



**Estyn**

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

**A report on**

**Forden Playgroup**

**The Community Centre  
Forden  
Welshpool  
Powys  
SY21 8NE**

**Date of inspection: February 2022**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

## About Forden Playgroup

Name of setting	Forden Playgroup
Category of care provided	Sessional Day Care
Registered person(s)	Shirley Edwards
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Not applicable
Person in charge	Shirley Edwards
Number of places	20
Age range of children	3 to 4 year olds
Number of children funded for up to two terms	5
Number of children funded for up to five terms	3
Opening days / times	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:15 to 11:45. Term time only.
Flying start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	No
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people /children who use, or intend to use their service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	
Date of previous Estyn inspection	
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	15/02/2022
No children speak Welsh at home.	

## **Non-compliance**

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

## **Recommendations**

R1 Provide consistent and effective opportunities for children to use and learn Welsh

R2 Provide more purposeful experiences to engage and interest children effectively when learning outdoors

## **What happens next**

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

## Main findings

### Wellbeing:

Nearly all children receive appropriate care that supports their wellbeing effectively. They make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and take control of their learning by choosing where they play, and with whom. Most children move confidently around areas and choose toys and appropriate equipment they enjoy. For example, they choose items from inside to take outdoors. Many children communicate and express themselves and their needs confidently in the knowledge that practitioners will respond and listen to them respectfully, such as when they express their preferences for snack.

Nearly all children enter the setting happily. They cope well with separation from their parents and settle quickly into the familiar routines. For example, upon arrival children are keen to write their names on the self-registration board and then choose an area where they want to play. Nearly all children form positive bonds with practitioners, which supports them to feel valued. Most children know whom to talk to if they are unhappy and approach practitioners confidently for comfort and support.

Nearly all children interact positively. They co-operate well in their play, take turns and share resources appropriately. For example, when a group of children were playing in the home corner they happily welcomed another child into their play. Most children are learning to respect the feelings of others and are beginning to show concern for their peers. For example, they show concern for a child when they fall and hurt themselves. Nearly all children respect their surroundings and resources, using them appropriately and helping to put them away when they have finished with them.

Most children are engaged and happy in their learning environment. They enjoy attending the setting and taking part in the variety of activities available to them. Many children concentrate and engage with tasks for an appropriate length of time for their stage of development, such as when they concentrate on completing a jigsaw.

Most children are confident and develop their independence skills effectively. For example, when putting their waterproof clothing and wellies on to go outside, children attempt to do it themselves before asking for support. Nearly all children access resources and toys they want and wash their hands independently. Most children develop a broad range of age appropriate skills through their free play. For example, they are confident to change the CD so they can listen to different music.

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

Most children progress well and play together purposefully. They develop effective literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their learning successfully.

Most children listen to instructions well and act on them sensibly. They concentrate and persevere, for example when using tools in the building area. They communicate clearly when responding to questions during play activities, such as explaining thoughtfully their conclusions after investigating whether flowers grow from bulbs. A few children use Welsh words and phrases regularly and spontaneously.

Many children are interested in books and they consider their contents thoughtfully. They treat books as emerging readers and respond sensitively to stories and discuss their feelings openly, such as how owlets feel when they are left alone in a nest at night.

Many children make marks purposefully with different media, such as chalk and paint. They enjoy completing mark making activities whilst role-playing and embrace their early writing experiences enthusiastically. They make appointments in a diary carefully after answering the phone in an office. As a result, many children explain the purpose of their writing clearly.

Many children use mathematical language effectively and in the correct contexts. Many are beginning to count up to 10 with increasing confidence and describe the sizes of wooden houses as biggest, smallest and medium. They select relevant tools and materials to solve mathematical problems well. For example, they sort and arrange shapes and match them to openings in a box accurately. In addition, they experiment with full and empty containers purposefully by filling pots with soil, rice and water.

Most children develop effective ICT skills through the use of tablets, cameras and electronic toys. They become familiar with the use of technology in their daily activities and through their play.

Most children develop beneficial physical skills by wheeling wheelbarrows outdoors and throwing bean bags into hoops. They respond positively to music and to the rhythms of tambourines and bells, by participating in physical movements and dances enthusiastically. They use tongs dexterously to fill a saucepan with vegetables. Many children develop their thinking and creative skills well, which impact positively on their learning. For example, they create interesting patterns when painting and playing with dough.

**Care and development:**

Practitioners implement the setting's policies and procedures effectively. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Practitioners have completed relevant and up-to-date

safeguarding training and they are familiar with the setting's safeguarding procedures. Practitioners are aware of the procedure to follow in an emergency as they practise regular fire drills with the children.

Practitioners practise good hygiene procedures consistently, washing their hands regularly and dealing with intimate care such as toileting appropriately. Practitioners are knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe and healthy. For example, they support and encourage children to get fresh air and provide healthy snack choices.

Practitioners are very caring and supportive. They communicate with children in a warm, friendly manner, creating a calm and relaxed atmosphere. Nearly all practitioners are positive role models for children and interact well with them during their play activities and routines. For example, practitioners sit with the children during snack time, modelling positive social and communication skills. Practitioners share a positive approach to managing children's behaviour and follow the setting's policy effectively. They praise children for being kind, sharing resources and taking turns. Practitioners have developed a good range of strategies to promote positive behaviour and children respond to these well, for example using distraction and communication well to diffuse any possible unwanted behaviour.

