



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

**A report on**

**Puddle Ducks (South Wales) Limited  
Station Road  
Raglan  
Monmouthshire  
NP15 2EP**

**Date of inspection: October 2019**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

## About Puddle Ducks (South Wales) Limited

Name of setting	Puddle Ducks (South Wales) Limited
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	N/A
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Sarah Richards
Person in charge	Sarah Richards
Number of places	150
Age range of children	Under 12 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	0
Number of children funded for up to five terms	14
Opening days / times	Monday – Friday 8am- 6pm
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	No – 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 children who use, or intend to use their service. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Date of previous CIW inspection	01/02/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	01/11/2013

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Dates of this inspection visit(s)	09/10/2019
<p>Additional information</p> <p>Nearly all children speak English as their first language. A very few children are learning English as an additional language.</p>	

## Summary

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Wellbeing</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Learning</b> (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Care and development</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and assessment</b> (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **Non-compliance**

*No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.*

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Review use of larger spaces so that they are more effectively used to support and encourage learning through play
- R2 Ensure that all practitioners and leaders have effective targets for improvement
- R3 Ensure that all practitioners fully understand the correct procedures for child protection

## **What happens next**

'Estyn and CIW will invite the setting to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.'

## Main findings

### Wellbeing: Excellent

Nearly all children are confident that their opinions and wishes are listened to and play happily knowing their play choices and individual needs will be met. There is a very wide choice of child led learning experiences and most children have free flow access to the outside play areas. For example, children in the two to three-year-olds base room move between the inside and outside confidently. They play with trikes, swings or explore nature outside, choose to go inside to have snack and then return to outside play at their leisure. Children contribute to the service's annual self-evaluation process and to ongoing evaluations of activities and resources. For example, children had recently gone on nature walks and then requested more factual books rather than story books, so books on hedgehogs had been purchased. Older children participate in an eco-committee and have become much more aware, for example consciously turning lights off when they leave rooms, making sure taps are turned off and recycling.

Nearly all children are happy and settled. Keyworkers are identified to work with children and children build trust and confidence with staff. Nearly all children are very relaxed and content. For example, babies bond with their keyworkers well. Nearly all children settle very well, understand daily routines and cope with transitions extremely well.

Nearly all children are developing very good social skills in line with their stage of development. Children are respectful, form friendship groups, are considerate of their friends and use good manners. Children happily share resources and wait patiently. For example, during one group activity a child very politely put their hand up and said 'Excuse me...' when wanting to ask a question. Older children are clear about expected good behaviour. For example, children in the After School Club are clear that the rule 'No jumping inside' needs to be respected.

Nearly all children thoroughly enjoy and benefit from the many play opportunities and experiences. They engage in the activities very well and sustain interest for long periods of time. For example, children enjoy arts and craft sessions, engage with and explore nature, listen intently at story time, sing animatedly and play enthusiastically during physical outdoor games. Babies really enjoy playing with bubbles, crawling through tunnels and messy play. Most children take part in all of the activities they want to explore. Children attending the After School Club enjoy going to the club and playing with their friends.

Nearly all children are confident and open to the play and learning opportunities. For example, children in two to threes age group self-register for their snack in the café by choosing their photograph from a board and posting it into a box. They choose

their cup and plate before selecting a place to sit at the café table. They understand good hygiene procedures very well and wash their hands regularly. Nearly all children develop their independence well, for example wiping their own noses, dressing themselves for outdoor play and helping to tidy toys away.

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

Nearly all children make good progress, and many make very good progress during their time in the setting. Nearly all children show outstanding levels of concentration and engagement in their learning, particularly when they are outdoors.

Nearly all children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them very well. For example, they are beginning to recognise different birds that join them in the outdoor area such as robins and magpies and can name common minibeasts confidently. A few children remember that they should not touch the plants with purple stems and know that dragonflies have four wings.

Nearly all children's personal and social skills are developing extremely well. Most children co-operate very effectively with each other. For example, during an outdoor session, children recall safety rules explaining to others that they should not reach into the bushes or walk across the log circle.

Most children develop their literacy skills well and their communication skills very well. They listen very attentively and speak clearly with confidence to both familiar and unfamiliar adults. Most children ask questions and join in with conversations very effectively. A minority provide detailed explanations, such as when they describe how their construction model works. During group time, nearly all children pay very close attention to a story and most join in with songs and rhymes. Around half of the children select favourite books, turn pages and chat about the pictures spontaneously during the session. Most children develop their mark making skills well and many are developing an understanding of writing for a purpose, such as when they attempt to write their name independently on their artwork.

Most children develop their numeracy skills effectively. They count objects accurately to five and say numbers in order to at least ten. Most make good use of mathematical vocabulary in their play. For example, they happily say that they have been painting for a long time or tell a friend that their model is the biggest.

