



Estyn

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Dolafon Ducklings

**Ysgol Dolafon
Dol-y-Coed Road
Llanwrtyd Wells
Powys
Powys
LD5 4RA**

Date of inspection: March 2022

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Dolafon Ducklings

Name of setting	Dolafon Ducklings
Category of care provided	Sessional care
Registered person(s)	Catherine Williams
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Gemma Powell
Number of places	12
Age range of children	3-5 years old
Number of children funded for up to two terms	6
Number of children funded for up to five terms	2
Opening days / times	Mon-Wed 09:00-11:30 (Term time only)
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	No
Date of previous CIW inspection	May 2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection	May 2011
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	29/03/2022
Currently setting leader is a temporary post until recruitment is possible.	

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Improve children's Welsh language skills

R2 Provide further opportunities to develop children's listening skills

R3 Ensure that staff appraisals contribute consistently to the setting's improvement

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:

Children develop a high level of well-being in the setting. They make good progress in developing their personal and social skills, and on the whole show enjoyment in their play and learning.

Nearly all children separate from their parents happily. They choose confidently from the range of familiar activities and settle to concentrate on these quickly and easily. They feel safe and relaxed in the environment. Children invite others into their play cheerfully.

Children move freely around the setting and choose independently from the range of activities and resources indoors and outdoors. They express themselves confidently using speech and gesture. They know that practitioners value interactions with them and they will respond appropriately. For example, children request more water for their car washing activity in the outside water play area when required. Children share their interests effectively and these feed into the setting's themes and topics appropriately. Attractive wall displays show photographs of children involved in their activities. This helps the children feel that their contributions are important and valued.

Nearly all children explore the environment enthusiastically. They take appropriate, measured risks confidently and develop their resilience extremely well, such as when cutting up vegetables for their soup. This is an especially strong feature of the setting's provision. Most children concentrate and persevere well. For example, they demonstrate focused attention while engrossed in playing with the water and mixing colours in jars with paper tissue. Most children interact well together and develop friendships through such activities. For example, when one child mixed the colour they were congratulated by their peers.

Children respect the setting's resources and use them appropriately. Most children accomplish things for themselves because the setting promote good opportunities to develop self-help skills. They are developing their independence and personal skills well. For example, children routinely hung up their coats on arrival. They demonstrate confidence when selecting their own snack and clear away when finished. Children access the toilet independently and wash their hands regularly.

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

Many children make good progress from their starting points. They enjoy their learning and achieve well in their activities. All children make themselves understood well and use appropriate language in spontaneous and structured play. For example, they state where they want to play and what they are going to do there. Many children express themselves with confidence and a few use rich vocabulary, for example, when describing the minibeasts in the small world play. The majority of children show an interest in books and enjoy their content and a few children handle books independently showing very good early reading skills. They turn the pages in

order and comment on the pictures. Only a minority of children listen well in discussion time on the carpet or when carrying out large physical play in the school hall. A few children can use simple Welsh words such as naming colours but many children do not use Welsh language during their play.

Many children's physical skills are developing well. The majority of children manipulate large blocks successfully when building models in the outdoor area. Many use large play equipment with increasing control. They handle funnels, water scoops and pipes effectively. Many children develop good fine motor skills. They use a range of tools, such small trowels when planting bean seeds into pots, and use glue sticks and scissors effectively. Most children are developing problem solving skills well. For example, they work out which vessels would be best to move water, and decide to fetch a net when they are unable to pick up an object with a rod.

Many children develop a worthwhile range of numeracy skills successfully and, when supported by an adult, use mathematical vocabulary appropriately in their play, for example when counting the number of fish they hooked from the water tub. A few children recognise numerals to ten and accurately count objects by pointing at them in turn and saying the corresponding number out loud.

Many children enjoy being creative, for example, when making spaceships in the dough. Nearly all children express themselves through music, movement and dance with enjoyment. They sing confidently and play musical instruments on the outdoor stage. Nearly all children develop personal skills well. They are beginning to remove and put on their own socks and shoes when doing physical play in the school hall. All children use the new self-registration system, selecting their name counters and hanging them on hooks. Many children develop effective social skills and emotional skills and co-operate well with each other in their play.

Care and development:

The responsible individual ensures that safeguarding has a high priority and promotes children's health and well-being very successfully. All practitioners have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe. All practitioners have attended safeguarding training and all hold the relevant first aid qualifications. They implement the setting's policies and procedures appropriately. The arrangements in place for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. The setting encourages healthy eating well by providing an open-ended snack time for children to access freely.

Children have plenty of exercise and fresh air, which is encouraged by the free flow to the outdoor area. Hygiene procedures and practices are good and practitioners regularly encourage children to wash their hands. Practitioners provide good care and support for children. They praise good behaviour and achievements and offer encouragement positively when children try to do things for themselves. As a result, children's behaviour is good and the environment is calm.

