



**A report on**

**Myrtle House Nursery  
22 Myrtle Terrace  
Llanelli  
SA15 1LH**

**Date of inspection: June 2011**

**by**

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**Reporting Inspector**

**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:

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

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## Context

Myrtle House Nursery is located in the town of Llanelli and is run by Elim Pentecostal Church. It is a private day nursery which is also registered to accept children who are eligible for Flying Start funding. It meets for five days a week, 50 weeks a year and there are two sessions each day between 9.00am and 1.00pm and 1.00pm and 5.00pm. Parents may bring their children at 8.00am and collect them at 6.00pm on request.

The room is spacious, attractive colourful and is well resourced. The building is set in beautiful, large, secure grounds which children have opportunities to explore. There is a hard play area which has sand and water play and a raised garden. There is also a small potting shed and an indoor play gym and the setting has access to a large hall which is used for play, movement and dance. Health and safety checks are carried out daily both inside and outside before the children arrive.

The children attending the setting come from the town and the surrounding area. The area is recognised as one which is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged.

Two children have been identified with additional learning needs (ALN) but neither has a statement. The setting is open to children of different ethnic origins and there are currently five such children registered. Five children are Welsh speaking and nine are learning English as a second language. The children transfer to several different schools at the beginning of the term following their third birthday and the setting has good links with the receiving schools. The setting is registered to accept children up to the age of five if parents so choose. Twelve children are funded at present. The setting was last inspected in June 2011 by Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW). This is the first time the setting has been inspected by Estyn.

The setting is registered under the Children Act 1989. There is a management panel and sixteen practitioners are employed who have appropriate qualifications in early years education; five are qualified teachers.

## Summary

<b>The setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The current performance of the provider is good for the following reasons:

- all children are happy and secure in the setting;
- there is a welcoming and caring ethos and every child is seen to be valued;
- all make good progress and achieve well;
- assessment is thorough and is used effectively to inform the next steps in learning;
- leadership is good and there is a shared vision, and
- staff work well as a team.

### Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good for the following reasons:

- there is a developing culture of reflection based on self-evaluation and a strong commitment to improvement;
- leaders give good direction, and
- there is a strong culture of continuous professional development and staff are committed to professional training.

## Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve the current provision and children's achievements the setting needs to:

- R1** strengthen the teaching by developing further the use of open and extended questioning and appropriate interventions to extend children's thinking skills and their learning;
- R2** develop a more flexible system of organisation which ensures children make more decisions about their learning and which gives them more time to become immersed in it, and
- R3** areas for improvement must be clearly prioritised and clear strategies must be developed for the achievement of targets.

### What happens next?

*The setting will produce an action plan to identify how it will implement these recommendations*

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

#### Standards: Good

Most children achieve well and make good progress in relation to their starting points in every area of learning of the Foundation Phase. Most concentrate well on experiences which interest them and many are confident learners who are ready to take risks and who enjoy exploring their surroundings. Nearly all children persevere well with the tasks set and during free choice activities.

Most children listen attentively and enjoy chatting with their friends during activities, at snack and at meal times. A few children use rich vocabulary and extended sentences to express themselves and many like to ask questions though the speech of a few children is restricted. Nearly all enjoy listening to stories and join in with familiar parts very enthusiastically. Many like to look through books which they handle like readers. Many children enjoy mark-making in role play areas and most children are beginning to recognise their name. Children develop their knowledge of technology well when using the computer with adults to create attractive pictures and to play simple games. They also learn to operate the Bee bots confidently.

Most children's mathematical skills develop well and they all use their fingers to indicate the number of objects in songs and rhymes and nearly all count accurately up to ten. Many use mathematical language and skills well in their play when they compare the size of different objects. They use positional vocabulary well to describe where objects are such as 'inside', 'outside', 'underneath' and 'on top of.'

Nearly all children show good levels of independence for their age and stage of development. Most children are keen to explore and experiment with a range of techniques and materials and many play imaginatively in role play areas.

Children's progress and achievements in Welsh are excellent. All count to ten and nearly all understand and follow accurately many instructions such as 'Mae'n amser golchi dwylo'. Nearly all understand and respond accurately to some phrases such as 'Ydy'r tost yn barod?' with 'Ydy.' Most enjoy looking through Welsh books and sing a wide range of Welsh songs with good pronunciation. All enjoy listening to Welsh stories.

#### Wellbeing: Good

Standards of wellbeing are good. Children are very happy in the setting and feel very comfortable and safe there. Nearly all are keen to try new experiences and begin to express opinions and ask to engage in particular activities. All develop positive attitudes to learning and are interested in what they do. They get on well with one another and with adults and their behaviour is very good. They make some decisions about their learning when given the opportunity to do so. Children are polite to one

another and to adults. Most children take turns and share toys and objects. Most are keen to talk about their experiences and are confident to ask for help from adults.

