feelings. Some children are developing empathy. For example, a child gave their friend a cuddle when they were feeling upset on arrival. Children play very happily alongside each other or together in line with their age and stage of development. Interactions are consistently positive, and clear friendships have formed.

Children are curious and highly engaged in their play and learning. They are excited and show enthusiasm when arriving at the setting and are keen to explore the activities on offer. They begin play almost immediately. They show very good concentration skills and eagerly join in with activities on offer to them. For example, children were absorbed in an activity of making shelters for zoo and farm animals and played alongside staff as they brought in extra resources to represent water and ice. Children also thoroughly enjoyed themselves as they took part in energetic outside play.

Children develop an excellent range of skills as they play. They have exceptional opportunities to develop their independence skills and are quite self-sufficient. For example, during a creative activity, children realise they need further equipment and confidently collect it themselves. They take care of their belongings, hanging up their bags and coats on arrival. During snack time children fetch their own bowl and cup, pour their own drinks and take their dishes to the sink when finished and wash up. Children are given responsibilities which raise their self-esteem and confidence. For example, the 'Helper of the Day' was proud to explain his role and responsibilities and show off his badge.

## Care and Development

Excellent

Staff implement procedures to a very high standard to keep children safe and promote their development and well-being. They have a clear understanding of the safeguarding procedures and their responsibilities to keep children safe and report any concerns. Accurate records of the children and staff attendance are kept. Staff have sound knowledge of children's allergies, dietary requirements, and medical needs. They are confident in recording accidents and incidents and have appropriate systems in place for the administration of medication. Staff offer healthy food and drinks and encourage children to wash their hands independently before their food is served. Staff sit with the children at snack time making this a sociable experience and providing a language rich environment. Staff follow very good hygiene procedures wiping tables prior to snack time and ensuring that infection control standards are followed during nappy changing. They practise regular fire drills with children, so they know what to do in the event of an emergency. Staff ensure children have access to daily outdoor play experiences, offering them the benefits of physical exercise and fresh air.

Staff are kind and caring towards the children. They are very responsive and nurturing, which means children approach them with ease. Staff fully understand the behaviour management policy and consistently implement positive behaviour strategies. We heard staff consistently praise children and seek out opportunities to raise children's self-esteem and promote positive behaviour. For example, children are respectfully thanked when they bring their dishes to the sink and a child was praised by all staff when they carefully carried a jug of water to the outside play area. The child looked visibly proud of their achievement. Staff genuinely delight in children's achievements. They always act as good role models, consistently promoting good manners and skilfully supporting the developing skills of sharing and turn taking. For example, when children found it a little difficult to share scooters, the staff member skilfully negotiated a way forward and thanked the children for agreeing to the proposed plan. Behaviour management is a real strength of the staff team. Staff have excellent relationships and communicate very well with each other, sharing key information which supports children's wellbeing. This ensures children are appropriately supervised and supported throughout the day.

Staff are committed to providing an excellent range of play and learning activities with an appropriate balance of child and adult-led opportunities. Staff play alongside children and seize opportunities to extend learning and discussion. For example, when a child showed an interest in our visit, they quickly made a 'laptop' and helped the child to set up a desk so that they too could be an inspector. The child was delighted with the arrangement and shared her desk with friends. Staff invite children to play and skilfully follow children's curiosity and interests. For example, when playing with animal models, the member of staff noticed the child's interest in the zebra's coat and they discussed the patterns, explored coloured filters together and held them up to their eyes, chatting about the effects and colours. Staff consistently observe children's play and learning to track their progress and have a very good understanding of the role this plays in identifying the next steps in

children's learning and development. They plan effectively, using children's interests as a stimulus for future activities. Systems are in place to monitor and identify any emerging or additional learning needs children may have. Staff take purposeful action and make effective use of the support available. They reflect professionally on children's progress and training opportunities which impact positively on their practice. Staff frequently use Welsh to further extend learning to very good effect. Staff prioritise the positive promotion of diversity and work hard to make sure that all the children and families who attend the setting feel welcome and part of the setting. The staff encourage families to share information about their nationalities with each other, inviting parents into the setting to talk about their heritage language. Staff have a very good understanding of the importance of recognising children's cultural links and speak meaningfully about the positive impact this has on the children in their care.

