

Buffy Williams MS
Chair of the Children, Young People and Education
Committee SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales

Eich cyf/Your ref:

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Dyddiad / Date: 4 March 2025

Dear Buffy Williams MS

Formal ‘concerns’ about children’s day care providers

Thank you for your letter of 6 February regarding formal concerns about children’s day care providers. The question raised by the committee concerned the substantial increase in concerns from 324 in 2020-21 to 552 in 2023-24. I have set out below a table at Figure 1 showing the concerns received from 2017-18 to 2023-24. I have also included the number of concerns received from 1 April 2024 to 31 January 2025. The chart at Figure 2 shows a very small increase of 0.13 percentage points in the proportion of concerns as a percentage of registered full day care services between the last full pre covid year of 2018-19 and the year 2023-24.

I am sorry I misheard the question in respect of concerns about children’s day care providers. Therefore, I mistakenly provided the Committee with the combined concerns for the fourth quarter of 2022-23 and 2024 -24 considered for childcare and play settings and for settings registered under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Act, i.e. adults and children’s social care services. This explains the disparity between the numbers quoted and the figures you refer to on the StatsWales website. I must apologise for any confusion.

As can be seen, the relatively low number of concerns received in 2020-21 is an outlier when compared with the three previous years, as well as with subsequent years. This is most likely explained by the impact of the Covid pandemic in 2020-21 and the consequent closure of many childcare and play settings. At the peak, just over 50% of the settings registered with CIW were closed. Given most concerns are raised by parents, carers, or staff, it is not surprising that 2020-21 saw a very significant reduction in concerns. Some

Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru (AGC)
Swyddfa Merthyr Tudful
Llywodraeth Cymru
Adeiladau'r Llywodraeth
Parc Business Rhydycar
Merthyr Tudful
CF48 1UZ
www.arolygiaethgofal.cymru

☎ 0300 7900 126

✉ ciw@gov.wales

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)
Merthyr Tydfil Office
Welsh Government
Government Buildings
Rhydycar Business Park
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 1UZ
www.careinspectorate.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

impact will have also been felt in the final two months of 2019-20 – which is likely to explain the reduction evident in that year.

The marginal and incremental increase in concerns in the last three years is likely to reflect efforts by CIW to promote and explain our role – including our readiness to receive and listen to concerns about the services we regulate. We do not see any correlation between the expansion of full day care places and an increase in the number of concerns received.

Figure 1

Concerns raised – Breakdown by service type and sub type.

| | April 2017- March 2018 | April 2018- March 2019 | April 2019- March 2020 | April 2020- March 2021 | April 2021- March 2022 | April 2022- March 2023 | April 2023- March 2024 | April 2024- January 2025 |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total | 467 | 492 | 439 | 324 | 528 | 549 | 552 | 473 |
| Childminders | 102 | 118 | 102 | 80 | 92 | 83 | 72 | 48 |
| Creches | 3 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | 1 |
| Full day care | 244 | 267 | 253 | 210 | 379 | 385 | 382 | 340 |
| Open Access Play Provision | 2 | 2 | 5 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Out of school care | 48 | 33 | 34 | 10 | 22 | 14 | 20 | 18 |
| Sessional day care | 55 | 58 | 27 | 10 | 32 | 28 | 17 | 22 |
| Children’s day care – not known | 13 | 12 | 18 | 14 | - | 37 | 60 | 42 |

Figure 2

Concerns raised as a % of Registered ‘Full Day Care’ Places.

| | March 2018 | March 2019 | March 2020 | March 2021 | March 2022 | March 2023 | March 2024 | January 2025 |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Total registered services | 31,197 | 34,593 | 37,638 | 39,193 | 39,412 | 40,510 | 42,629 | 43,674 |
| Total concerns raised | 244 | 267 | 253 | 210 | 379 | 385 | 382 | 340 |
| Concerns as a % of services | 0.78% | 0.77% | 0.67% | 0.54% | 0.96% | 0.95% | 0.90% | 0.78% |

As noted in my annual report, most childcare and play services do a good job caring for their children. The ratings we award at inspection show most services to be performing in line with the National Minimum Standards with adequate or good ratings, or a combination

of the two. We are now regularly showcasing [positive practice](#) on our website and over time most providers will have a 'Quality Meeting' with an inspector in between inspections. I am confident this will further strengthen our role in supporting good outcomes for children using childcare and play services.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "G. Baranski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G".

Gillian Baranski
Chief Inspector
Care Inspectorate Wales