



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

**Open Door Family Centre
Howell Drive
Welshpool
Powys
SY21 7AT**

Date of inspection: May 2013

by

**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: 28/05/2013

Context

Open Door Nursery, previously known as The Ark Nursery, serves the town of Welshpool in Powys. The nursery meets each morning and afternoon in the purpose-built Family Centre in the centre of the town. The nursery has seven experienced members of staff.

The nursery is registered to take up to 24 children per session and children are admitted from the age of two years. There are currently 31 children on roll. The number of children who attend each session varies. During the inspection, there were five 3-year-olds present, all of whom are funded by the local authority.

The children who attend the nursery come from a wide range of family backgrounds. However, a majority come from areas of social and economic hardship. Nearly all children have English as their home language. There are no children from Welsh speaking homes. No children are identified as having additional learning needs.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) in February 2013. The setting was last inspected by Estyn in May 2007.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance has strengths that outweigh areas for improvement. This is because:

- the setting provides a welcoming, happy and relaxed environment;
- practitioners provide a suitable range of learning experiences;
- practitioners are enthusiastic and work well together; and
- children's health and wellbeing is promoted successfully.

However:

- learning experiences do not build well enough on what children already know and can do;
- teaching activities are insufficiently focused on developing children's early reading, writing and mathematical skills; and
- assessments are not used appropriately to inform future planning and identify children with additional learning needs.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvements have strengths that outweigh areas for improvement. This is because:

- practitioners are committed to improving their own practice and the provision for the children;
- the management board now sets the strategic direction for the setting;
- there are good levels of communication between staff and the management board; and
- there are effective links with the local community.

However:

- self-evaluation and improvement procedures are not well embedded and do not focus well enough on the progress children make; and
- the setting is unclear about its priorities for improvement.

Recommendations

- R1 provide learning experiences that build systematically on what children already know and can do, particularly in language, literacy and communication skills and mathematical development
- R2 use assessments to inform future planning to meet the needs of all children, including those with additional learning needs
- R3 address the health and safety issue raised during the inspection
- R4 continue to develop the role of leaders and managers within the setting
- R5 put in place self-evaluation, monitoring and improvement procedures that focus on the progress children make

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

n/a

Standards: n/a

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills 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?

Adequate

Learning experiences: Adequate

The setting provides children with a suitable range of learning experiences. Planning is thematic and meets the requirements of the Foundation Phase. Practitioners know the children well and, as a result, plan activities that meet the needs of the majority of children. However, learning experiences are not always progressive and do not build well enough upon what children already know and can do.

Practitioners' develop children's speaking and listening skills well across all areas of learning. However, opportunities for children to develop their reading, writing and numeracy skills across all areas of learning are less well established. Planning for continuous and enhanced provision is generally appropriate.

Regular visits from members of the local community enhance children's learning experiences effectively. Practitioners provide suitable opportunities for children to practice their Welsh language skills as part of daily routines, such as, registration and snack time. A few members of staff promote the use of the Welsh language very well across all learning experiences. The setting provides limited opportunities for children to learn about the culture of Wales.

Teaching: Adequate

Practitioners are enthusiastic and have an increasing understanding of the expectations of the Foundation Phase. They use an appropriate range of approaches that engage and encourage children to learn. Practitioners ask good questions that help children to think for themselves, for example, they ask children to consider the thickness of the clay when they are making their own model animals. Practitioners are suitable role models, support the development of children's language and personal skills appropriately and intervene sensitively in play situations to move children's learning forward. However, planned activities do not always focus enough on developing early reading, writing and mathematical skills.

The setting has recently introduced new assessment procedures. These provide a useful record of children's achievements. The outcomes of assessment, however, do not inform the planning of future activities. As a result, activities do not always meet the needs and abilities of individual children. Parents and carers receive a worthwhile record of achievement when their child leaves the setting, which provides them with useful information about their child's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Adequate

Practitioners promote children's health and wellbeing successfully. Staff are caring and kind, and support children well by praising them for good behaviour and offering them encouragement so they persevere with activities. Practitioners encourage children to form positive relationships and they nurture a sense of respect and tolerance towards others. Daily contact between practitioners and parents and carers ensure that children settle quickly and this contributes significantly to children's good emotional and social development.

