



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

**Llywelyn Day Nursery and Fun Club
Ysgol Llywelyn
Trellewelyn Road
Rhyl
LL18 4EU**

Date of inspection: May 2011

by

Mr Eifion R Morgan

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

Llywelyn Day Nursery and Fun Club is located in the grounds of Ysgol Llywelyn Primary School in Rhyl, North Wales. It occupies a recently renovated building with immediate access to the outside comprising a tarmac area for games and wheeled toys, a grassed area with fixed play equipment and a wild life area incorporating raised beds for growing plants.

Internally there is a large spacious room with several alcoves including a small kitchen. There is a designated cloakroom area and toilets and washing facilities. The main room is well differentiated into activity areas in keeping with the Foundation Phase philosophy. The leader has a study providing a room for any confidential discussion and storing children's records.

All children come from the immediate urban area – an area described as comprising areas of social-economic disadvantaged in part. All the children speak English in the home and currently none are from ethnic minority communities. Children from such backgrounds are welcomed and have been present previously. Similarly no child, at present, has been identified as having additional learning needs, but the setting has supported such children in the past.

Children are admitted following their 3rd birthday and move onto the next stage of their education in the adjacent primary school following their fourth birthday. The setting is open from 7.30 a.m. until 6.30 in the evening and is open all year apart from Christmas to the New Year and bank holidays.

Currently there are 30 children on the register, 22 of whom are funded. The Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) set the limit at 32 children.

The setting was inspected by CSSIW in 2010 and the report did not identify any major recommendations.

The nursery has received the Quality Assured award by the Wales Pre-School Playgroup Association (WPPA) and is recognised by the WPPA and the local authority as an exemplar of good practice.

The setting has not been previously inspected by Estyn.

Summary

The school's current performance	Excellent
The school's prospects for improvement	Excellent

Current performance

Excellent

- * The impact of leadership on standards of achievement and children's progress.
- * The quality of the learning environment and children's experiences.
- * Management of staff and resources.
- * The range and quality of the teaching.
- * The quality of assessment and the use made of the outcomes of assessment in planning future activities to meet the needs and interest of the children.

Good

- * The quality of planning to meet the needs of the children and to develop their skills
- * Provision for ensuring children's wellbeing.
- * Provision for children's care, support and guidance.
- * Partnership with parents and other organisations including links with the primary school.
- * Planning to incorporate children's ideas and a sense of enjoyment of working with children.
- * Management of staff and resources.

Prospects for improvement

Excellent

- * The dynamic and infectious personality of the leader focused on children's high achievement and experiences and a "go and get" approach to resources.
- * Track record of improvement over the last 4 years.
- * Clear, accurate self-evaluation.
- * Flexibility and an openness in planning to take in new ideas.

Good

- * Setting organisation and administration giving the staff time to prepare and attend courses.
- * Total commitment to providing the very best experiences for the children.
- * Ability of the staff to work together for the benefit of the children.

Recommendations

The setting needs to

- maintain its current commitment to produce the very best experiences for all children.
- focus on assessing children's competence in skill development and identify the next steps in children's learning.
- where possible, erect an outside shelter that would offer greater protection*

* This is recognised in the self-evaluation plan.

What happens next?

The Nursery will draw up an action plan which shows how the nursery is going to address the recommendations.

Estyn will invite the nursery to prepare a written case study describing the excellent practice identified in the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Excellent

Standards: Excellent

Children's progress and achievement is outstanding. Children start at the setting with very different levels of knowledge, skills and understanding but the innovative and imaginative teaching is highly effective. All children progress very well and achieve well above expectations in both their academic and social development.

Children's skills development is of a high quality and enables them to take a full and rewarding part in their learning.

Children's literacy skills are very well developed enabling them to communicate clearly and have the self-confidence to approach and engage the inspector in discussion. Such skills enable them to progress very well, such as when interacting with adults or with their peers. Children express their feelings and emotion clearly and carry out instructions promptly and without question.

All children enjoy stories and listen intently. Most react positively answering questions and are able to retell the story to an inspector. They remember important words, such as the "pupa" in the story of the "Hungry Caterpillar" and recognise the stages in its life cycle. All children show an interest in books and hold them correctly. Many retell the stories they have heard and know the characters.

All children practice writing and know the functions of writing as was obvious when one child brought his writing pad and pencil outside with him to make notes when exploring the wild life area.

Children's numeracy and mathematical skills are very good and practically all children count accurately, match shapes and use mathematical language in relevant contexts. They recognise patterns and can name common two dimensional shapes. A particularly highly commendable skill is when children use a computerised magnifying glass to view their exhibits. This, together with the use of technological equipment, such as digital cameras, shows the children's competence in using technology in their every day activities.

