



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

**Craig y Don Playschool
Queen's Road
Llandudno
Conwy
LL30 1TE**

Date of inspection: October 2011

by

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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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Context

Craig y Don Playschool was set up during the 1970s and from 2004 has operated from the current premises.

The playschool is located in Craig y Don, an area close to the centre of Llandudno in Conwy, North Wales. The medium-sized playgroup is run by the four practitioners.

The playschool is based in the Community Centre and the accommodation is shared by other members of the community. This means that the practitioners have to set out and clear away the equipment before and after almost every session. There is a small entrance hall outside the playschool room that has a digital photo frame and information for parents to view when they drop off or collect their children. Inside, the room is divided into areas for play and outside the group have access to a small enclosed play space.

The playschool operates all day during term time and children can attend the out of school club in the holidays. The playschool is open from 9am to 3pm.

Craig y Don Playschool is registered with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales to provide full day care for 26 children. The children attending the playgroup are aged between two and a half and four years of age.

The last CSSIW inspection was in June 2011 and this is the second inspection by Estyn.

The practitioners who work in the playschool are qualified to level 3.

There were four children present aged three during the inspection. None were eligible for funding during this Autumn term.

The playgroup is English speaking, providing care and education for children from families for whom nearly all this is their first language.

Ethnicity is all White British and one child has additional needs.

The playgroup has an equal opportunities policy and an admission procedure that welcomes all children. The area served by the playgroup is considered to be neither advantaged nor disadvantaged. Children attending the group are from varied backgrounds and come from the local area.

Craig y Don Playschool receives support from Conwy Early Education.

Summary

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

Current performance

Current performance is good because;

Children are settled and make good progress.

Teaching is good.

Interesting activities and learning experiences develop confident, independent learners.

Care support and guidance is good.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because;

There is an effective working relationship with the Early Education teacher.

The playschool has a very positive attitude to improvements.

There is good support from WPPA.

Enthusiastic practitioners work for the benefit of the children and to raise standards.

The playschool has made good progress since the last Estyn inspection.

Recommendations

R1. To introduce a more effective leadership and management system.

R2. Extend the assessment process to include more detailed records regarding the progress and development of the children.

R3. Provide more mark making opportunities.

R4. Introduce more informal Welsh language during the session.

What happens next?

The provider will produce an action plan that shows how the setting will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	N/A
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There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skill development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

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

Planning effectively engages all children and challenges many. Plans are differentiated to take into account individual learning needs. Practitioners know the children in their care well and respond spontaneously and appropriately in activities.

Activities are exciting and innovative, for example, sponge painting with feet or finding and matching coloured teddies in porridge oats.

Learning experiences actively develop thinking and wider skills and enable children to progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes. The curriculum builds effectively on their knowledge and skills and learning opportunities effectively develop relationships, tolerance and respect for all. The playschool provides all children with a range of stimulating and interesting experiences in all areas of learning and there are opportunities to work together and help their friends, for example, when making a den. Activities encourage taking risks such as a bear hunt expedition in a local park.

Children are very confident, independent learners who are happy to experiment with new experiences. Children's creative skills are developed through painting and imaginary play. They develop an understanding of the world in which they live by visiting the shop to buy food to make sandwiches for a picnic. Children have opportunities to find out about living things by caring for the fish in the setting and from visitors who have brought owls and ducks to the playschool to extend their learning.

Practitioners provide experiences that effectively develop children's communication, numeracy and ICT skills, including using the computer to look at photographs and working through simple programmes. There are very good opportunities for stories and language and good coherence across the curriculum. Although there is a well stocked graphics corner, the setting needs to introduce opportunities for mark making and developing early writing skills in other areas.

The setting encourages children to use the Welsh language during circle time and although this is a very strong feature including puppets, opportunities to use the language on an informal basis throughout the session need to be developed. A few

children are sufficiently confident to use Welsh spontaneously as they play. Children have good opportunities to learn about the traditions, culture and celebrations of Wales including St David's Day.

The setting is starting to make good use of visitors and the local community to extend the experiences of the children including learning about simple re-cycling and the world around them.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners are well deployed and actively support the children both indoors and out. They make effective opportunities for the use of the Welsh language during circle time and actively encourage children to participate.

The practitioners are particularly efficient at developing and facilitating play when they join in with the children. They share ideas and maximise further learning opportunities. Adult support is well focused and makes a good contribution to the progress of the children.

Practitioners make very good use of informal learning opportunities such as keeping the outside door open so that children could look closely at falling hailstones. Children are encouraged to try things for themselves so becoming independent learners. Tasks include putting on wellingtons and helping themselves to snack.

Practitioners understand the Foundation Phase outcomes and requirements and they actively promote the children's learning through play. Practitioners use a range of good questioning techniques to extend the knowledge of the children and they all know when to intervene and when to observe and let the children discover and find out for themselves.