Most children's physical skills are developing very successfully. They use tools such as scissors, brushes and spatulas very well. Most children show excellent coordination as they gently scoop up slugs and spiders before placing them carefully into viewing pots. Nearly all children negotiate space exceptionally well as they run up and down a grassy slope or through large areas of long wet grass. Many children take part in construction play with energy and confidence. For example, they pull and lift blocks and planks into place successfully as they build themselves a large house.

Most children develop their creative and thinking skills effectively. For example, they explore and experiment as they mix powder paint with water to create a range of colours for their paintings skilfully. A few children develop their creative skills very

successfully as they mix different shades of blue paint or invent imaginative machines with a construction set. Most children use a range of information and communication technology (ICT) equipment effectively. For example, they programme a toy to move along a floor mat or take photographs of minibeasts successfully with a little help.

Most children develop their Welsh language skills effectively. They use simple Welsh words and phrases successfully, such as asking for fruit during snack time when encouraged. A few children use Welsh words spontaneously. For example, they tell a practitioner that they are going to paint a pili pala (butterfly) before running to the craft area.

### **Care and development: Good**

Practitioners are experienced and well qualified, and provide a caring and nurturing experience for the children. All practitioners have attended child protection and 'Prevent' training. The PIC is proactive in placing child protection flow charts for staff within the staff room and has discussed procedures at a recent team meeting. However, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children do not meet requirements and give cause for concern as a few practitioners are not confident to apply the correct child protection procedure independently if their concerns are not followed up appropriately. Practitioners know children very well and are able to anticipate their needs to promote healthy lifestyles and keep them safe. For example, they practise emergency evacuation procedures regularly, promote good hygiene and promptly and regularly record review records of accidents, incidents and administration of medication. During 'Forest school', children learn not to walk across the fire circle and practitioners engage children in a 'swapping seats' game, which reinforces safe behaviour well as children must walk around outside of the circle. Practitioners provide food that is nutritious and appealing with a good variety of fruits and vegetables and there is good access to water so that children remain hydrated. There are highly effective systems to promote children's feelings of security and emotional wellbeing, as the keyworker system is implemented well. Children with dietary needs and allergies are supported very well.

Practitioners manage interactions with children effectively and adopt a positive approach to encourage children's learning and social interactions with their peers. They use positive feedback, praise and a variety of strategies well to support children to adopt good behaviour. For example, a 'kindness brick' is given as a reward so that children can add it to the kindness wall display. Practitioners diffuse any unwanted behaviour quickly and effectively, for example through diversion techniques such as singing songs and reminding children gently of expectations of behaviour. As a result, children engage well and a calm, well-organised atmosphere presides throughout all of the base rooms, play areas and after school activities.

Practitioners understand how to promote children's all round development well. Children's development, learning and independence underpin all of the interactions between practitioners and children and practitioners promote skills that are in line with children's age and stage of development. The keyworker system is implemented very well, with keyworkers responsible for personal care completing



daily care charts and regular observations for their key children, thus building strong understanding about the children they are responsible for. They undertake regular observations of children and evaluations of activities effectively to identify and promote children's development and plan future activities. However, some practitioners do not always fully consider whether activities such as the circle time suit all children's stage of development, particularly younger children. One practitioner's role is to support children with special educational needs and those who require additional support. They advise keyworkers and liaise with other professionals as necessary to ensure that they meet children's needs appropriately and have built good relationships with, for example, speech and language therapists. Practitioners support children to learn and explore other cultures effectively. For example, children create 'Mehndi patterns' and sing songs from a range of countries and cultures during circle time.

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

Practitioners plan a range of learning experiences inside and outside that are highly effective in engaging and meeting the needs of nearly all children. They are very successful in supporting children to develop their personal and social, communication and physical skills.

Practitioners use resources very effectively to develop a full range of skills across all areas of learning, including children's thinking and creative skills. This results in children maintaining very high levels of interest and perseverance and using their imagination well, such as when they use small bricks to make a complex 'snow tractor pusher' and go on to make up simple games to play with it. Practitioners are beginning to consider the four purposes of the new curriculum, and promote these particularly successfully in the outdoor learning area.

Practitioners support children to make choices, take risks and develop their confidence and independence very effectively. They provide excellent opportunities for children to develop their physical skills, such as building with large-scale construction equipment and water play. This enables children to develop their co-ordination very effectively.

Practitioners listen to children and intervene in their play extremely skilfully to extend their learning and develop their communication skills. For example, they join children's play in the construction area and ask a child to re-explain how their model works. This develops children's communication skills very successfully.

Practitioners develop children's literacy, numeracy, ICT and Welsh language skills effectively. They build systematically on children's existing knowledge, understanding and skills through careful planning, skilful interactions and responsive questioning. For example, practitioners encourage children who name shapes confidently, to recognise and count the number of corners they find. Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about their Welsh heritage. For example, they make Welsh cakes and wear traditional dress as part of their St David's Day celebrations.