Practitioners know the children well and have a clear understanding of their individual needs, abilities and preferences. Children's individual files document this. Children receive care that is consistent with their individual routines. Practitioners provide a

nurturing and caring environment where the needs of the children come first. For example, practitioners often encourage children to make decisions for themselves.

Generally, practitioners support children's development well. They provide a wide range of interesting and varied activities for the children to take part in. Practitioners know when to intervene to develop and extend children's play and when to step back to allow children to use their own initiative. Practitioners celebrate children's achievements regularly. They use verbal rewards effectively. For example, practitioners say 'wow' and 'well done' to encourage children and comment specifically on what the child had achieved. Children are rewarded appropriately on the few occasions when they use Welsh words, for example by collecting stickers for their Welsh language credit cards.

Practitioners are good behaviour role models. For example, they encourage children to share and to work and play together. They promote and prompt the use of good manners. The setting has effective procedures to support children with additional needs. They keep parents well informed about their child's progress and involve them appropriately in setting targets. For example, practitioners maintain a regular dialogue with parents and make suitable use of an app which records progress.

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

Practitioners' planning takes very good account of the principles of the foundation phase and the Curriculum for Wales. Practitioners develop activities based on children's interests that are based on the setting's plans for developing their skills. For example, a practitioner provides some piping and large plastic trays for a child who is interested in experimenting with transporting water. Practitioners skillfully plan learning experiences based on the children's previous learning. Their systems for recording, monitoring and reporting progress are effective. Generally, staff have up-to-date knowledge of child development and understand how to support those with additional learning needs. Practitioners develop clear play plans for these children. They employ the strategies identified in these plans effectively. Children learn how to relate to others and take some responsibility for their actions. This is encouraging children to form positive attitudes to each other and to start to develop self-discipline.

The setting is suitably equipped to develop children's skills in communication and literacy. There is a wide range of media for developing mark making and early writing skills both indoors and outdoors, such as chubby crayons, chalks, paint and marker pens. Practitioners are good language models. They model correct grammar and take opportunities to extend children's vocabulary through the course of their play. For example, they planned a car wash activity which developed children's communication and physical skills very well. However, there are not enough opportunities for the children to use simple Welsh words and phrases through their play.

Environment:

Practitioners provide a welcoming and rich environment that supports children to play and learn successfully. There are excellent resources which are changed regularly to fit the children's needs and interests. Children thoroughly enjoy and benefit

immensely from playing outdoors. For example, two boys enjoyed preparing vegetable soup to sell in their shop whilst a little girl built a wall using a cement mixer, sand and bricks.

The layout of the premises promotes children's independence successfully. Leaders ensure that the accommodation is very safe and secure. Risk assessments are thorough and undertaken for both the indoor and outdoor learning environment. These are reviewed and updated often. Fire equipment is tested and emergency evacuation procedures are completed regularly. Safety measures are embedded into the daily routines and help to ensure the setting runs smoothly.

Leaders organise the play and learning environment to support children's independence effectively. For example, all furniture is of appropriate size and height and the low-level storage enables children to identify and choose resources easily. Toilets and hand-washing facilities are age-appropriate and easily accessible. An open-ended snack time is set up throughout the session and children cut up their fruit and vegetables and pour their drinks independently.

Practitioners offer a range of dressing up clothes from across the world and provide toys and stories that celebrate diversity. This helps children to begin to understand and respect different cultures. Recycled materials and natural items such as twigs and leaves are available for children to enjoy playing with. There are suitable play resources available for the various age ranges and individual children's needs. All resources are clean, well maintained and fit for purpose.

Leadership and management:

There is a clear vision for the setting that focuses on developing safe, happy, curious children. This is set out comprehensively in the statement of purpose. The leader meets the children's needs effectively and organises the setting well. The staff are well supported by the registered person who sets high expectations by assisting and challenging everyone to do their best. Practitioners have up to date job descriptions and their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. The setting has clear aims and objectives that focus on children's needs, and these are understood and implemented by all practitioners. The current practitioners have relevant and appropriate qualifications and experience of working with young children. These staff are deployed appropriately to their temporary roles. The leader ensures that a range of relevant policies and procedures are in place. These are effectively applied in practice. As a result, children are nurtured well in an inclusive and welcoming environment

The setting has suitable self-evaluation processes that feed into useful termly development plans. These plans clearly identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. They set appropriate actions that bring about the desired improvements. For example, the setting has introduced an app which records progress that has improved systems for tracking and reporting. The practitioners frequently access the training offered by the advisory team and respond readily to their advice and support. This has a strong impact on outcomes for children. However, staff appraisals have not been completed for some time, and as a result, individual practitioners do not have personal targets linked to improvement priorities.

Effective use is made of available grants. For example, leaders arranged for the physical environment to be altered to enable free flow provision and greatly improve the quality of the outdoor space. The setting is based within the local primary school and leaders take advantage of this by facilitating communication between staff to support transition effectively. This allows children to move onto the next stage of their education smoothly.

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)

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