Most show an appropriate understanding for their age and stage of development of the importance of eating healthily. They enjoy snack time and lunch time when they eat a wide range of fresh, healthy food which is prepared for them. All clean their teeth after eating and know that this keeps their teeth healthy. Many know that milk gives them strong bones and teeth and that they need food to grow. Most name healthy foods. All wash and dry their hands before snack and dinner. Many help to tidy up at the end of sessions.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

Practitioners work very well together to plan a wide range of activities which stimulate, engage and challenge most children to learn effectively. Planning meets the needs of individual children well and ensures that all make good progress towards the outcomes of the Foundation Phase. It builds well on children's knowledge, understanding and skills. All practitioners plan together using assessments they have made and the evaluation of the previous week's provision to ensure it meets the needs and interests of the children. Every practitioner makes a valuable contribution to the planning from their observations of those children for whom they are key workers.

Practitioners know the children very well and provide experiences which respond appropriately to their varying needs, abilities and interests. Learning experiences enable children to develop communication, numeracy and ICT skills every day.

The opportunities provided for the development of children's Welsh language skills are excellent. Welsh speaking practitioners repeat instructions and questions and all adults feed the children with vocabulary, rhymes and stories, at registration time, during activities and during singing. Incidental Welsh is used at all times by all practitioners and children are consistently encouraged to use Welsh. They celebrate the Welsh culture through such festivals as Dydd Santes Dwynwen and Dydd Gŵyl Dewi.

All children show a good understanding of the need for recycling. They collect yogurt pots and plastic bottles to make musical instruments and know that some materials can be recycled such as plastic and paper. The children have grown herbs and vegetables which they enjoy eating with dips and in soups and they have made chutney from marrows they have grown and crumble from apples and pears they have gathered. All these experiences contribute well to their knowledge and understanding of the world around them and to their understanding of the need to respect it and take care of it.

## **Teaching: Adequate**

The good features in the quality of teaching outweigh its shortcomings. All practitioners are aware of the learning objectives for activities and have a good understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. Adults support children's learning well when they use open-ended questions to move their learning along though the use of these is underdeveloped. Interventions do not always extend children's learning, for example when rhetorical and under-challenging questions are asked which do not extend children's thinking.

Practitioners sometimes provide children with helpful oral feedback as they learn and all make good use of praise to encourage children. Children's progress and wellbeing are tracked thoroughly across all areas of learning and this information is used effectively to plan the next steps in children's learning.

Teaching is most effective when the children are given greater freedom and opportunities to make decisions about their learning. When teaching is not over-directed, the children demonstrate higher levels of initiative, curiosity and problem-solving skills. For example, they explore the grounds and experiment with the water butt, troughs and containers. Some activities are, however, over-directed with set time limits and practitioners do too much for the children such as giving out snacks and milk and putting their toothbrushes in the container. This restricts some opportunities for the children to develop greater autonomy. Focused activities are over-directed and their organisation lacks flexibility. As a result, a minority of children tend to lose interest quite quickly. Children demonstrate greater motivation, curiosity and perseverance when engaging in activities which they have chosen. Opportunities for the development of thinking and creative skills are sometimes restricted by time limits and an element of over-direction.

Daily observations of significant things are noted by all practitioners and then entered into children's personal profiles by their key workers. This information is used effectively to inform the setting's assessment documentation. There is a daily informal exchange of information with parents and carers at the beginning and end of sessions and parents' evenings are held twice a year. Parents receive helpful reports about their children's progress and achievements at the end of the year.

## **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The setting has good arrangements to ensure children's health and wellbeing and arrangements for the support of children with additional learning needs. Practitioners work closely with professionals such as the health visitor, Speech and Language team and Local Authority (LA) special needs advisers. These arrangements impact positively on provision.

There are good transition arrangements for children joining or leaving the setting and head teachers from some of the primary schools to which the children transfer visit the setting. Children and parents visit the setting before admission. Children and their parents or carers say they feel happy in the setting and are willing to ask for help and support. Children are kept safe by regular careful risk assessments. There is a code for entrance to the setting and the outdoor area is enclosed. All practitioners have received the necessary training which, together with the relevant policies and procedures, reflect the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008. All understand their roles and responsibilities. Other policies are appropriately detailed and relevant.

Learning experiences develop well children's awareness of and respect for other cultures when they learn about the customs of the children of different ethnic origins in the nursery. They also promote well children's personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children with additional learning needs (ALN) have full access to all learning experiences and their needs and interests are met and monitored well through their individual play plans.

### **Learning environment: Good**

There is an inclusive and happy ethos at the nursery which is founded in Christian values and at the same time respects different faiths and beliefs. The nursery respects and celebrates the diversity of the children's backgrounds well by such experiences as celebrating the festivals and customs of other beliefs and cultures and practitioners make this meaningful by asking the parents of children at the setting to share their experiences.

The children say a prayer before snack and before going home. All develop a sense of awe and wonder about the world around them especially through the opportunities they have to explore the natural world in the setting's grounds.

The setting has effective policies and procedures which are known to everyone to deal with any instances of oppressive behaviour, to ensure equal opportunities and to ensure that the rights of the child are met. These are monitored regularly and work effectively. The setting is registered by the CSSIW and has already responded to the very few minor recommendations made in the last report. Risk assessments are undertaken regularly.

