



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

**Sparkles Day Nursery
Prince Charles Road
Wrexham
LL13 8TH**

Date of inspection: June 2014

by

**Michael T. Ridout
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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW..or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2014: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 11/07/2014

Context

Sparkles Day Nursery is a community enterprise and is part of Caia Park Partnership Limited, which is a registered charity. The nursery was opened in August 2006 to serve Caia Park, which is a social housing estate with a population of 13,500 people, in Wrexham.

The nursery provides full or part-time care for children aged from two months old to full time school age. It is open on weekdays from 8am – 6pm and is registered to accommodate forty children.

The setting provides Early Entitlement education sessions on four afternoons each week during term time. These are separate sessions run alongside the full day care provision for younger children. Those attending live on the estate and have a wide range of needs, including some with disadvantaged backgrounds. At the time of the inspection there were 16 three-year-olds that are funded up to 10 hours per week by the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. All are English speaking and British born. None are from ethnic minorities. No families speak Welsh at home. Currently no children receive additional support to help them learn.

The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales last inspected the setting in July 2013. This is the first inspection by Estyn. Prior to Spring 2014 Sparkles Day Nursery provided up to four places for Early Entitlement education. The number of three year olds admitted was increased to 16 at Easter this year. Separate provision for Early Entitlement and Flying Start was then established.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is adequate because:

- a majority of children achieve well in a narrow range of skills;
- children's personal development and wellbeing are very well promoted;
- good teaching skilfully promotes children's learning;
- practitioners and children have good relationships;
- partnerships with parents are good and
- the setting has a welcoming, friendly and inclusive ethos.

However,

- a minority of children have underdeveloped skills in literacy and numeracy;
- nearly all children's skills in ICT are not developed; and
- the planning of learning experiences is not sufficiently established to assure the progressive development of children's skills.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- the setting is well led, managed and organised on a day-to-day basis;
- recent improvements in the planning and organisation of learning have a positive impact;
- self-evaluation clearly identifies what the setting does well and the areas it needs to improve.

However,

- strategic leadership and forward planning to secure further improvement are insufficiently developed, and
- recent improvements are not yet securely established.

Recommendations

- R1. raise standards in literacy, numeracy and information communication technology (ICT);
- R2. develop planning to ensure progression in learning and better guide teaching;
- R3. provide effective strategic leadership;
- R4. implement rigorous procedures for resource management;
- R5. develop forward planning to help achieve the goals identified in self-evaluation.

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?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

Children come to the setting with a wide range of achievement and needs. Most make good progress from their starting points. Progress is most evident in personal and social development. Most make steady progress across areas of learning in a narrow range of skills.

A majority makes good progress in aspects of literacy, but progress for the remainder is variable. A few have good speaking and listening skills. They spontaneously initiate simple conversations, for example during role-play or when working alongside an adult. They make their needs known, ask sensible questions using simple vocabulary and express themselves clearly. However, many have a limited vocabulary. With few exceptions children enjoy listening to stories, such as *The Hungry Caterpillar*. They are spell bound and eagerly anticipate what happens next in the story. Many enthusiastically recite familiar songs and rhymes. A very few handle books as readers and show increasing awareness that text and pictures 'tell' the story. A majority recognise their name when prompted by a photograph. They experiment with mark making in different contexts and a very few are beginning to form letters, for example as they 'write' their name.

Progress in early mathematical skills is widely variable. Numeracy skills steadily develop as children count as part of daily routines, sing rhymes and play number games. Around half confidently count to at least 10 by rote. A few sort and count objects with an adult, but their skills in matching and ordering numbers are limited. Most children develop an appropriate awareness of time in the context of the setting's routines. However, many children lack appropriate mathematical vocabulary to name shapes and make comparisons, such as when filling and emptying containers. With few exceptions children's skills in ICT are not developed.

Children respond well to everyday Welsh, particularly during group activities, but few speak familiar vocabulary spontaneously during play.

Wellbeing: Good

Most children have positive attitudes and enjoy learning through play. They generally engage in activities with enthusiasm and confidently make choices as they move between tasks. Levels of engagement are generally good and with few exceptions children remain busy, sustaining interest and concentration for appropriate periods of time. Most are well motivated, happy and at ease in the setting.

Children have good relationships with practitioners and with each other. Many increasingly show consideration and courtesy, such as when sharing resources and during snack time. Standards of behaviour are good. Most relate well to other children and play in a calm and settled manner. They respond well to daily routines and participate in whole group activities with enthusiasm.

Practitioners encourage children to express their preferences as they play. Many develop greater self-confidence as they undertake simple responsibilities as Helpwr Heddiw. Most children readily help tidy resources at the end of each session.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Adequate
---	-----------------

Learning experiences: Adequate

Practitioners confirm recent training and guidance has raised awareness of Foundation Phase approaches. This is evident in the range of learning experiences that engage the children's interest well as they play indoors. This provision is in line with children's needs and provides good opportunities to promote the Foundation Phase outcomes. However, provision for outdoor learning is not developed.

