Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

# Inspection Report

## Early Explorers Flexi Care

Holywell Leisure Centre, North Road, Holywell, CH8 7TQ

07301969336

**The inspection visits for this service took place between 05/05/2026 and 07/05/2026**

## Service Information:

| | |
|---|---|
| Operated by: | Hayley Murphy |
| Care Type: | Children's Day Care |
| Registered places: | 30 |
| Main language(s): | English |
| Flying Start service: | Yes |
| Receive funding to provide early years part time education: | No |
| Promotion of Welsh language and culture: | The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service. |

## Ratings:

| | |
|---|---|
| Well-being | Good |
| Care & Development | Good |
| Environment | Good |
| Leadership & Management | Excellent |

## Summary:

Children are happy and busy. They enjoy their play and are relaxed as they follow routines well. Children interact with each other happily and most make confident choices, which develops their independence and skills. Children know their decisions will be listened to and respected. They form close, warm relationships with staff and the other children. They play well together, are starting to take turns and make up imaginary games with dolls and soft toys.

Staff encourage healthy lifestyles and promote children's well-being successfully. Staff enjoy working in the setting and work well together, completing relevant records and sharing information with parents when needed. Staff are appropriately qualified and implement consistent practice. They manage interactions with children successfully and are good role models. They know the children well, and offer opportunities to problem solve and activities which the children are interested in.

The environment is welcoming, with neutral tones on the walls and displays of children's work. Age-appropriate furniture and resources are clean and well maintained. The spaces are organised and equipped to meet the needs of children. Regular monitoring, risk assessments and daily checks are completed to keep children safe.

Leaders are exceptionally reflective. They are highly experienced and committed to making improvements and maintaining good standards within the setting. They have good oversight, review their policies and procedures and maintain records highly effectively. Partnerships are successful especially with Flying Start with whom they produce documents to share with other settings. There are excellent relationships with parents which benefit both the children and their families.

# Findings:

## Well-being — Good

All children including those with limited speech make choices confidently and communicate their needs well to staff and each other. They know their opinions and interests are acted upon and respected by the staff who care for them. Children move freely between different activities. They are keen and confident to show us, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), the activities, and what they can do, such as when they go swimming and jump into the pool successfully. Children include staff in their play and are full of smiles mixing soil and water together outside. Children have good opportunities to make choices and decisions about their play and learning. They choose what they want to play with and which friends they want to sit alongside for meals.

Children are happy, and comfortable at the setting. They settle quickly when they arrive and move independently around the environment knowing they can help themselves to favourite toys and resources. They have good relationships with all staff, seeking support when needed. The atmosphere is purposeful yet calm and relaxed.

Children engage with one another well. They have built positive relationships which creates an atmosphere where children feel safe and valued. Children play together like one happy family group and are keen to see what other children are doing. They want to join in playing with the different coloured bottles explaining the red ones are hot. They enjoy playing at ‘home’ and children are given encouragement and praise when playing alongside each other. With a few gentle reminders, children listen to and follow instructions well. Children are thanked when helping to tidy up together and show pride when they are praised. Older children are learning how to take turns and interactions between children are positive.

Children are active and busy and enjoy their play and various activities. They are proud to show their problem-solving skills, to see how fast they can pour water and laugh when it splashes. All children actively participate and enjoy themselves finding activities and resources. They have fun looking at books outdoors in the tent. They are curious and watch what happens when they add soil to water and stir.

Children visit the local park located behind the setting to play on large pieces of equipment which enables the children to learn more about the world around them. All children have access to experiences which enable them to gain skills such as balancing and develop their independence. For example, children are encouraged to do things for themselves such as pouring their own drinks and visiting the bathroom to wash their hands.

## Care & Development — Good

Staff successfully encourage healthy lifestyles and promote children's safety and well-being. For example, they provide children with healthy snacks and nutritious meals and offer opportunities to be active. Staff follow appropriate hygiene routines which means the setting has been awarded the highest level from health inspectors. They complete accident and incident records appropriately and know the importance of sharing these with parents. Staff complete attendance records, understand their responsibilities to report safeguarding concerns and are familiar with the setting's policy. All staff have attended the required safeguarding training, and all have undertaken paediatric first aid training. Policies accurately reflect current practice.