The ratio of adults to children is very good. Practitioners are well qualified and have considerable experience of working with young children; these factors contribute well to the very good ethos. Practitioners address the requirements of the Foundation Phase framework well and the children receive many interesting learning experiences which match well their individual needs.

The room is very spacious and provides a colourful and welcoming environment and enough space for the children to enjoy their learning experiences. All children display an interest in and concern for their peers, adults and visitors and demonstrate kindness towards them.

The regular access to and use of the enclosed area outside enhance well the children's learning experiences. Undirected outdoor activities promote well their problem-solving skills and enhance their ability to concentrate and to persevere with experiences they enjoy. The use of the community to enrich their learning experiences is well developed and many visitors, such as the dentist and road safety officer visit the children to talk to them about their work.

There is a good range of appropriate and good quality resources available to support the planned learning experiences and children have daily access to a good sized outdoor area which, while currently adequate, has been identified by the setting managers as in need of further development.

Practitioners in the nursery are well trained and demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The leader is keen to keep up to date with recent developments and to ensure that she and her team have opportunities to continue to develop their skills and expertise.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

The lead practitioner gives clear direction to the setting and the process of improvement. She and her deputies work well as a team to provide positive leadership. They work together effectively to help each child to fulfil his/her potential according to their stage of development. Together they provide interesting learning experiences and create a positive ethos in which all children are happy and can achieve.

The leader and her deputies fulfil their responsibilities effectively and demonstrate a strong commitment to their role to the benefit of every child. They contribute to the strategic planning of the setting and share aims, objectives and a sense of common purpose. Although targets for development are set and the leader is clear about what is to be achieved, they are not set out in sufficient detail. The leader sets clear goals and shares high expectations of staff and children which ensure good standards of achievement. She monitors regularly the setting's progress towards achieving these. The lead practitioner and her deputies demonstrate by personal example the values they wish to promote in the children.

The setting responds positively to national and local priorities; for example the development of the outdoors to ensure full delivery of the Foundation Phase. Senior managers have a very good understanding and knowledge of their staff and encourage and support them in developing their strengths. There is an effective appraisal system in place.

The management committee understands and fulfils its role well. It has a very good knowledge of the setting's performance and there are regular discussions with the leader and her deputies. The management committee, leader and deputies use sound information to make decisions effectively and all fulfil their legal duties.

The leader meets national and local priorities as required by the Assembly and the local authority.

### **Improving quality: Good**

There is a developing culture of professional reflection at the nursery. Practitioners reflect together daily on their practice and know their setting and its children well. They identify strengths and areas for development and take positive action to maintain good practice and to initiate changes.

The setting's self-evaluation report is a useful document and identifies clearly strengths and areas for development though strategies to achieve these are not sufficiently detailed. All practitioners contribute to the process of self-evaluation. Targets for improvement are reviewed and further areas for improvement identified. There is good evidence that these are being addressed positively such as in the development of learning outdoors.

The nursery makes good use of Foundation Phase training and of reviews carried out by LA advisers and Flying Start officers to refine curriculum planning and assessment and to continue to improve its provision.

All practitioners are appropriately qualified and engage in valuable training, for example, Children's Partnership training for first aid. All attend local authority training for the Foundation Phase and have good current knowledge of developments in this field. Continuing professional development is encouraged strongly; it is a good feature and the leader shares her strong commitment to this with her staff.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting has good relationships with the parents of the children in their care and the results of the parents' questionnaires indicate that parents overall 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.

Good links exist with the local primary schools which receive most of the children. The setting enjoys a very positive relationship with the Flying Start advisory teacher and the Foundation Phase advisory teacher for the LA both of whom provide good support and advice. There is evidence that this advice has been acted on to improve provision for the children.

The setting has close links with agencies such as the PPA, Children's Partnership, the LA advisory service for ALN together with the health visitor and dentist.

Staff work very closely with the stakeholders and they are very willing to consult and to welcome suggestions from parents and guardians.

## **Resource management: Good**

The setting has a good range of up-to-date resources which contribute effectively to children's learning. Practitioners are deployed efficiently and make a significant contribution to the progress made by all children. The proprietor manages the budget effectively and ensures that financial decisions are evaluated in terms of their impact on children's standards of achievement, progress and wellbeing. The setting provides good value for money.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

#### **Responses to parent questionnaires**

Seventeen replies were received to the parent questionnaire. All parents said that their child is happy in the setting. Any strengths or areas for development identified in the questionnaires by individual parents were considered during the inspection. Discussions with a selection of parents during the inspection indicate they are generally happy with the quality of the educational provision.

#### **Responses to discussions with children**

Most children were confident when talking to a visitor. They spoke clearly and indicated that they liked coming to the nursery and enjoyed their activities. They felt that they had many friends and knew what to do if they were unhappy or needed help.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team / reporting inspector

Branwen Llewelyn Jones	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](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

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