Practitioners encourage children to take responsibility and co-operate with each other extremely well. For example, during an outdoor learning session practitioners give each child a specific role such as catching mini-beasts, looking after the mini-beasts or identifying them on a chart. Nearly all children carry out these responsibilities confidently and co-operate superbly well with each other.

Practitioners support children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills effectively. They provide opportunities for children to learn about and care for living things and foster a sense of awe and wonder very successfully. For example, they encourage a child to blow gently on a spider and observe it carefully as it gradually moves away. Practitioners develop children's understanding of sustainability successfully through encouraging them to turn off taps and use glass milk bottles.

Practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and understand the requirements of the foundation phase well. They have high expectations of all children, including more able and talented children. Practitioners develop very good relationships, are positive role models and share consistent expectations with children. As a result, nearly all children show enthusiasm for learning and behave extremely well.

Practitioners observe children carefully and place a high value on the contribution of each child. They know children very well and this enables them to adapt their interactions to support each child's learning very effectively. They assess children regularly and record assessments that measure children's progress over time successfully. They use this information to plan future activities, which meet children's needs and interests very well.

### **Environment: Good**

The building is well maintained and safe. Leaders manage entry to the premises appropriately. They ensure that risk assessments are maintained and reviewed regularly. Practitioners complete appropriate health and safety checks daily to ensure children's safety. The premises and equipment are clean and staff follow infection control guidelines throughout the day. Equipment and resources are of very good quality.

The nursery is purpose built and the environment is spacious and overall is set up so that it provides a rich and stimulating space for children to play and learn safely. There are suitable resources for all children attending including easy access to toileting facilities for older children directly off base rooms, which promotes their independence appropriately. The layout and arrangement of the premises meet children's needs well. For example, there is an excellent, easily accessible, spacious outdoor play area. Rooms are large, light and spacious. However, as rooms are so spacious, one base room did not feel inviting to play in.

Leaders ensure that there is a comprehensive range of high quality, developmentally appropriate play and learning resources for all ages that offer suitable challenges, risks and opportunities to experiment. For example, practitioners promote children's curiosity and problem-solving skills through the use of 'loose parts play' where

natural and recyclable materials can be moved around and used in endless ways. The setting has a wide range of low level furniture and resources that practitioners use effectively to enhance children's learning. For example, low planters enable children to reach inside to plant and grow their own vegetables or flowers. Children are encouraged to be eco aware. For example, they wash and re-use yoghurt pots and empty cereal boxes for craft activities.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The responsible individual is also the person in charge and has a clear vision to provide a home from home environment, which prepares children well for the next adventure in their learning when they go to school. She has high expectations of practitioners and challenges them successfully to do their best. There is a strong commitment to teamwork and practitioners feel valued.

The responsible individual shares an appropriate range of suitable policies and procedures with practitioners to support the effective running of the setting. These are reviewed annually. However, the setting's child protection policy did not provide enough details on the procedure to be followed by practitioners should leaders fail to act upon any concerns raised with them. This procedure had been discussed within a team meeting in July 2019 and a flow chart is present in the staff room. There is an up-to-date statement of purpose that ensures parents can make an informed choice about using the setting.

The responsible individual has a hands-on approach and knows the setting well. This drives improvements such as children's Welsh language development across the setting effectively. Arrangements for identifying strengths and areas for improvement are successful and all practitioners are committed to improving quality. Practitioners know what the setting does well and confidently identify recent improvements. For example, they explain how introducing a key worker system has improved children's wellbeing. Improvements to outdoor provision have been beneficial in developing children's learning across the setting, including those attending holiday club. In the pre-school, these improvements have supported children's learning very successfully.

Leaders follow safe recruitment processes and the setting meets the required numbers of suitably qualified practitioners consistently. They provide effective and up-to date job descriptions, ensuring that practitioners have a clear understanding of their role in the setting. There are established appraisal and supervision systems to review the performance of practitioners. These provide useful opportunities for practitioners to discuss and reflect on the quality of their work. However, a majority of targets are too broad and do not provide practitioners with clearly identified areas for improvement. Leaders provide effective opportunities for continued professional development and practitioners take advantage of these and strive to improve their performance. This has a positive impact, such as improving practitioners' understanding of how to develop older children's problem-solving skills through block play and younger children's fine motor skills through handling musical instruments such as shakers successfully.

The setting has a range of successful partnerships that have a positive effect on provision and children's progress. Leaders organise regular fundraising events for a range of charities. For example, the responsible individual cut and donated her hair to the 'Little Princess Trust', raising both money and awareness for the charity. This supports older children to understand the importance of helping others effectively. Leaders work well with the local authority and have shared their practice in developing children's learning outdoors with other settings successfully. Leaders ensure that practitioners keep parents informed about children's care and development well. For example, they complete daily diaries for parents of younger children and hold parents' meetings to share children's achievements and to discuss their progress effectively. The responsible individual has also developed good links with health professionals and a local food bank.

## 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))

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
<b>Poor</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

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