Children's Welsh language development is generally good and they are making significant progress in developing their competence. Discussion with a sample of parents indicates that children are using the language at home.

Wellbeing: Good

All children, relative to their age, have an exceptional understanding of how they can become healthy including the importance of food and exercise.

Virtually all children show high levels of self-esteem and are highly motivated and engaged in their learning. They show positive attitudes to new learning experiences.

Most children are confident, competent and are sufficiently self-confident to work for sustained periods of time on their own.

A notable and very good feature is their caring attitude towards one another, as was apparent when a child fell over and injured herself. One child, some time later, came to see how she was. Undoubtedly children enjoy their time at the setting; they arrive in the morning full of enthusiasm and eager to partake in the activities. They are keen to communicate with the inspector and talk about what they are doing. Most children display the self-confidence to choose their favourite activities and persevere for significant periods of time. Children are actively involved in making decisions about their activities in the nursery, such as contributing to planning the learning curriculum.

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

The Nursery provides children with a highly imaginative curriculum which successfully stimulates their imagination and sustains their interest.

Planning is a collaborative venture involving both staff and children initially in a brain storming exercise based on a stimulus provided by, for example a children's story or character such as "Gruffalo".

Children's activities are then well focused on providing high quality activities and organisation of the activities to ensure all children are well challenged and actively involved.

Activities for different children are very well focused in that very good account is taken of children's ability and prior attainment as noted in previous evaluations. Such planning ensures progression and continuity in children's learning. Very good account is also made to ensure that children's communication, numeracy, ICT and wider skills are developed coherently and embedded in the experiences of all children.

The outdoor environment is used imaginatively as an extension of the classroom and, during the inspection, children experimented confidently and creatively with experiences that extended their knowledge and understanding well above expectations. Of particular note was the use of a lap-top computer and attachment to magnify plants and animals collected by the children.

Children are actively involved in projects such as recycling and growing seeds. In discussion they are beginning to appreciate the important of recycling and sustainability.

Excellent opportunities are provided for children to develop personal and cultural identities such as celebrations of Welsh festivals but also extend their knowledge and understanding of other cultures and traditions, such as celebration of the Chinese New Year and Indian customs. Children made costumes, listened to music and

tasted traditional foods as part of their celebrations. This brought them meaningful experiences about the cultures and traditions of other peoples.

Teaching: Excellent

The teaching across the curriculum makes an outstanding impact on children's learning. Staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the philosophy of the Foundation Phase learning and have very high expectations of the children.

The taught curriculum is highly innovative and provides highly stimulating learning experiences across all areas of learning matched by innovating teaching approaches.

Resources are well used to support the learning, including the use of technology. There is an excellent balance between adult-led and child initiated activities and a very good notable feature is that staff know when it is appropriate to intervene in children's learning. This they do sensitively and skilfully so as not to overwhelm children but to encourage and challenge them. Questioning is well used to develop children's thinking skills.

An outstanding feature of the setting is the assessment of children and record keeping. Records are comprehensive and the outcomes of assessment very well used when planning future activities. Fundamental to this is the evaluations made of children's achievements and the "key worker" system which the setting uses. The "key workers" have an extensive knowledge of individual children's progress and ability.

Parents, in discussion and in the questionnaire returned, reported on their total satisfaction with the reports on their children and they appreciated the information they were given, such as the new words in the Welsh language. This helps them to support their children's learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Good and effective procedures are in place to support children's health and wellbeing. These are supported by appropriate policy documents. The setting is an effective learning environment where children are rarely without meaningful learning activities. The setting has a well established positive behaviour strategies and challenging behaviour in relation to bullying, harassment or antisocial behaviour rarely, if ever, occurs. Adults and children get on well and are happy in each other's company. Children are able to ask for help and are confident that they will be supported. No child is left unsupported for any length of time and this aspect of care and support is very good.

The Nursery has good arrangements in place to support children identified as having additional learning needs and whilst no child has such needs at present, arrangements have worked very well in the past, resulting in good support from outside specialists. Induction arrangements and key workers being identified for individual children are highly effective and the close collaboration with the adjacent primary school eases the transfer of children.

Learning experiences promote children's personal development very well. Children appreciate the awe and wonder of the natural world and a sense of curiosity prevails as was observed during the inspection.

The setting very successfully fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect and promotes principles that help children distinguish between right and wrong.

Children's social development is particularly good. Children know the acceptable code of behaviour; they share resources willingly, relate very well to each other and are keen to take responsibility. They are adept at decision making.

