



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

**Kiddy Kabin Pre-school
Shotton Community Centre
Plymouth Street
Shotton
Flintshire
CH5 1JD**

Date of inspection: February 2013

by

Mary Dyas

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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Publication date: 01/03/2013

About the setting

Kiddy Kabin Pre-school is an English-medium setting which meets in a small community centre in the grounds of Shotton Infants School. The playgroup has the use of one room in the centre which is registered for up to 16 children. The room is occasionally also used by other groups so sometimes equipment needs to be stored away. Recent access to a securely fenced outside area with a tarmac surface has improved the outdoor provision. The playgroup is open from 9.15 to 11.15 for five mornings a week during school term times.

Children attending the setting are considered to come from a mix of socio-economic backgrounds and almost all move on to the adjacent infant school for the next stage of their education. Most children come from the local community but around 20% travel from further afield because their parents value the work of the setting. At the time of the inspection there were 24 children on roll of whom 14 were in receipt of funded educational provision from the Local Authority.

The setting welcomes all children and makes appropriate provision for those with additional learning needs. No children have currently been identified with additional learning needs. Many children come from homes where the first language is English and no parents speak Welsh.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in July 2011 and by Estyn in January 2007.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- All children are happy in the setting;
- All children enjoy their activities and make appropriate progress;
- Most children show that they understand the rules of the playgroup and play co-operatively together; and
- There is a good ethos of care and concern for the children in the setting.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Staff are a strong team and work well together;
- All practitioners value the setting and want the best for the children in their care; and
- The current action plan identifies appropriate targets for improvement; however, self-evaluation is not yet firmly established as a tool for focused improvement.

Recommendations

R1. Continue to develop the provision for the use of the Welsh language in the setting.

R2. Continue to develop daily use of the outdoor area to ensure all areas of provision are available over time.

R3. Ensure self-evaluation procedures are embedded into the work of the setting.

R4. Continue to implement and develop the new planning format to ensure that evaluations of teaching and learning clearly inform next steps in planning and that opportunities for both adult-led and child-led activities are clearly identified.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

All children achieve well according to their starting points and stage of development and make good progress in all the areas of learning of the Foundation Phase. Most children speak in complete sentences and a very few use complex vocabulary to describe what they are doing. Most children are able to recognise their written name at snack time and a few are beginning to write their names independently. All children listen with interest to stories and show their enjoyment by concentrating and asking questions. They enjoy opportunities to browse through books, which many choose to do voluntarily, and all handle them correctly like readers. All enjoy mark-making both indoors and outdoors and they experiment confidently with a range of materials.

Almost all children count confidently to ten by rote and most are able to count objects accurately to at least three. Most also use mathematical language correctly in the course of their play; for example when discussing the size and shape of boxes in the role play shop. All children are developing their knowledge and understanding of information and communications technology through their play with electronic toys

such as an adding machine, pop-up toaster and bubbling kettle and when they manoeuvre toys using remote control.

Children's progress in Welsh is adequate. Most understand the simple words and phrases used by adults in the setting and join in enthusiastically with familiar Welsh songs and stories but do not yet use their knowledge spontaneously in their play.

Wellbeing: Good

Standards of wellbeing are good. All children are relaxed and happy in the setting and are eager to try new experiences. All children interact positively with one another and with adults and their behaviour is generally good. Children are polite to each other and to adults. Most children understand the need to take turns and share toys and objects and generally manage to do so. They willingly help to put things away when it is time to tidy up. Many are keen to talk about their experiences and are confident to ask for help from adults.

Many children show an appropriate understanding for their age and stage of development of the importance of eating healthily. They enjoy snack-time, eating a range of fresh, healthy food and are aware of the need to wash their hands before eating or after using the toilet. All children take part in a short exercise session every morning before their snack and they know that afterwards their heart is beating faster and will slow down again when they sit down and rest.

All children are developing good levels of independence. They cut soft fruit, spread soft cheese on bread or crackers, pour milk onto cereal independently and most are able to put on their own coats to go outside. All are fully engaged in their activities and many seek to develop what they are doing.

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

The setting has recently adopted a new format for planning and evaluation and this is developing well. All areas of learning are covered over time and activities are planned for both outdoors and indoors with clearly identified learning intentions. However, curriculum planning is not sufficiently focused on building on children's knowledge understanding and skills. Children are acquiring a good range of skills and knowledge across all areas of learning of the Foundation Phase but planning does not ensure progression and continuity in learning. Evaluations of teaching and learning are very general and do not link to the stated learning intentions to indicate the next steps in children's learning.

Welsh is well used during group time through reading stories in Welsh and singing Welsh songs but the consistent use of incidental Welsh throughout the session to develop children's independent use of the language is limited. All children celebrate and learn about Welsh culture and traditions when they celebrate St David's Day. The setting makes good use of the children's backgrounds to enhance their understanding of other cultures.