An appropriate range of learning experiences fosters children's moral, social and cultural development. Children are encouraged to care for others, to take their turn and to share toys and other items fairly. Children learn about the importance of caring for the environment by growing flowers in their outdoor area. However, the range of learning experiences provided do not foster children's spiritual development effectively.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. There are appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the safe recruitment of staff and all practitioners understand the procedures for dealing with safeguarding issues. A health and safety issue was brought to the attention of the setting during the inspection.

The settings policies and procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with additional learning needs are adequate. Practitioners address well the needs of children with medical conditions and make appropriate use of specialist services when necessary.

Learning environment: Good

The setting provides a welcoming, happy and relaxed environment for children to learn. Practitioners are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the needs of the children in their care. They make sure that the children have equal access to all aspects of the setting's provision. Practitioners provide good role models and this helps the children to learn about tolerance and respect. The accommodation is of good quality, is generally secure, and maintained well. Practitioners make good use of the available space both indoors and outdoors. The recent introduction of a dedicated learning room for older children has improved the setting's provision. The outdoor area is safe and secure and practitioners use it effectively to provide a range of appropriate experiences across the curriculum.

The setting makes appropriate use of visitors and visits to local businesses to enhance children's learning experiences. Resources are appropriate for most areas of learning and practitioners generally ensure they match children's needs appropriately.

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

The setting has recently been through an unsettled period with significant changes to its management and staffing team. Although many practitioners have worked in the

setting for a lengthy period, they are very new to their current roles and responsibilities. The nursery manager has only been in post for two weeks and the leader for the three-year-olds in her present role for about three months. Practitioners know they are in the early stages of developing their understanding of their new roles but are very committed to improving their own practice and the provision for the children. They engage well in activities to improve their professional knowledge and attend regular staff meetings. Meetings usually lead to clear action points but these do not focus well enough on how to improve children's standards or on sharing good practice.

The management board now meets more regularly and provides good support to practitioners. There are good levels of communication between the board and practitioners. The management board has recently produced a strategic plan for the setting, which provides a clearer direction for the setting's future development. It is too early to judge the impact of the new strategic plan.

Improving quality: Unsatisfactory

Self-evaluation procedures are not yet embedded within the setting. The interim nursery manager in consultation with the chair of the management board and practitioners has recently produced a useful self-evaluation report. However, the self-evaluation report is not based well enough on first hand evidence of current standards and quality of provision. As a result, the setting is not clear on its priorities for improvement.

The setting has an acceptable improvement plan containing targets. Although the improvement plan identifies two priorities for improvement, there is no clear correlation between these priorities and priorities identified in the self-evaluation report. Further, there are no suitable procedures in place to monitor progress against these targets and previous setting improvement plans contain very similar targets. Practitioners are unable to demonstrate clearly how previous plans have improved children's standards or the quality of teaching and provision.

The setting has made limited progress in addressing the recommendations from its previous inspection report.

Partnership working: Good

The setting, through its regular newsletters, keeps parents and carers well informed about what their child is learning and day-to-day activities. Parents and carers appreciate the availability of staff to talk to them at the start and end of sessions and feel comfortable approaching practitioners with any concerns.

The setting has informal links with the local infant school and practitioners often arrange to take children on transition visits. The setting does not pass any information directly to the schools to which children transfer but they do encourage parents to share their child's leaving report with their new school. Effective links with the local community and the involvement of local people and organisations contribute well to children's overall development and wellbeing. Practitioners, especially those new to their roles, welcome the support they receive from the local authority advisory

teacher and there is evidence that they act on this advice, for example by rearranging the layout of the setting so that three-year-olds have their own room for focused tasks.

The setting has a good partnership with the 'Team Around the Setting Group' and this partnership has helped practitioners to better understand their new roles and responsibilities.

Resource management: Adequate

Appropriate use is made of practitioners' time, expertise and experience to support children's wellbeing effectively. Arrangements for staff appraisal and professional development are in place. Practitioners are enthusiastic about working in the Foundation Phase. They make every effort to improve their own knowledge, understanding and skills and make use of their training to improve the provision for the children.

The indoor and outdoor learning areas are resourced adequately and managed appropriately.

The management board has recently reviewed spending and produced an operational strategic plan to ensure its continued existence. As a result; the management board have reviewed the setting's staffing structure and provided greater clarity in lines of responsibility and accountability. Overall, the setting provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

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

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Liz Miles	Reporting Inspector
Huw Watkins	Team Inspector

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 partnerships 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.