Children have a good understanding of the culture and traditions of Wales and of other cultures. Overall, the nursery's provision for developing children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Safeguarding arrangements are well established and understood by all staff. Policies and procedures are in place and meet the requirements of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures (2008). The leader has overall responsibility for dealing with child protection and safeguarding issues and all staff have received appropriate training.

Learning environment: Good

The Nursery is a fully inclusive community where all children have equality of access to activities and areas of the settings provision. A very good aspect is the respect with which each child is given and the staff's knowledge and understanding of each child's idiosyncrasies. Staff are experienced and well qualified and all have been part of the team for a number of years. All display a full understanding of the Foundation Phase curriculum and take an active part in planning and contributing to the curriculum. They create a stimulating environment for learning.

There is a good supply of quality resources that are accessible to the children and are well focused on supporting the learning. The accommodation, recently renovated, is an attractive learning environment, supplemented by the easily accessible outside environment. The outside environment is an excellent resource enabling children to experiment and explore, to grow seeds, care for them, to find animals, such as snails and to examine them carefully using magnifying glasses. Apart from these wildlife and cultivated areas there are facilities for children to develop their physical skills, to use water and sand and for role play.

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

The Nursery benefits from outstanding, dynamic leadership that sets very high expectations of both staff and children. Her aspirations are realised in practice. A clear sense of purpose pervades all aspects of the work of the setting. Staff play a very effective role in providing high quality teaching and learning and facilitated by the setting's leadership style which encourages staff to be innovative, inventive and

to take a leadership role. Staff know their roles, accept their responsibility and work very well as a team.

In summary, the leader over the last few years has clearly focused on children's needs and worked tirelessly to improve the setting and the provision for children's learning. In this she has been highly successful. Of particular note is the support she receives from her staff and the positive ethos apparent in the nursery. Her innovative, imaginative approach is recognised as an example of exceptional practice. National and local priorities have been met.

Improving quality: Excellent

The Nursery has been highly effective in identifying its strengths and areas for development and this information very well used to focus development. Accordingly to information received in discussion with the headteacher of the Primary school this has resulted in a setting that was under-resourced, lacked focus and with only a small number of children being developed over recent years, to a highly successful, innovative and vibrant setting.

Nevertheless she is not complacent and a positive culture of self-evaluation pervades all the work of the setting. Of particular note is the way staff are open to new ideas and have embraced the philosophy of the Foundation Phase learning intentions. Fundamental to the success of the setting is the use made of the views of the children. This successfully involves them in their own learning.

Interested parties, including parents and professional support, have been very well used and the advice of such individuals has been invaluable.

Partnership working: Excellent

Partnership support makes a good contribution to the setting's work and children's achievement and wellbeing. The setting has been actively involved with other centres of provision in the locality and is regarded as an exemplar of good practice by the Wales Pre Playgroup Association (WPPA) and exemplar of the work used by them. The nursery also benefits substantially from the support and professional advice received from the local authority advisory teacher and this is fully recognised by the leader.

Very good links exist with the adjacent primary school to the benefit of the children. Visits to the school for celebratory activities have been very worthwhile and reciprocated. Overall there is an excellent co-operation between all practitioners to the benefit of the children. Community links are used very effectively to support children's learning.

Resource management: Good

Resources are managed very effectively and the staff have worked very imaginatively and successfully to acquire and renew the resource provision. Currently this benefits the children resulting in very good progress and achievement.

Overall, the leader has been highly successful in acquiring finance to support the setting and she has been very well supported by her staff.

Staff accept their roles and are pro-active in ensuring the success of the setting. They are well qualified and take every opportunity to improve their professional expertise.

The leader keeps a careful eye on spending to ensure cost effectiveness and overall provide very good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Pre-inspection questionnaires and discussion with a representative sample of parents indicate their total satisfaction with the nursery and its staff.

Twenty-two replies were received, none where critical and most replies were strongly in agreement with the statements in the questionnaire.

This included:

- (i) satisfaction with the setting
- (ii) children liking the setting
- (iii) good behaviour
- (iv) good teaching
- (v) safety at the setting
- (vi) ability of parents to approach the setting
- (vii) preparation of the children for moving on to school, and
- (viii) that the setting is well run.

All responses agreed that

- (i) children settled in well when starting, and
- (ii) children make good progress.

Responses to discussions with children

Children, in conversation, said that they were very happy and very much enjoyed coming to the nursery. They enjoyed the activities they did, particularly exploring outside. The staff helped them whenever they needed help and they enjoyed the story telling and the singing.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion R Morgan	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.