



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Teddy Bear Towers Day Nursery
Trelawney Towers
Chester Road
Flint
CH6 5DU**

Date of inspection: November 2011

by

Mary Dyas

for

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the setting's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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About the setting

Teddy Bear Towers Day Nursery is an English medium setting serving the town of Flint. It operates from a large Victorian building on the outskirts of the town and is open from 8am to 6pm from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks a year. Children move into the pre-school room at the setting around the time of their third birthday and many stay at the setting even when they attend a school nursery class. The business also includes an after-school and holiday club and a playgroup for children aged from two to three years.

The setting serves a mainly urban area and children are considered to come from a mix of socio economic backgrounds. All children speak English as their home language and none speak Welsh at home. The nursery welcomes all children and 7% of children currently on roll in the pre-school room have been identified with additional learning needs.

The pre-school room is registered for up to 12 children per session. At the time of the inspection there were 27 children on roll of which seven were three year olds who did not also attend a school nursery. There were no children in receipt of funded educational provision from the Local Authority.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in August 2011 and this is the first time it has been inspected by Estyn.

Summary

The setting's current performance	Good
The setting's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The setting is judged to be good because:

- Children enjoy their time in the setting and make good progress
- The setting provides a good range of interesting and stimulating activities to enhance the children's learning
- Children enjoy their learning and become involved in the activities; and
- Relationships between children and adults are warm and caring

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Staff in the setting are committed to providing good quality learning experiences for the children
- The setting has a well established record of working to improve the provision - for example in the setting up and development of the outdoor learning area
- Formal self-evaluation has accurately identified areas in which the setting needs to improve; and
- Review of the action plan indicates that good progress has already been made in addressing the targets for improvement

Recommendations

The setting needs to:

- Ensure that the children are given more opportunities to be involved in the planning of their learning experiences
- Continue to develop the use of the Welsh language to enable children use what they have learned spontaneously in their play; and
- Consider ways in which parents and carers might be provided with more information about the activities planned for their children

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan to show how it intends to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The progress of all children is good and they achieve well. Almost all children's numeracy and mathematical skills are good and all count by rote accurately and confidently to at least 5. Many are able to count objects to at least 3 without support. Most children are beginning to use mathematical language in their play; for example when 'baking' cakes with play dough.

Most children communicate clearly and are confident to talk to adults about what they are doing and nearly all carry out instructions promptly. All children enjoy stories in both English and Welsh and all show an interest in books and their content and handle them correctly. Many choose to look at books without an adult during their play. The majority practise writing and take opportunities to write notes on pads, using them across several different areas of learning.

All children are developing their understanding and use of ICT as they play confidently with a range of electronic toys and equipment. Children's Welsh language development is good and they make good progress. The majority understand simple words and phrases and a few are beginning to use the words they have learnt in the group context but not yet independently in their play.

Wellbeing: Good

All children are happy in the nursery and enjoy their experiences. The warm relationships they have with their practitioners make them feel safe, happy and confident. All have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and that good food and exercise are important to make them healthy. Most identify healthy foods and things they should not eat. All children know that they need to wash their hands after using the toilet and also before their snack.

All children develop a positive attitude towards learning which they demonstrate by taking an active and enthusiastic part in their learning experiences. All children behave well and are polite and show consideration for others when taking turns sharing equipment.

Most children make friendships in the setting and show care and concern for one another. Children play in self selecting groups, in pairs and independently depending on the activity in which they are involved.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

Planning is done collaboratively, and activities successfully engage all children. Planning is flexible and occasionally responds to children's interests. Overall, planning for both the indoors and outdoors is well focused on meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes and builds systematically on children's existing knowledge, understanding and skills. Children do not have enough opportunities to influence the planning of the activities in which they are involved.

All children are well supported and respected as individuals and this has successfully developed their self-confidence. All children are familiar with the routines established by the playgroup and are sufficiently confident to be independent learners. There are good opportunities provided for children to develop their basic skills, including their physical and creative skills and to understand the need to care for living things. Provision is made to ensure the coherent development of skills across the curriculum, including developing children's thinking skills.

Practitioners use incidental Welsh consistently throughout the session and children are encouraged to use the Welsh language as much as possible. Activities based around St David's Day are well used for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the traditions and celebrations of Wales.

