



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

**A report on**

**Little Gems and Little Treasures Playgroups  
Victoria Infant School  
Poyser Street  
Wrexham  
LL13 7RR**

**Date of inspection: February 2019**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

## About Little Treasures Victoria

Name of setting	Little Gems and Little Treasures Playgroups
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Deborah Clare Eccles and Janet Mary Lloyd are currently the Registered Persons for this setting. A Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) has been established to provide this service. An application to re-register the setting in the name of the CIO is required.
Responsible individual (if applicable)	N/A
Person in charge	Janet Mary Lloyd
Number of places	32 children under 12
Age range of children	3 – 4 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	13
Number of children funded for up to five terms	0
Opening days / times	Monday- to Friday during term time only: Morning session 9.00am – 11.30am Afternoon session 12.30pm- 3.00pm
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a setting that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It is situated in a primarily English speaking area and the provider does not currently intend to offer or promote a Welsh Language service.

A report on Little Treasures Victoria  
February 2019

Date of previous CIW inspection	04/05/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection	01/06/2012
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	12/02/2019
Additional information	
A very few children speak English as an additional language.	

## Summary

Theme	Judgement
<b>Wellbeing</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Learning</b> (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	<b>Good</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>Good</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 Improve children's problem solving skills

R2 Provide opportunities for children to influence what and how they learn

R3 Ensure that small group activities meet the needs of all children

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children make effective choices, for example when deciding what they would like to eat for snack. They are confident practitioners will listen to them, respect their choices and respond to their needs well. Nearly all children choose whom they sit next to and who they play with confidently and move around the room freely between activities.

Nearly all children are happy at the setting and are confident that practitioners will respond to their needs. They develop a sense of belonging by being spoken to respectfully and by name. For example, children smile when welcomed to the session and look at their friends in recognition as each of their names are called. Nearly all children cope well with separation from their parents or carers. They are content and express enjoyment through their play. Nearly all are familiar with the regular routine which provides them with a sense of familiarity and security.

Nearly all children interact well together and get along with one another. They use their manners regularly, for example by thanking practitioners and each other when sharing toys. They behave well and have a good understanding of the expectations of them. For example, a child asks a practitioner politely for support to resolve a dispute over toys. Nearly all children listen to practitioners and carry out instructions well. They are keen to please adults and understand the importance of co-operative play.

Many children are actively engaged and interested in the toys and activities laid out for them. They show concentration and sustain interest in their chosen activity well. However, a few children lose concentration easily during large group activities which limits their potential for skill development.

Nearly all children enjoy their play and learning. They move around the indoor and outdoor areas freely and are curious and excited about their activities. Nearly all children enjoy the extended periods of child initiated play and the opportunities to play alongside the staff; smiling, laughing and having fun together. Nearly all engage with their learning but do not have a strong enough contribution to ideas about what and how they will learn.

Nearly all children are developing and learning well. Many are becoming independent. For example, many children are able to put their coats on independently. They show resilience when they find things difficult, confident they will receive help should they need it, for example, when zipping up their own coat. Many younger children develop their independent skills well, for example when persevering to spread butter on their toast at snack time. However, this is not consistent across the setting as older children rely too much on adult support to complete tasks during snack time.

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

Most children make good progress in the development of their skills. They develop effective listening skills. For example, they listen to each other's contributions carefully when making pretend cakes in the outdoor role play café. They speak with increasing clarity, such as when describing the pictures they draw on the outdoor blackboard. They enjoy joining in with songs and rhymes as part of their daily routines. Most understand that writing conveys meaning. They listen to stories attentively and join in enthusiastically with the parts they are familiar with. Many reflect on what they have heard and are confident to make their own contributions, for example when listening to a story about feelings they say how their 'heart feels today'.

Most children develop effective numeracy skills. For example, they join in with counting the number of children attending the setting that day with accuracy. Most count independently up to five and a few count to ten and beyond. They begin to develop suitable mathematical vocabulary, such as when choosing whether to use the bigger or smaller tweezers and describing their difference. A few use their understanding of relative size well to place piles of wooden rings in order of relevance to their size.

A few children use information and communication technology (ICT) well as part of tasks under the direction of an adult. For example, they use a simple digital camera to record other children's activities in the outdoor area. Many children begin to use ICT independently as part of their play, for example when using an electronic keyboard in the music area.

