



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

**A report on**

**Pontymoile Under Fives and Holiday Club**

**Pontypool Active Living Centre  
Trostant Street  
NP4 8AT**

**Date of inspection: March 2022**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

## About Pontymoile Under Fives and Holiday Club

Name of setting	Pontymoile Under Fives and Holiday Club
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Isobel Yacomen
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Andrew Yacomen
Number of places	32
Age range of children	2 years to 4 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	6
Number of children funded for up to five terms	14
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 09:30 - 11:30 and 12:30 - 14:30.
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
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	24th April 2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	2014
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	15/03/2022
No children who attend the setting speak Welsh at home.	

## **Non-compliance**

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

## **Recommendations**

R1 Develop the use of observations by practitioners to better inform children's learning

R2 Develop children's independent skills during snack time

## **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:

Nearly all children arrive happy, excited and ready to play and learn. They interact well with practitioners and visitors. Most children express their feelings confidently. They make suitable decisions when choosing resources and activities on arrival at the setting. Most children are enthusiastic and concentrate well during activities. A few children discuss things that interest them. For example, when playing dinosaurs with the plastic blocks they share facts and take part in role play.

Nearly all children cope well with separation from parents and carers on arrival at the setting. They form close emotional bonds with practitioners, which supports their sense of security and belonging. Most children are aware that practitioners will listen to their choices and respond effectively to their needs.

Nearly all children are interested and engaged in the activities on offer. They choose music on a tablet and listen and dance excitedly to the song.

Nearly all children are happy to play together and with practitioners. For example, they chat and share when baking cakes in the role play area.

Nearly all children demonstrate behaviour that is in line with their age and stage of development. They are beginning to understand the importance of taking turns and sharing with friends. They show respect for their resources and tidy up together at the end of the session. They listen and respond well to simple instructions by practitioners in Welsh.

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

Nearly all children make strong progress from their starting points. Most children make themselves understood and develop their speaking and listening skills well. A few children talk with accurate detail, for example when describing the plan to help with the construction of a house. They use the plan successfully to test out design ideas and make relevant changes.

Nearly all children show an interest in books and stories; they turn pages and retell the story in sequence successfully. A few children identify favourite parts of the story and discuss similarities and differences, for example how the main character carries shopping in a basket on her head. Nearly all children listen with understanding, carry out instructions and follow the routines of the setting well. Most children experiment with and enjoy early writing experiences and are beginning to make meaning with their marks. They use a range of tools with increasing control. For example, they use hammers and nails to make wooden models or a range of paint brushes in the creative area. They demonstrate pride in their achievements and share their accomplishments with others. Most children enjoy singing and joining in with songs and rhymes and are able to make choices, for example selecting tracks to play on a tablet or choosing a puppet from the song box.

Nearly all children make good progress in acquiring Welsh language skills. They enjoy singing and joining in Welsh songs and rhymes and are beginning to count together to 10. They understand and respond appropriately to simple language, such as greetings when they enter the setting. A few children are beginning to recognise the weather in Welsh.

A few children take on leaderships roles within the setting directing the tidy up routine at the close of the session. They communicate effectively and encourage co-operation through appropriate encouragement.

Most children use simple mathematical language well in their play. For example, they use language related to length and size when playing with blocks. A few are beginning to play with quantities and number to support their mathematical understanding, such as counting scoops of flour and salt to make playdough and describing the number bricks needed to make a model.

Nearly all children's physical skills are developing well. They balance and climb on a range of heights and surfaces when walking on stones, boulders and fallen logs in their visits to the local park. They use their arms to steady themselves when balancing at height and are able to jump off using two feet.

### **Care and development:**

Practitioners follow rigorous and robust systems and procedures to ensure children's health and safety. They have a strong understanding of their responsibilities, and provide good opportunities for children to develop in line with their age and ability. For example, they regularly promote practices for staying healthy, for example going for walks in the local park. Practitioners follow rigorous cleaning and hygiene procedures, and practices are effective. They encourage children to wash their hands at regular intervals, in particular on entry to the setting, before and after snack and after messy play activities.

Practitioners keep thorough records of any accidents, incidents, pre-existing injuries and personal information. All practitioners have up-to-date child protection training. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The setting has good procedures to support children with identified and emerging additional learning needs. Practitioners act diligently on the advice of specialist agencies for the benefit of the children. Partnerships with parents are effective in supporting their children in their development and learning.

Practitioners have up-to-date first aid and food hygiene certificates. They provide nutritious and healthy food at snack time and fresh water is available to the children daily in individual labelled bottles. The setting runs a rolling snack time where children are able to make choices of when they wish to eat. However, there are limited opportunities for children to develop their independent skills during this time with the practitioners pouring milk and cutting fruit.

Children have opportunities for both free play and adult-led activities that are developmentally appropriate. They receive praise for their achievements. Their

creative work is valued and displayed in frames around the setting, giving the children a sense of pride and belonging.

Practitioners support children to manage their behaviour successfully. They have good knowledge of each child's needs and preferences. They act on information from parents at the time of registration, and are knowledgeable about individuals' needs. Practitioners model effective behaviour and help children to begin to develop an understanding of their emotions.