Teaching is stimulating, engages all and very imaginative use of resources effectively supports the learning of the children, for example, when recreating a bear hunt.

Practitioners use a wide range of approaches to stimulate play and learning and make it fun. They provide helpful oral feedback and spend time with individual children discussing what they are doing and how it can be developed or improved.

Although practitioners make some written observations of the children, these do not always contain sufficient information. There is time before and after the session for parents to talk to practitioners and discuss their progress. An assessment record is given to parents when their children leave the setting, a copy of which goes on to the school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Learning experiences promote the children's personal development and their moral social, spiritual and cultural growth. The setting has undertaken risk assessments and there is an appropriate policy and procedure for safeguarding children.

All children know the routines well and the playschool effectively helps children to distinguish right from wrong and encourages them to help each other. Playschool ensures the children make decisions and develop an understanding of living and sharing with others. The older children were observed to help and support their younger friends particularly when making a den.

There are good transition arrangements for the children when they are joining or leaving the group and there are developing links with the school.

The setting has effective arrangements for providing children with additional needs specialist and personal support. Practitioners work closely with parents and professionals to assist these children and they make good progress in the group. The setting effectively promotes the health and well being of the children by serving healthy food for the snack and providing plenty of outdoor play.

Learning environment: Good

The playschool welcomes all children, offers equal access to the Foundation Phase curriculum and is fully inclusive. The learning environment supports the children in their play both indoors and outdoors.

The Community Centre room is set out so that children can help themselves to resources. This ensures they settle very quickly to the activities when they arrive and are confident to help themselves.

Accommodation is suitable and effective and the local environment is used to enhance facilities in the group. Colourful displays stimulate the children and develop their learning. The children enthusiastically add their individual pieces and decide where to put the work.

Sufficient well trained and experienced practitioners meet the needs of the children and their understanding of the Foundation Phase outcomes is evident in their day to day work. Practitioners use training well to improve their own knowledge, awareness and skills and this has a positive impact on the education and progress of the children. A fine supply of varied, good quality resources in all areas are well matched to the learning and developmental needs of the children.

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

Leadership: Adequate

The practitioners create a very positive ethos within the group where the children are valued and respected. Although the playschool has been left without a manager and there is an overall lack of leadership in the group, there is still a sense of purpose amongst the practitioners and a need to make changes.

Practitioners are enthusiastic and well motivated and this has had a very positive impact on the group. Practitioners feel strongly that the setting will continue to improve as there is a culture of self reflection and development that maintains and advances the setting.

Practitioners respond quickly and effectively to any advice and guidance from the local authority teacher and WPPA and ensure changes impact positively on standards and quality of provision.

All practitioners are aware of and fulfil their roles and responsibilities and they are fully focused on the needs of the children.

The playschool responds very positively to national and local priorities. They are involved with re-cycling, healthy eating and training and developments within the Foundation Phase.

Improving quality: Good

Self-evaluation has recently been completed and there are processes in place to evaluate the strengths of the setting and areas for improvement. The playschool is committed to valuing the views of all. Practitioners contribute to the process and use the information gathered day to day from the running of the setting to successfully identify new resources.

Long term strategic planning and evaluation are at an early stage. Practitioners are beginning to develop positive links with the local community and the school. They have made good use of Foundation Phase training to improve their practice, the curriculum and organisation within the group, particularly extending the use of outdoors and bringing the 'outside in'. The group have made very significant and consistent progress during this term.

Craig y Don Playschool has made good progress since the last Estyn inspection.

Partnership working: Good

There are good relationships with parents and a notice board keeps them up to date with what is happening in the playschool.

The early education teacher works effectively in the setting and practitioners value the support they receive and are keen to respond to advice and guidance. The

setting is starting to make use of visitors from the community and the local environment to support the learning of the children.

The playschool works in partnership with the local college and school and provides good support and placements to students following child care courses and pupils on work experience. This is an effective way for the students to develop their own skills, provide extra help for the children and for the playschool to move forward with new ideas.

Although the partnership with the school is in the early stages this emerging relationship actively contributes to facilitate the transition arrangements when children leave the group to go to school.

An effective partnership with Wales Pre-school Providers Association has introduced a member of staff to specifically develop the Welsh language in the group. This has had a very positive impact on the standards and achievements of the children and the confidence of the practitioners.

Resource management: Good

Resources are used well. There is a good range of high quality resources that contribute well to the progress and achievements of the children. Practitioners are well deployed and make effective use of all the areas both indoors and outdoors.

Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of budget matters and ensure that any extra resources will benefit the children and improve standards and well being.

The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

All positive comments were received about the setting with all parents either agreeing or strongly agreeing to all the statements on the inspection questionnaire.

Responses to discussions with children

Children like coming to the group. They are happy.
They show great enthusiasm for the staff and find the activities exciting.
They particularly enjoy outdoor play and going in the water with their wellingtons.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Anne Manning	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.