A report on

Mochdre Playgroup

Mochdre Infant School
Station Road
Mochdre
Conwy
LL28 5EF

Date of inspection: March 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Mochdre Playgroup

Name of setting	Mochdre Playgroup
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Mochdre Playgroup
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Cheryl Jones
Person in charge	Cheryl Jones
Number of places	26
Age range of children	2-4 year olds
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	7
Number of children who receive funding for early education	4
Opening days / times	9am – 3pm Monday, Tuesday; 9am – 5pm Wednesday - Friday
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The service is not making a significant effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	This is a post registration inspection.
Date of previous Estyn inspection	This is the first Inspection since Registration
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	03/04/2025

Summary

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

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1. Continue to develop the use of Welsh throughout the setting

What happens next

CIW and Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a case study on its work in relation to on-entry transition and assessment arrangements that effectively foster a nurturing environment for all children, for dissemination on their websites.

Main findings

Well-being: Excellent

Nearly all children respond well to interesting and exciting opportunities to make decisions during their time at the setting. They decide whether to play outside or in and choose between the wide range of stimulating resources and activities on offer. They move freely between different areas, transporting toys and resources to support their play. Children express their views confidently and their interests are included in matters that affect them. For example, children develop strong relationships with key workers who work closely with them.

Nearly all children are exceptionally happy and settled throughout their time at the setting. They are confident, cope with separation from their parents and carers well, and relish the start of each day at the setting. Nearly all children form strong, trusting emotional attachments with the small team of practitioners with whom they are extremely familiar. Nearly all children readily approach practitioners, communicating with them in a variety of ways depending on their stage of development. They eagerly invite practitioners into their play and come to them for assistance, comfort or reassurance if needed. For example, some children readily gesture to practitioners when they need support with hand washing, whilst others are delighted when a staff member responds to their invitation to help them search for treasure and build a den. They know practitioners will always show interest, care for their needs and listen to them. Nearly all children are familiar with routines and expectations at the setting, and this adds to their strong sense of belonging. For example, children are eager and ready to join in wiggling their 'Welsh finger' as they count their friends at the start of the day.

Most children are starting to form friendships according to their age and stage of development. They play contentedly with a friend or alongside each other and are beginning to co-operate and share resources well. For example, children play happily together as they shine their torches and search for 'treasure'. They enjoy cutting play dough alongside each other at the table, ensuring that they leave enough room for other children to join in. Many children are learning to consider the needs of others well. For example, with some support they give each other enough space on the climbing frame, demonstrating a mature awareness of other children's needs and desires.

Nearly all children are highly enthusiastic and interested in their play and learning. They thoroughly enjoy both adult led activities and opportunities to lead their own play. For example, children busily seek out their own interests outdoors and later smile broadly and call out enthusiastically as they join in with a story.

Nearly all children show an increasing level of independence during their time at the setting and have many worthwhile opportunities to develop these skills further. For example, children help themselves to snack and many pour their milk unaided from a bottle. They access the toilet facilities independently and wash their hands, with encouragement and support from staff.

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

There is no report on children's learning. This is because the number of three or four year-old children present at the time of the inspection that do not receive funded education elsewhere was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Excellent

Practitioners have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They have a thorough knowledge of safeguarding issues and follow the setting's safeguarding procedures diligently, keeping detailed and precise records. Practitioners record accidents, incidents and pre-existing injuries accurately and share this information with parents promptly. Leaders monitor these records to identify patterns and trends and pro-actively address any issues as they arise. Practitioners are vigilant and attentive in their care of children to ensure that snack and mealtimes are highly enjoyable, relaxed, sociable and safe. Practitioners promote healthy lifestyles, by offering a choice of healthy food at snack time. They ensure that children have access to daily outdoor play experiences and understand the benefits of physical exercise and fresh air. Practitioners carry out fire drills, which help children and all colleagues know what to do in an emergency. They evaluate the procedures and evacuation times and record any improvements that may be needed. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners are excellent role models. They are exceptionally kind, caring, calm and patient. They bring warmth and humour into their interactions with children and are very responsive to children's attempts to communicate. This ensures that children feel valued and enjoy their time at the setting. Practitioners are outstanding in the way they manage and support children's behaviour. They use praise and regular encouragement to good effect and use positive phrases to encourage the behaviour they want to see. Practitioners gently encourage children to be kind, show respect for each other and share resources. They are sensitive and thoughtful in the way they support children to resolve disagreements when they arise, ensuring that children have the opportunity to explain things from their viewpoint. This ensures that children feel valued and able to express themselves.