Most children develop their physical skills well. For example, they show increasing skill when using tweezers to move mini-hearts from a tray of rice into a container. They demonstrate appropriate hand to eye coordination when throwing coloured balls into matching coloured tubs. They use a good range of outdoor play equipment to develop their balance and fitness.

During their short time in the setting most children make good progress in developing their Welsh language skills. They understand simple commands given in Welsh and are beginning to use simple words and phrases appropriately, such as when greeting staff in the morning with 'Bore da' (good morning). They enjoy joining in with a range of Welsh songs as part of their daily routines.

Most children develop imaginative creative skills. For example, they enjoy taking part in a dragon dance as part of celebrating Chinese New Year and making images in foam for their 'frosty' topic. However, due to a lack of opportunity, few pupils develop effective problem solving skills.

**Care and development: Good**

Practitioners have a robust understanding of the service's safeguarding policy and know how to keep children safe and healthy. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. All

practitioners encourage a healthy lifestyle and serve nutritionally balanced snacks and drinks. They have a good understanding of the need to encourage children to be physically active and ensure there are opportunities for regular outdoor physical play. Practitioners have a good understanding of policies and procedures. They undertake regular fire evacuation drills with various starting locations to ensure everyone is familiar with the required procedure. They understand the medical needs of the children in their care and work closely with parents to ensure their individual care needs are safely met. Nearly all practitioners receive training in First Aid and understand the requirements of record keeping. However, elements of record keeping, such as accident records, are inconsistent. There are effective policies that practitioners and children follow, which ensure that good hygiene practices are in place and the risk of any cross infection is minimised.

Nearly all practitioners manage interactions with children compassionately. They promote positive behaviour well through a consistent and kind approach and celebrate positive behaviour often, for example through strategies such as star of the week and 'Helpwr Heddiw' (Helper of the day). Nearly all practitioners are approachable, know the children well and show sensitivity to the needs and experiences of individual children. Nearly all practitioners deliver care in a nurturing manner and are responsive to the needs of the children.

Practitioners provide children with positive incentives to develop skills, such as putting on their own coats. They recognise their achievements by celebrating with them regularly, which in turn supports their emotional wellbeing and develops their self-esteem. For example, they hold a ceremony and award certificates to the children once every child has accomplished putting their coat on independently.

Nearly all practitioners promote children's play, learning and development successfully and meet their individual needs well. They have a comprehensive knowledge of child development and keep up to date with developments through attendance at regular and relevant training. Practitioners apply their training well to implement the principles of the foundation phase successfully within the play opportunities they provide. Overall, practitioners link their planning to outcomes for children appropriately. However, this is not continued for the older children attending the setting alongside their school education. Nearly all practitioners endeavour to understand fully the child's individual routine and preferences at the point of registration. Practitioners evaluate the activities they deliver in order to plan effectively for future improvements.

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

Practitioners plan a good range of learning experiences for children that engage and stimulate children's interests well. For example, after finding out about volcanoes in a book, children enjoy working with adults to create their own miniature volcano. Practitioners use their knowledge of the children's current abilities and the next steps in their skills development well to deliver activities that ensure that most children make good progress. Planning links well to the foundation phase framework and shows progression in children's skills effectively.



Practitioners make good use of a range of visits to support children's learning. For example, they visit a local supermarket to find out about healthy food and develop their understanding of the use of ICT through operating the tills. However, practitioners do not always involve children sufficiently in contributing ideas about what and how they will learn.

Practitioners have a thorough understanding of good foundation phase practice, and provide interesting opportunities for children to learn through play and active involvement. They use the setting's limited space effectively to support children's learning. High quality, thoughtfully planned learning areas encourage children to choose freely during their play. Practitioners provide suitable opportunities for children to access these areas independently. They use questioning well to extend children's learning and prompt their thinking.

The setting provides good opportunities for children to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. In particular, practitioners are skilful in identifying incidental opportunities to improve children's mathematical and wider vocabulary. They encourage children to develop an enthusiasm for books by reading to them regularly with enthusiasm and engagement. They allow children to develop their reading preferences by allowing them to have an individual vote on which story they would like to hear next.

Practitioners use Welsh appropriately as part of the daily routine and during a few activities. This has had a positive impact on children's ability to understand and use the language in the limited time they have attended the setting. Children have beneficial opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions. For example, they make cards to celebrate Santes Dwynwen day. The setting provides a good range of learning experiences to foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, practitioners develop a sense of awe and wonder amongst children when they grow herbs and vegetables in their outdoor area. Practitioners continually encourage the effective social development of children by modelling positive relationships and rewarding skills of collaboration and cooperation amongst them.