Staff implement the setting's behaviour policy consistently well. Staff are exceptionally skilled at de-escalating situations in a calm and supportive manner, demonstrating a clear understanding of children's emotional needs. Staff nurture the children and respond with sensitivity and give gentle explanations gently sorting frustrations. Staff provide children with regular praise for their efforts which fosters a positive and encouraging environment. Staff sit with the children at mealtimes and talk about homes and families, encouraging social interactions.

Most staff are qualified in childcare, and all are positive role models. They support children's well-being successfully. Staff provide children with a range of activities that meet their interests well. Staff understand children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) who need extra support. They work with parents and specialist services to provide support, and this ensures all children are happy, settled and make effective progress.

## Environment — Good

Leaders follow effective procedures to ensure the environment is safe for children. For example, staff ensure the main entrance to the setting is kept locked and all visitors are authorised and recorded. The outdoor area is secure, with staff carrying out daily checks to ensure this area is safe before use. Leaders complete effective written risk assessments and review these frequently. The environment is clean and well maintained.

Leaders ensure the rooms are warm and welcoming with walls decorated in natural tones which helps create a peaceful space. Areas are organised appropriately and facilitate children's play and learning well. There is plenty of room for children to move around and play a variety of games. Leaders ensure there are a suitable number of toilets, and wash basins for the children attending. Coat pegs are located at the children's height which encourages independence.

Leaders ensure they provide children with a good range of resources and activities that encourage exploration and the development of skills. For example, the role-play develops children's social and imaginative play. The setting is developing the use of open-ended resources which encourages children to problem solve and invent their own play ideas. Leaders provide children with suitable furniture and toys that are clean and in good condition, including culturally diverse resources such as books, dolls and foods from different countries

The outdoor area offers a variety of play opportunities with different surfaces, as well as a garden. Staff understand the benefits of outdoor play and include real life objects as well as a range of recycled resources for the children's play. Resources are available for children to access themselves, which allows them to follow their own interests such as a water tray and a planting area with garden tools.

## Leadership & Management — Excellent

Leaders are highly reflective of their practice. They are experienced and the statement of purpose reflects the setting. They ensure staff work towards a shared vision and roles and responsibilities are defined. Leaders understand the National Minimum Standards and their regulatory responsibilities and policies and procedures are current.

Leaders complete their annual quality of care review appropriately, including gathering viewpoints from parents, children and staff. They use these to reflect on the setting's strengths and areas for development and set targets for future improvements such as extending and developing the garden area. There are also plans to change the layout of the nursery to give the toddlers more space. At the time of the inspection leaders were considering how best to screen the setting from the swimming pool. Leaders have beneficial links with a range of professional groups which helps support and develop their practice. The setting is proactive in making changes to improve the provision and develop the skills of the children. Leaders have devised their own documentation for the curriculum and the way in which staff files are set out. This will be shared with other settings through Flying Start.

Leaders manage staff highly effectively. They ensure staff are deployed to meet children's needs well. Leaders conduct appropriate supervisions and annual appraisals, linking these to staff observations of practice. Staff are encouraged to be reflective and attend mandatory training and other courses which ensure they are up to date with the latest practice and extend their knowledge and skills to benefit the children. Leaders chat informally every day to discuss the provision, which ensures relevant information is shared effectively.  Staff enjoy their work and feel well supported.

Leaders have developed exceptionally positive relationships with parents and carers. They share the children's achievements with parents when they come to collect them. Parents spoken to said that their children are happy and staff are friendly, helpful and approachable. They give good advice and parents were very pleased with setting.

# 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.**

# 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 |

# Best Practice

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

| Recommendation(s) |
|---|
| To consider covering the windows to ensure privacy for the children. |

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