



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

**Bassaleg Pre School Playgroup
Bethel Baptist Church Hall
Penylan Road
Bassaleg
Newport
NP10 8LL**

Date of inspection: 11 – 12 December 2013

by

**Mr P Mathias
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:

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

Bassaleg Pre School is situated in Bassaleg, a suburb of Newport, South Wales. The setting has been operating for more than 30 years and has been based in several local buildings during that period. The playgroup has been in the Bethel Baptist Church Hall for the last three and half years having moved from the Graig Youth Centre in April 2010. The room is maintained by the church.

The group is privately owned and the owner is a qualified teacher who works as the setting manager. The owner is also the registered person for the setting. She has been in charge of the setting for 12 years. There are ten other members of staff, eight of whom hold early years qualifications.

There are currently 60 children attending the group, 33 of whom are funded. Of these, Twelve are four years old and twenty one are three years old. The intake of children is predominantly from white, English speaking backgrounds. Many are from advantaged homes. None of the children speak Welsh at home. A very few have English as an additional language.

The group currently has a few children with additional learning needs. The setting is registered with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) for 26 places and was last inspected in July 2013. There were no significant recommendations from that visit. The last Estyn inspection was in November 2007.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of Bassaleg Pre-School Playgroup is good because:-

- nearly all children make good progress from their different starting points in literacy and numeracy;
- there is a very positive ethos where individual children are valued, encouraged successfully to be independent and to think for themselves;
- the quality of teaching is good and all practitioners have a good understanding of how to provide for children of this age;
- the setting manager has successfully created a cohesive and supportive team spirit amongst all the staff and
- assessment procedures are detailed and used well to track children's progress.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:-

- the self-evaluation document is accurate and well constructed; all staff have been involved in making the evaluations;
- there are positive links with the local authority which are contributing to the continued development of the setting;
- staff appraisal is well established and effective and
- the issues of the previous inspection have been successfully addressed.

Recommendations

R1 continue to develop children's knowledge and confidence to use Welsh in the setting;

R2 extend the levels of challenge in activities for the more able and

R3 encourage children to evaluate their own learning and to identify what they have done well.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

Nearly all children make good progress in relation to their different starting points in literacy, numeracy and in other areas of learning. They are eager to take part in all activities prepared for them.

All have good oracy skills for their stages of development and speak clearly in short sentences. A few are very confident and speak at length. They listen to stories with interest and enjoy repeating their favourite parts of them. Nearly all look enthusiastically at books with adults and retell the stories from memory. They now know that books are read from left to right and enjoy looking at them for themselves when they are in the outside play area and when indoors. All are making good progress in learning how to write using a good range of mark making tools. A few write their names legibly and know the sounds that these letters make.

In mathematical development many children recognise numbers within 10 and know which numbers come before and after a specific number. They arrange numbered Christmas stockings in the correct sequence on a washing line. They appreciate that the first number is zero. Nearly all count objects in a row and relate them to numerical symbols. They estimate quantities accurately, for example when deciding how much dough they will need to make biscuits. They experiment with capacity, building up increasingly accurate ideas of how much different containers will hold.

In information and communications technology (ICT) many use a camera confidently to record events. They program an electric toy to follow a route. They use torches when they search inquisitively for minibeasts in their garden. A few show well developed skills when manipulating a mouse on a laptop to add to or create pictures using a good range of suitable programs.

Across the setting nearly all join in enthusiastically in Welsh action songs and carols. They respond appropriately to simple instructions and praise in Welsh. They learn about their local area and celebrate Nadolig Llawen and St David's Day enthusiastically. However, very few use their knowledge or have confidence to speak unprompted in Welsh in their play or in response to practitioners.

Wellbeing: Good

All children enjoy being in the setting. They arrive happily and are eager to begin. Many readily move to their activities spontaneously and are keen to engage in a wide range of activities. They make sensible decisions for themselves about where and for how long they wish to be involved. They work together co-operatively, for example when drawing up plans to construct a building. They use tools sensibly to 'cut' and 'shape' materials for the building.

All children have good relationships with all adults in the setting. This is a particularly strong feature as they share ideas and discuss in their groups at snack time or when working in the kitchen.

All behave very well and wish to please. They co-operate willingly with each other and nearly always share their resources happily. All are developing independence, for example when getting ready to go outside with little help from adults. They are well aware of the need to wash their hands carefully before and after they handle food and the importance of general hygiene.

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

The curriculum is carefully planned so that it is wide and interesting. It meets the requirements of the Foundation Phase and the needs of all the children.

Longer term plans are sufficiently detailed to ensure that children build systematically on what they know and can do. These are regularly reviewed by practitioners and adapted where necessary to meet individual children's needs to stimulate children's interests and enable them to make good progress in communication, numeracy, ICT and other areas of learning.

The setting plans carefully to promote children's independence and ability to solve problems for themselves. However, planning does not consistently indicate further challenges for the more able.

There are planned opportunities to develop children's use of incidental Welsh. This includes using Welsh in some activities in singing and in following instructions. There is however insufficient use of incidental Welsh across the setting in order for children to develop confidence to use their knowledge readily. All children learn about other cultures and their Welsh heritage and traditions

Teaching: Good

All practitioners have a good understanding of how to plan and teach to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They discuss enthusiastically with their children what they plan for them to do. In the process they ask open-ended questions regularly and encourage all to come to conclusions themselves, for example when the biscuits they are making are going into the oven. All practitioners ask children to predict using phrases such as 'what will happen if?'