Practitioners are highly nurturing, sensitive and alert to the needs of children in their care. All practitioners know children exceptionally well and respond to their needs swiftly, sharing valuable information as key workers. Practitioners are highly skilful in the way they support children who may have recognised or emerging additional learning needs. They are very observant and thorough, ensuring that children receive effective support as required. They follow professional advice and are pro-active in finding ways to support children, ensuring that all practitioners follow a consistent approach with each child. This approach ensures strong and consistent provision and a solid commitment to ensuring the best outcomes for the children in their care. They communicate well with each other and are diligent in keeping accurate records. They work closely with parents, carers, professionals and outside agencies to provide excellent support for the children at the setting.

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

Nearly all practitioners have a very good understanding of child development and how children learn. They have high expectations of themselves and children and understand children's individual strengths and needs extremely well. They observe children at play and provide a wide range of stimulating learning experiences that encourages their curiosity. This develops children's independence and problem solving skills across all areas of provision.

Practitioners provide beneficial opportunities to develop children's numeracy skills. They encourage children to recite numbers in both languages and count the number of children in the setting. Through skilful discussions, practitioners introduce the concept of measure effectively during water and investigative play. Practitioners provide a suitable range of experiences for children to develop their digital skills by using digital devices and toys. As a result, children choose equipment independently and begin to understand the purpose of digital technology. Nearly all practitioners use questioning skilfully to enhance children's problem-solving and thinking skills. For example, children are asked to think about how to make an outdoor area safe for climbing and running. They are also very skilful at understanding when to intervene and when to step back to give children time to work things out for themselves. For example, they allow children the freedom to examine how things work, such as a large balance scale outdoors. They introduce tools and other materials to enable children to fix problems for themselves.

Practitioners make effective use of the Welsh language with the children. They speak clearly and take opportunities to introduce new vocabulary purposefully, encouraging children to develop their understanding of simple words and phrases. They encourage children to join in singing a range of Welsh songs and rhymes and use incidental Welsh to give instructions, and congratulate them when they have done well. However, children's independent use of Welsh is at an early stage of development.

Practitioners provide a rich and engaging learning environment of high quality both indoor and outdoor that inspires curiosity and exploration and allows children to choose independently where they wish to learn. Practitioners plan an engaging range of learning and play activities that enable children to develop a range of skills progressively in all areas. Practitioners ensure that most activities are child initiated and come from children's interests. For example, after children become excited after seeing a squirrel, practitioners plan a range of engaging activities to enhance this experience. For example, they provide opportunities for the children to make hides and feeders and learn to use binoculars in order to see the squirrel more clearly.

Practitioners are good role models for developing children's communication skills. For example, they share books with children, model how to read a book correctly and discuss the story enthusiastically developing children's enjoyment of reading. They effectively encourage children to engage in mark making experiences such as writing shopping lists and using digital pads to develop their early writing skills.

Practitioners are beginning to make more effective use of the local area to enrich children's learning and arrange visit to the local shops, Chinese take away and park. This fosters a

sense of belonging to the local community and enriches children's knowledge of the locality and its' traditions.

Practitioners plan high quality experiences that enable children to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. For example, they provide opportunities to paint poppies and observe a minute's silence when learning about Remembrance Day. They provide children with a range of multicultural books, toys and small world figures to begin to learn about different cultures and their traditions. Practitioners provide children with suitable opportunities to learn about their Welsh identity and culture through celebrating St David's Day and tasting traditional Welsh foods. Practitioners also provide an informative display of local features and landmarks helping children develop a sense of Cynefin.

The setting's procedures for monitoring children's progress are highly effective. Practitioners carry out regular observations of children's play and use the information effectively to identify next steps in learning. They provide parents and carers with regular summaries of their child's progress and well-being.