## Environment

Good

Leaders ensure the environment is suitably safe, secure, and well maintained. There are a range of comprehensive risk assessments in place to support safety at the setting. The setting is clean, tidy, well maintained and welcoming. Thorough cleaning routines are in place which ensure the environment is well managed in terms of infection prevention and control. For example, staff clean and wipe down tables prior to snack time. The premises both inside and outside is secure, and an appropriate system is in place to record any visitors to the setting.

Leaders make certain the environment has very good indoor play space which children freely explore. The spacious playroom is divided into interesting areas which support children in their play and learning. Children have opportunities to relax in a comfortable reading area, role play in a 'kitchen' home area and enjoy junk modelling in a space for creative activities, for instance. The children benefit from colourful displays which promote diversity and explore different cultures. Photographs of children engaging with activities are also displayed, strengthening their connection to the setting. Leaders ensure that the outdoor play space is used frequently. Free flow between the indoor and outdoor area is encouraged. Although modest in size the area has been planned carefully and provides children with ample opportunities to enjoy their play in an outside environment. For example, we saw children engaged in water and sand play and demonstrate some impressive gymnastic skills. Children can also access the spacious school grounds. For example, we saw children enjoy an extended period of outside play on the well-resourced school playground and staff told us about the woodland area within the school grounds which they also frequently visit and play games such as Hide and Seek. Leaders also make good use of the local environment. For example, sometimes visiting the park and enjoying local walks.

Leaders provide a wide range of resources, allowing children variety and choice. They provide diverse resources suitable for the developmental stages of the children who attend the setting. For example, through multi-sensory, physical, creative and construction resources. Children can access toys and resources easily, as they are stored at low level or within their reach. The service promotes diversity and equality and provides a range of toys representative of different cultures.

## Leadership and Management

Good

Leaders are enthusiastic and motivated to provide a high-quality service. They have a strong vision for the setting and future improvements which they share effectively. They are knowledgeable about their regulatory responsibilities and have engaged positively with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) during the inspection process. Leaders of the setting play an active role in the day to day running and have a good understanding of the staff, children and the care they provide. They update the setting's policies and ensure staff implement these in practice. Leaders maintain and share an up-to-date statement of purpose that accurately reflects the service providing parents with helpful information and allowing them to make an informed choice about childcare.

Leaders work hard to provide a quality care provision to children and their families. The staff team are enthusiastic, motivated and enjoy their work. There is an evident culture of continuing professional development with staff taking opportunities to extend and develop their professional practice. Leaders maintain an organised environment and documents are easily accessed and generally in good order. At the time of our visit, not all the required statutory information was held within each staff file. This was quickly rectified, and staff files are now complete and hold the requisite information. They have a clear system in place to ensure that staff's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are up to date and that mandatory training, such as paediatric first aid, remains current. Leaders monitor the quality of the service and plan for improvements effectively. They regularly seek feedback from parents, children and staff, and identify areas to further develop. Leaders carry out regular appraisals and supervisions providing support and an opportunity to discuss any issues which may arise. They are keen to further develop the strong staff team, providing staff with opportunities, for example, to submit positive comments about each other's practice, which are then displayed at the setting.

People who run the setting have developed meaningful and positive relationships with parents and carers. There are effective systems in place to keep parents well informed about their child's time at the setting. Thorough verbal handovers are exchanged between staff and parents at the start and end of sessions. Questionnaires received from parents and staff following our visit are extremely positive. Parents tell us, "*[My child] has grown so much and is confident with her words and even sings and counts in Welsh,*" and "*The staff are amazing and go out of their way to make the children feel safe and cared for.*"

## 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.

# 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)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

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