They set out thoughtfully a wide range of outdoors activities and support individual children in their investigations well. They foster children's confidence to make their own decisions. In the best examples practitioners cleverly modify the type of questions they ask to match the different understandings of individual children, for example when reading 'Kipper's Snowy Day' and when recognising numbers and their sequences. However, not all practitioners regularly challenge the more able to do more or to begin to evaluate how successfully they have completed their tasks.

There are very positive relationships between all practitioners and their children. As a result children work well together and are anxious to please.

Practitioners carefully assess children soon after they begin and record their progress systematically. Those with additional learning needs are identified quickly. Staff keep detailed notes to record what children have achieved. They use their notebooks well to modify future activities or repeat previous work. Parents are kept well informed and receive detailed reports of progress at the end of their child's stay. The detailed assessment records are sent on to the primary schools to which children transfer.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has good arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. Children are encouraged regularly to eat healthily and to enjoy taking part in vigorous exercise both inside and in the outdoor areas. Practitioners successfully promote good behaviour and consideration for others. They are very aware of how to encourage children positively and to foster confidence and eagerness to learn.

The setting has an appropriate range of policies to guide practice in all areas of the setting's life. These ensure that children are safe and secure. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. There are good arrangements to check the suitability of staff and to monitor their work. There are good processes to monitor the arrival and departure of all children each day.

The setting is very conscious of providing well for the all round development of children. There is provision to ensure children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Children have good opportunities from visitors to the setting and visits from the setting to places of interest locally, to learn about their village and the people who help them. Those with additional learning needs are quickly identified and receive good support. Parents and appropriate professionals are fully involved in this process.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is well-organised. It has a warm and inclusive atmosphere where all children are equally valued and encouraged. All practitioners know their children particularly well. They ensure that their needs are met and all receive the attention and reassurance they need. As a result nearly all children respond very well to this positive environment.

Practitioners are appropriately qualified and experienced. Many have worked in the setting for some time and co-operate effectively together. Resources are well matched to the Foundation Phase expectations. A particular success has been following a move from a previous location, the creation of an extensive and well-resourced, outdoor play area. There is also good provision for children to explore the nearby fields and woods. The overall accommodation is well used to support all areas of learning.

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

The manager, who is also the owner, is well qualified, experienced and very well-organised. She has fostered successfully and developed a positive and welcoming ethos where children are happy and thrive. She has a very strong commitment to the professional development of all practitioners. She has developed successfully a process of involving all practitioners in decision making. There is a strong sense of teamwork and shared responsibility.

The setting has a clear sense of direction and a culture of continuous improvement. This is reflected in the positive relationships between the setting and the local authority. It shows in the full commitment of all staff to work effectively as a team.

All staff are part of a professional appraisal process which is well established. This process identifies individual training needs. These needs are then addressed through appropriate courses and visits. The manager has shown considerable initiative in making informal links with other settings in the local area and sharing amongst them good practice.

The setting is addressing national and local initiatives well, time has been well spent in looking at how the setting is developing the skills children need to be successful learners. This has resulted in a strong culture of challenging children to think for themselves and to learn through first-hand practical experiences.

Improving quality: Good

The setting manager has a clear understanding of the setting's needs. She has put in place good systems to involve all staff in the process of self-evaluation. All have actively contributed to the systematic analysis of strengths and areas for development. These assessments are frank and accurate. They have led to well thought out plans to address identified areas of relative weakness. There are clear targets to achieve. These are reviewed regularly.

Partnership working: Good

There are good partnerships with parents and carers who feel they are actively engaged in the setting's work. Parents and carers are kept well informed both informally and formally of their children's progress. There are, for example termly meetings arranged to discuss progress with individual practitioners who have primary contact with their children. In discussion, parents said they were very happy with the setting and had no complaints.

The links established with the local authority and with other settings are well used to continue the process of improvement. There are good links with the local community. For example, children regularly visit the local shop to help buy the ingredients they need for their various cooking activities. The post office has been very well used as a resource to develop children's skills in literacy. There are appropriate links with the primary school to which most transfer. These include visits to the setting by the receiving teacher as well as the transfer of information prior to the move to the next phase of education.

Resource management: Good

All staff are appropriately deployed and fully engaged in the local training program. They work well together and share a common commitment to providing well for their children.

The setting is well resourced with a good range of good quality materials and play equipment. Both the indoor and outdoor facilities are well used and have a positive impact on children's learning.

In view of the progress children make from their different starting points and the funds available, the setting gives good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	17	14 82%	3 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	17	15 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	17	14 82%	3 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	17	14 82%	3 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	17	12 71%	5 29%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		69%	27%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	17	16 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		79%	18%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	17	14 82%	3 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		82%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	17	15 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caiff fy mhentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		73%	22%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	17	15 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	17	12 71%	5 29%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		64%	25%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed	17	14	3	0	0	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
about my child's progress.		82%	18%	0%	0%		gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	17	16 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	17	10 59%	5 29%	2 12%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		62%	30%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	17	11 65%	5 29%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		71%	23%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	17	14 82%	3 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		62%	30%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	17	15 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Peter Mathias	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)

Glossary of terms

Areas of Learning	<p>These are the seven areas that make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity • language, literacy and communications skills • mathematical development • Welsh language development • knowledge and understanding of the world • physical development • creative development
CSSIW	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	<p>This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnership's conditions of registration.</p>
Foundation Phase	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.</p>
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
Local authority advisory teacher	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
Mudiad Meithrin	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.</p>

National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National (NDNA)	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.