Environment: Excellent

The environment is safe and secure. External doors to the main school building are always locked, and practitioners allow only authorised access to the setting's rooms. They ensure that a record of all visitors is maintained. Leaders ensure that highly effective, comprehensive risk assessments for all areas and activities are in place and always followed by practitioners. They complete comprehensive daily safety checks of the environment to identify and, where possible, eliminate any risks to children's safety.

The indoor environment is warm, welcoming and inviting to children, providing an excellent environment for play and learning. The room is thoughtfully laid out to provide varied spaces to stimulate children's interest. For example, areas such as the 'home corner' and painting and coloured dough activity tables are set up attractively to invite children to play. Toys and activities are at children's height enabling them to access what they want to play with freely. There is a safe relaxing space where children can rest, read quietly and sleep if needed. Display boards and photographs around the setting give children a sense of belonging as they celebrate their home and family life and regular visitors to the setting. Toilets and nappy changing facilities are clean and organised and suitable in number.

Children's independence is supported well by the layout of the setting. For example, children can independently access the toilets and leaders have developed an outdoor dressing area. This provides a valuable area for children to take the time and space they need moving between areas and learning to dress and undress in outdoor wear independently. The outdoor environment is safe, spacious, inviting and natural, containing grass and mature trees. It provides many worthwhile opportunities for children to play and learn in the fresh air. For example, the climbing frame presents physical challenges whilst the planting areas give children opportunities to plant and grow vegetables. High quality waterproof and windproof clothing is provided for all children, and this ensures that they can have access to the outdoors in all weathers, whilst remaining warm, dry and physically comfortable.

The setting has a large quantity of high-quality, toys and play resources, both indoors and outdoors. There is a mix of natural and man-made materials with many attractive wooden resources that support children's development well. Real life and multicultural items promote children's awareness of equality and cultural diversity. Staff follow very robust systems to regularly check toys, equipment and resources to ensure that they are clean and in good condition.

Leadership and management: Excellent

Leaders have high expectations of themselves, practitioners and children. They provide practitioners with strong leadership and have high aspirations for them, empowering them to lead and make decisions for the benefit of children. This clear vision and ethos leads to highly effective teamwork and successful co-operation among practitioners. A clear statement of purpose provides an accurate picture of the setting and relevant policies are regularly reviewed and shared with parents and practitioners. This creates a safe and homely environment in which children can thrive. As a result, children love attending the setting and make excellent progress.

Leaders have established strong and robust self-evaluation and improvement planning procedures that consider the views of a wide range of stakeholders. Leaders consult with parents and carers regularly to seek their views about the setting and what needs to be improved. They also provide valuable opportunities for practitioners to reflect on their own and others' work and discuss what works well and what could be improved. All this information is used purposefully to plan for improvement. Leaders have established a strong culture of continuous evaluation, aiming for provision of the highest standard for children in their care.

The setting uses budgets and grants effectively and prioritises expenditure against targets purposefully. Leaders enhance children's learning experiences by investing in valuable resources, such as seating and storage, which enable children easy access to a variety of creative and water play materials. This thoughtful arrangement encourages active participation and ensures that children are fully engaged in their play and learning.

Leaders follow effective arrangements to supervise and monitor practitioners performance. Together, they reflect on their roles, responsibilities, identify sensible targets for improvement and organise valuable, good quality training as necessary. For example, the whole team were involved in purposeful training to discuss how to plan most effectively to develop children's skills.

The setting has a range of effective partnerships that promote children's learning successfully. There are strong links with parents, ALN support groups and the local education authority. Positive links with the local schools are developing and, as a result, there are more robust arrangements in place to ensure that children transition to the next stage of their education progresses smoothly.

Leaders have well-established and strong relationships with parents and carers. They provide parents with regular information about their children's progress, and the range of activities that they enjoy while at the setting. There are regular opportunities for parents to discuss their child's experiences and celebrate their progress in different skills.

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).

© Crown Copyright 2025: This report may be re used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 09/05/2025

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.

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2025.
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.