Practitioners meet children's individual needs successfully. The setting has effective procedures to support children with additional learning needs. Practitioners track children's progress appropriately and have a good understanding of their stage of development. They extend children's learning successfully through their play and appropriate questioning, for example when placing the different sized rings on the pole and getting children to order them according to their size. Practitioners are effective in providing good opportunities for children to develop their Independence, such as providing resources and support during snack time so that children can make their own sandwich or prepare their fruit.

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

Practitioners provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which encourages children to play independently. They plan engaging activities, which allow the children to develop their skills effectively through play-based learning.

Practitioners' planning follows the interests of the children conscientiously, which provides them with valuable opportunities to learn through practical challenges. Teaching motivates the children to co-operate sensibly during tasks, such as when they plant seeds in pots and splash in puddles outdoors.

Practitioners plan interesting opportunities to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills. They question the children skillfully when they make marks in an appointment book and challenge the children effectively to sort and match jungle animals by the patterns on their bodies. As a result, the teaching is purposeful, which has a positive impact on developing children's skills. Practitioners encourage children to take managed risks effectively and to experiment in their play and independent

learning, for example when climbing and bouncing on the appropriately sized trampoline indoors.

Practitioners develop the children's physical and creative skills successfully. For example, they encourage them to balance on adventurous equipment and to dance with ribbons. Practitioners provide good problem-solving activities to encourage learning in real-life contexts. For example, they allow the children to decorate hearts with leaves and elastic bands, and to build towers with three-dimensional concentric circles.

Practitioners place a positive emphasis on developing children's spiritual, moral and social skills, for example encouraging the children to line up co-operatively to wash their hands and to consider their own and their peers' feelings at circle time. Practitioners provide good opportunities for children to learn about and celebrate diversity through playing with dolls from different ethnic backgrounds and through the study of different festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. They promote the cultural heritage of Wales well by celebrating Saint David's Day and through participating in traditional folk dancing. However, the provision to improve children's Welsh language skills is not effective enough.

Practitioners use assessment information purposefully. They discuss the results of tasks sensibly with the children, which enables them to provide creative contributions towards the next steps in their learning. Practitioners provide parents and carers with beneficial information about their children's achievements on social media, in annual reports and through verbal discussions at the setting.

### **Environment:**

Leaders provide a safe environment for children. The setting keeps a record of all children, staff and visitors on site. This allows everyone to be able to be accounted for in an emergency. Entrance to the setting is secure and controlled, preventing any unauthorised access or children being able to leave unsupervised. Leaders conduct risk assessments on all areas used by the children and on specific activities, such as trips to local places of interest. Practitioners maintain the learning environment well, providing children with a warm, welcoming and friendly atmosphere. Leaders and practitioners complete appropriate cleaning routines and daily checks on the environment before children arrive, ensuring that there are no new hazards.

The environment consists of a main room, which has direct access to an outside area. Practitioners organise the space effectively and make good use of the main room to provide stimulating areas of learning that children can access freely. Practitioners set up and pack away the resources and areas of learning effectively each day and the indoor environment is a particular strength of the setting. The areas of learning are stimulating and encourage children's curiosity and imagination. For example, the writing area is set up as an office for children to practise their literacy skills in a fun way. The outdoor environment gives children appropriate space and opportunity to be physically active, get fresh air and explore

the world around them. However, the resources and activities available do not engage children's interest well enough when learning outdoors.

The setting has a wide range of good quality, child friendly resources that are suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children. Practitioners enhance indoor areas of learning very well. For example, they provide real kitchen equipment, such as saucepans and teapots in the home corner. Practitioners support children's awareness of different cultures by making appropriate resources available. They provide a good amount of natural materials to support children's learning effectively. Toilet facilities are child friendly and easily accessed from the main room. Furniture is at a suitably low level, which allows children to use and access it independently.

### **Leadership and management:**

The leader and other practitioners work together purposefully to improve children's outcomes, through positive teaching and conscientious care practices.

Leaders operate effective procedures to ensure that the setting delivers consistent practices that benefit the children. They have a clear vision, which ensures that enjoyable and stimulating experiences drive improvements in children's learning and wellbeing. As a result, the established practices and policies focus purposefully on meeting the needs of the children.

Thorough self-evaluation procedures identify areas for improvement effectively, such as introducing opportunities for children to learn more about equality and diversity. The leader takes full account of the views of everyone involved with the setting, such as parents and carers, the local school and officers from support agencies. She has regular discussions with these stakeholders, and acts on any findings. As a result, a full consideration of their comments enhances the provision and children's experiences.

The practitioners listen carefully to the children's views by following their interests and learning experiences daily. They plan the next steps in their development carefully. In addition, they act on the suggestions for improvement of parents and carers well, such as using social media to communicate relevant information about the children's daily activities.

The setting is currently in the process of registering as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The management committee are supportive and are effectively involved in monitoring the setting.

Leaders have regular arrangements to monitor the setting's practices. They validate the decisions made by the registered person to ensure their relevance to the setting's targets. As a result, the procedures lead to reliable targets when planning for the future.

The leader allocates resources purposefully. She ensures that all the staff attend regular and relevant training, such as courses on curriculum reform. This sharp focus



on developing practitioners' skills enhances their professional development and helps them to meet the needs of the children more effectively. Suitable use of the budget and support grants allows leaders to prioritise expenditure against the setting's improvement targets well. As a result, the leaders promote interesting experiences for the children, by funding useful resources, such as a woodwork bench.

The setting has a range of strong partnerships, such as with the local church. This supports the setting to provide interesting experiences, including studying historical artefacts. The close relationship with the nearby school is effective, and it prepares the children for the next stage of their education successfully.

## 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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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