Children are developing an understanding about sustainability through their involvement in the nursery's daily recycling of paper and left over food and they know that we need to recycle things so that we don't waste them. There are few opportunities for children to learn about other peoples and cultures.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a good understanding of the philosophy of the Foundation Phase and a good knowledge of child development. They have high expectations of children in terms of their achievements and personal behaviour and these are realised in practice. Tasks are suitably challenging and often staff make good use of questioning to challenge and support children. Staff are good role models and children follow their example, thus ensuring good relationships in the group. There is a good balance between child-selected and adult-led activities. Staff show a good understanding of when it is appropriate to intervene in the children's play and when to leave them to discover and develop for themselves.

Assessment of children is carried out regularly and methodically. Practitioners make dated observations of children's progress which are then filed in the child's assessment profile. These observations are clear and relevant and relate well to Foundation Phase outcomes. They are used to inform the completion of the Local Authority's 'This is Me' profile. This profile is shared with parents at the end of the school year when the children move on to mainstream provision and the setting has plans to introduce an additional opportunity to discuss children's progress in January.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The provision for the promotion of children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Day-to-day activities are well designed to foster values such as honesty, fairness and respect for truth. Good arrangements are in place to ensure that children have a smooth induction into the playgroup and also when they move on to mainstream school.

The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. All staff have received training and are aware of their responsibilities. There are good arrangements in place to support children with additional learning needs and the setting works in partnership with parents.

Learning environment: Good

The nursery is fully inclusive and is an integral part of the local community. Staff know the children and their families well. They are experienced and well qualified and ensure that all children have equal access to all activities. Practitioners create a stimulating environment for learning and children are becoming confident and independent learners. There is a good supply of quality resources that are easily accessed by all the children and effectively support their progress. The setting is an attractive learning environment with examples of children's work displayed around the walls. The setting has worked hard to develop the outdoor environment which provides good experiences across the Foundation Phase areas of learning.

Children's experiences are enhanced through visits from individuals in the community such as a police officer and dental health advisor and children are regularly taken out on walks in the locality to visit the lifeboat station, library, garden centre and supermarket and also to visit the hairdresser which is located in the same building as the nursery.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The pre-school practitioners focus well on the children and their individual needs and interests and succeed in creating a positive ethos in which they work well together to provide interesting and stimulating learning experiences. The philosophy of the Foundation Phase is successfully incorporated into the work of the group and outcomes for children are good. Good relationships exist with parents and carers and with the local primary schools.

The nursery owner and her managers have good systems of appraisal and staff review in place and a good range of policies regarding keeping children safe. Induction procedures ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and regular staff meetings ensure they are kept up to date with recent developments. The nursery also is successfully meeting national and local priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum.

Improving quality: Good

Informal self evaluation in the setting is well established and practitioners know their setting. There is a positive culture of reflection on practice and the recently produced self-evaluation document is a useful one which identifies many of the setting's strengths and appropriate targets for improvement. Evaluation of improvements in terms of children's progress is still at an early stage of development.

The leader and deputy have established good links with other registered providers in the area and have attended meetings to share ideas and good practice. The setting has welcomed visits from other settings to see the work that has been done on establishing the outdoor learning area.

Partnership working: Good

Results from the parents' questionnaires show that parents are very satisfied with the care and the learning experiences provided for their children. Practitioners speak to parents every day about what their child has been doing and celebrate success. The setting has recently established visits from teachers in local primary schools to come to meet the children before they move on to their nursery classes. A very positive relationship with the Foundation Phase link teacher from the Local Authority provides support and advice. There is clear evidence that this advice has been acted on to improve provision for the children.

Resource management: Good

The setting has a good range of resources which are managed and deployed effectively to support different areas of learning and individual learning needs. There are appropriate numbers of suitably trained staff to deliver the Foundation Phase. Use of the outdoors is well developed and planned for.

An administrative manager oversees the nursery finances carefully and, in collaboration with the owner and officers in charge, tries to link spending to areas requiring improvement. Overall the setting is well resourced and provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Parents who responded to the questionnaire were all positive about the provision for their children. In particular all parents :

- are satisfied with the setting
- agree that their children were helped to settle in well
- feel that teaching is good and that staff treat their children fairly and with respect; and
- agree that their children receive appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs

Responses to discussions with children

Most children were happy and confident when talking to a visitor. They spoke clearly and used age appropriate vocabulary. All said they liked coming to the playgroup and enjoyed their activities. They felt that they had many friends and were happy.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mary Dyas	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.