Practitioners provide effective opportunities for children to develop an understanding of being Welsh and an understanding of the wider world. As a result, they learn how to treat people of all cultures with respect and tolerance. For example, they celebrate the customs of the Chinese New Year, in addition to St David's Day, Easter and Christmas.

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

Practitioners plan a worthwhile range of experiences that promote children's all-round development. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of child development and apply this successfully in their interactions with children. They take appropriate notice of children's repeated patterns of play as they begin to explore the world around them and provide a range of resources and opportunities to support this. They provide long periods of uninterrupted play in which children demonstrate high levels of concentration. For example, when making models in the construction area, children work collaboratively to make a fire station and fire engine. Practitioners provide a good balance of challenge and support and encourage children to attempt tasks before intervening. They support children to develop resilience, independence and confidence successfully through encouraging them to take calculated risks and challenge themselves. For example, practitioners encourage children to use tools independently in the woodwork area to make models and challenge themselves physically in their visits to the local park.

Practitioners observe and follow children's interests and fascinations and use these observations well to plan future experiences. However, they do not always feed well enough into planning that extends children's skills, knowledge and understanding. As a result, practitioners do not always take advantage of opportunities to deepen children's learning.

Practitioners provide opportunities for children to develop a sense of curiosity and awe and wonder. They make regular visits to the local park and encourage children to take notice of nature, for example looking for the signs of spring. They provide beneficial opportunities for children to learn about and care for living things, such as looking after the setting's stick insects and beetles. This supports children's understanding of care, respect and concern for their environment and its inhabitants.

Nearly all practitioners work well as a team. They are strong language models and use questions effectively to develop children's thinking skills. There are regular opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills through worthwhile play activities, for example following a recipe to make playdough.

Practitioners model Welsh well during circle time activities and throughout the day. They encourage children to respond when appropriate. They provide beneficial opportunities for children to learn about their Welsh heritage and culture, such as dressing in national costume for St David's Day celebrations.

The setting works well with parents to identify children's individual needs and preferences. They keep parents well informed of their progress through regular updates.

### **Environment:**

The setting is located within the ground floor of a leisure centre. The setting has secure and robust systems to ensure children's safety. Visitors cannot access any part of the setting unless admitted by a staff member, and all visitors sign in and out on arrival and departure. Leaders keep children safe and healthy by following a range of very clear and comprehensive policies. Toilet and nappy changing facilities are clean and well maintained. The layout of the facilities supports children to access the toilets and wash basins independently according to their age and stage of development. Practitioners practise suitable hygiene procedures, such as wearing protective aprons and gloves to prepare and serve food and to change nappies. The registered person completes an infection control audit annually and responds promptly to any issues that arise. They practice fire drills regularly so that the children can familiarise themselves with the arrangements and keep themselves safe.

The setting is clean, inviting and well maintained and provides extensive and valuable opportunities for children to play and learn. Practitioners organise the environment thoughtfully to provide interesting and stimulating areas with good quality provision for children to develop their creative, fine motor, problem solving and social skills independently and in groups. Both childcare rooms are of a good size, attractive and benefit from natural daylight. Although there is no direct access to an outdoor area, the children benefit from regular visits to Pontypool Park, in which the setting is located. Here children have further opportunity to develop their physical and social skills as well as an opportunity to explore their local environment, supporting their sense of belonging.

Practitioners prepare the environment with care and ensure that resources reflect the children's interests. Equipment is kept at a low level with labels identifying the contents. This ensures that every child is able to reach equipment easily and make independent choices in their play.

There is a wide range of toys and equipment to promote cultural awareness, including books, dolls and examples of children's drawings of cultural celebrations. Practitioners provide opportunities for children to learn purposefully about recycling resources. For example, at snack time practitioners discuss the importance of disposing of food waste appropriately.

### **Leadership and management:**

There is a welcoming and positive ethos in the setting. Leaders have created a clear sense of teamwork within the setting and, as a result, practitioners work together and support each other well. Leaders delegate responsibility effectively and ensure that

systems and procedures are purposeful, and practitioners follow them consistently. They provide beneficial opportunities for all practitioners to develop in their role and as result practitioners feel valued and supported in their work. The setting's statement of purpose provides an accurate picture of what the setting offers.

Leaders identify the setting's strengths and areas for development accurately. There are appropriate practices to evaluate the work of the setting and improvement plans are effective and have a positive impact on the setting. The setting works well with the local authority early years advisory teacher to identify areas for improvement. For example, they have reviewed planning and procedures to take account of the Curriculum for Funded Non-Maintained settings in preparation for implementation. Leaders make good use of funding and grants to purchase appropriate resources, for example story book activity bags to encourage children and parents to play together at home.

There are useful professional development opportunities for practitioners. The setting's recent focus on developing the Welsh language skills of practitioners and children has had a positive impact on the levels of Welsh used in the setting. Both practitioners and children are gaining in confidence to use Welsh incidentally and in adult-led activities.

Leaders share outcomes of assessment with parents and the feeder primary schools to support transition arrangements. They keep in touch with parents about their child's progress regularly.

Leaders safely recruit suitably qualified practitioners and provide useful opportunities for them to access professional development activities. They provide regular supervision and appraisal, which focuses on practitioner well-being, improving performance and identifying future training needs effectively.

## 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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