Practitioners maintain useful assessments of the children's ability that feed well into planning and shape future tasks. For example, they take notes of the particular skills that children demonstrate during activities and collate these at the end of the week to feed into the following week's planning. They use electronic systems well to record children's skills and to create a portfolio to share with parents.

### **Environment: Good**

Leaders prioritise the safety and the cleanliness of the environment. They have made significant investment to ensure that the environment is inviting for children of all ages. It offers a wide range of beneficial play opportunities and is suitable to meet the needs of the children. Leaders ensure that practitioners have a secure understanding of their responsibilities in relation to safety, for example checking that the external gates into the playgrounds are secure. Risk assessments are in place and kept up-to-date, and they address any identified risks appropriately. Practitioners promote children's safety effectively whilst allowing them to take risks and to develop an understanding of their own capabilities, for example whilst climbing on and off the wooden train and pirate ship in the outdoor area.

Leaders ensure the use of the outdoor play space is given a high priority and utilised regularly. The indoor environment is well decorated, welcoming and centred around the needs of the children, for example with low level tables and chairs. Leaders use bilingual displays beneficially to celebrate the children's achievements whilst promoting their cultural and language development. They plan skilfully to enable children opportunities to explore the indoor or outdoor environment freely.

Leaders review the range of resources and equipment available to the children regularly, rotating the toys well in order to sustain the children's interests. They plan worthwhile opportunities for exploratory play, helping to promote children's curiosity and creativity by using a range of materials as an integral part of their play. The setting has a wide range of furniture and equipment that is suitable for the age and needs of the children, and that promotes their independence and self-help skills. For example, leaders have recently installed a new sink in the playroom at child height that allows children to wash their hands without adult support. Leaders ensure that toys and resources are stored safely and are labelled clearly, enabling children to choose what resources and toys they want independently. Leaders are developing and extending their use of sustainable and natural materials within the service to give the children a greater understanding of the world around them and support their sensory development.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting based on an ethos of high expectations for learning and behaviour within a happy and caring environment. Leaders work well with practitioners to deliver this vision for the benefit of the children. Leaders are supported well by a management committee. They keep its chair well informed about developments at the setting, including progress with any improvement actions and any issues with specific children. Effective communication between leaders is both formal through termly meetings and informal through regular discussions. This ensures that the service runs smoothly.

The setting's statement of purpose provides an accurate picture of what the setting offers and is reviewed regularly. Leaders ensure all practitioners have up-to-date job descriptions that specify their roles and responsibilities clearly and that they have a good understanding of what is expected of them.

Leaders implement helpful supervision and appraisal systems that encourage staff to reflect on their performance and identify areas for improvement. They support practitioners well and value their contributions, ensuring that they receive relevant training to develop their knowledge and skills.

Leaders and practitioners have an appropriate understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement within the setting. They work well together to review the effectiveness of the provision consistently and make improvements. For example, they identified the need to improve the quality of the outdoor provision and have now developed a stimulating environment that makes the most of the available space and provides an engaging area for children to develop their skills.

The setting has safe and effective processes for the recruitment and deployment of staff. Leaders ensure there are enough suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of the children and that they deploy them well to make the most of their skills.

The setting works hard to maintain productive relationships with parents. Leaders keep parents well informed about the activities that the children engage with, through regular newsletters and via a beneficial electronic system that sends messages and photographs directly to parents' mobile phones. Leaders develop nurturing and trusting partnerships with parents and use these beneficially to seek their views and plan for improvements. They have effective partnerships with the local authority advisory teacher and use the advice and support given well to deliver positive outcomes for children and parents. For example, together they deliver a workshop that assists parents to understand how to help improve their child's early literacy and numeracy skills. Parents have confidence that the setting will support their child's development and that they will keep them regularly informed of their child's progress.

The setting benefits from very positive relationships with its host school. For instance, the school encourages setting staff to attend relevant training sessions alongside school staff and invites setting children to participate in school events, such as sports day. As a result of this close working, the quality of transition experiences for nearly all children is very good.

## 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 evaluates 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

© Crown Copyright 2019: This report may be re used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 16/04/2019