Children are learning about sustainability through their recycling of used paper and plastic bottles which they take to put in the school's collection bins and then watch when the council lorries arrive to empty them. They also save their uneaten snack food to feed to the birds.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners demonstrate a good understanding of the Foundation Phase and use a range of approaches to stimulate play and active learning. Where teaching is good adults intervene appropriately to challenge and support children; however, on occasion adults intervene too quickly and children do not have sufficient opportunity to explore and investigate for themselves. Practitioners are very enthusiastic and fully committed to supporting children and to providing good quality all round provision. All staff discuss together the impact of planned activities on children's learning but this is not systematically recorded in order to form an effective part of the assessment process.

The setting operates a keyworker system where all staff have responsibility for updating children's assessment records. Daily observations of children's achievements are noted on sticky notes by all practitioners and then entered into children's personal profiles. This information is effectively used to inform the Local Authority assessment documentation 'This is Me. There are opportunities for daily verbal exchange of information with parents and carers during the handover at the beginning and end of sessions and the setting offers parents the opportunity to come to discuss their child's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Good procedures are in place to ensure children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners have created a warm family atmosphere in the setting where every child is valued and all feel comfortable and happy. Induction into the group is effective in ensuring that very young children settle happily and is dependent on the individual needs of each child. Almost all children move on to the adjacent infant school and good arrangements are in place for the nursery teacher to visit in order to read stories and get to know the children.

The setting makes good provision for children with additional learning needs. Strong emphasis is placed on the importance of early identification and there are good links with several outside agencies to ensure that those children with identified additional learning needs are well supported.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no reason for concern. Practitioners have all received recent training and are aware of their responsibilities. A good range of policies is in place and appropriate risk assessments have been carried out.

Learning environment: Good

Practitioners have created a warm and positive ethos in the setting. Adults show affection for the children, they know the children very well and respond to each one with sympathy and sensitivity to their individual needs. The playgroup is an inclusive community and respects and celebrates diversity. For example there is a mole puppet which comes to say hello in a range of languages appropriate to the children in the setting at the time. All children have access to the full range of activities and the setting has appropriate access for children and adults with physical disabilities. Displays of children's work help to create a bright and welcoming environment but some have been up for a long time and need to be replaced. The setting makes thoughtful use of the space available and the room is set out with all areas of provision. The outdoor space is relatively new and still in the process of development.

The setting employs sufficient well-trained practitioners to meet the needs of all children. They have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase. Practitioners are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills through relevant training. A good range of natural and man-made resources appropriately supports the children's learning needs.

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

The setting leader and her staff are highly committed to the playgroup and to supporting the children and their families. The setting provides a warm and caring ethos for the children which successfully supports their personal and social skills. This is greatly appreciated by parents and carers of children attending the setting. A system of annual appraisals is in place and targets for personal improvement are agreed between the leader and the staff member. These targets are realistic and demonstrate an understanding of what they need to do in order to improve. However, progress is not always made towards meeting these targets. Staff work together closely as a strong team and provide positive support for one another.

The officers of the management committee are primarily staff members with a long standing chairperson who supports the setting well both as a volunteer and supply staff member. Office holders therefore have a good knowledge of the work of the playgroup but there is no provision for a critical friend to offer challenge to the setting. Parents and carers of children attending the setting are asked to ensure that their child is represented at meetings. The committee meets its legal responsibilities and national and local priorities are implemented.

Improving quality: Adequate

The recently produced self-evaluation report identifies the strengths of the setting and the action plan has a number of targets arising from this. However, although many of these targets have apparently been met there is no process for regular monitoring of progress. The self-evaluation was produced by the leader and her deputy with input from the Local Authority Early Entitlement teacher but this appears to have been a mainly paper exercise which has not impacted on the other staff or the chairperson of the management committee. There is no evidence that parents or children have had an opportunity to contribute to the self-evaluation process. However, regular discussions amongst the playgroup staff have resulted in spontaneous improvements which have impacted on the provision for the children.

The setting has good links with another playgroup in the area and they meet regularly to share equipment and ideas.

Partnership working: Good

Although only a few questionnaires were received before the inspection, the inspector had the opportunity to meet with a group of parents of children currently attending the setting. They unanimously expressed their satisfaction with the provision and were very positive about the care and support shown to their children. Practitioners provide information about the children's activities informally at the end of each session and a board of up to date photographs in the foyer enhances this. A bi-monthly newsletter provides practical information.

The setting enjoys good relationships with the adjacent primary school and the headteacher and nursery class teacher to support the children in their transition.

The setting has worked with their link teacher from the Local Authority but has not always taken the advice they have been given in order to improve the provision.

Resource management: Good

Staff in the playgroup are well deployed during the sessions and over time they support children in all areas of provision both indoors and outdoors. This ensures effective support for all children and enables all staff to interact with all the children. Resources are used effectively indoors and outdoors to support the planned activities and to provide opportunities for children to explore and experiment.

Spending costs are considered by the management committee and leaders make good use of a limited budget to resource the setting appropriately. The setting provides value for money.

Appendix 1

Parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received (fewer than 10).

Responses to discussions with children

Children say they enjoy coming to the playgroup. They like going outside to play with the water and in the 'den' and a minority talk about the friends they play with.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mary Dyas	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.

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.