The planning for learning experiences indoors builds well on frameworks provided by the local authority. Both medium and short term planning are well structured and the areas of play provided are in line with children's needs. This provision is successful in engaging their interest. Activities, including tasks led by adults, are well defined each week, but implementation of this provision is at an early stage. Too few details are recorded to show how and what children can be expected to learn from an activity. Furthermore, planning for enhanced tasks provides little guidance on the use of resources to develop learning and provide suitable challenge.

Practitioners regularly contribute ideas to planning and the setting leader systematically records planning each week. This provides a good basis to build on children's prior knowledge and skills and practitioners are flexible in implementing this planning. Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing literacy, numeracy and communication skills. This is evident in the provision of activities that promote well a narrow range of skills in these areas. However, there is little evidence of provision for skills in ICT.

Familiarity with the Foundation Phase is developing well, but the setting is not yet confident in ensuring there is appropriate progression in the curriculum. Broad topics provide a good framework to ensure progression in learning. However, insufficient use is made of the skills framework to check that activities promote relevant skills.

Practitioners know the children very well. Learning experiences successfully promote positive relationships and nurture respect. However, opportunities to promote awareness of other cultures and build on resources within the community and local environment to enhance provision are not developed.

The provision for the Welsh language is developing well. Everyday Welsh is spoken within daily routines, but planning to promote awareness of Welsh history and culture is less well developed.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is enthusiastic, fosters good relationships and often successfully promotes incidental learning. Practitioners have high expectations and promote children's personal and social development particularly well. Structured planning and routines help ensure a good balance between child-selected and adult initiated tasks.

Practitioners manage children's learning and behaviour well; they provide good models of language and use a range of teaching strategies to good effect. They are developing their knowledge and understanding of child development and the Foundation Phase. They know well the tasks they are to lead or support and promote good levels of engagement. Practitioners often demonstrate an intuitive understanding of how children learn and their understanding of how to develop the learning objectives for tasks is steadily developing.

Practitioners are enthusiastic and use questioning and praise well to promote learning. Learning through play is strongly encouraged and teaching builds positively on a suitable range of indoor activities. Opportunities for choice and independence are well promoted; children are given plenty of time to complete tasks and practitioners intervene appropriately when needed. This was clearly evident, for example, when sorting and matching objects with children.

The setting has appropriate procedures for assessment and these are consistently implemented. The use of assessment booklets is well established. Practice in gathering evidence of individual progress is developing well and individual learning records provide a sound basis to plan the next steps in learning.

Information about children's progress is exchanged informally with parents/carers on a day-to-day basis. Furthermore, before children transfer to school, practitioners meet with parents to discuss children's individual learning records.

Care, support and guidance: Adequate

Good quality care and support impacts well on children's personal and social development. Arrangements to assure children's health and wellbeing are implemented consistently. The emphasis placed on healthy development, including healthy eating during snack times and regular exercise outdoors, is appropriate.

Procedures for wellbeing are securely based on positive relationships, structured routines and clear boundaries for behaviour. Strong emphasis is placed on moral and social development. This fosters positive values including, honesty and fairness and successfully promotes good behaviour. However, provision for spiritual and cultural development is insufficiently developed.

There is little evidence of provision to promote awareness of sustainability.

The setting liaises appropriately with agencies in the community to provide specialist support when required. However, the setting's special needs policy does not set out appropriate arrangements to support and integrate children who need extra help with their learning.

Established procedures ensure the setting is safe and secure. Appropriate risk assessments are implemented and members of staff have a valid criminal records disclosure. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. These arrangements give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Adequate

The setting is a happy learning environment. It has an inclusive ethos and children have equal access to all aspects of provision. Practitioners are supportive and foster good relationships. This helps ensure children feel safe and free from undue anxiety.

Practitioners skilfully manage any challenging behaviour and foster tolerance. They know well children's needs and have a good understanding of their backgrounds and needs. Provision to raise awareness of diversity is limited. Policies do not include details of any steps to ensure that future children with disabilities do not suffer less favourable treatment in the setting.

There are sufficient appropriately qualified practitioners for the number of children. The provision of resources to address the requirements of the Foundation Phase is basic. The range for literacy and numeracy is adequate, but the range is narrow. Some recently acquired resources are not age appropriate. The provision for ICT is limited.

The accommodation is adequate and provides a safe and secure environment for learning. The outdoor provision is not sufficiently developed and available resources are under utilised. There is no evidence of using resources within the community to enhance learning experiences.

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

Leadership: Adequate

The setting is well led and managed on a day-to-day basis. A significant development is the separation of planning for Flying Start and Early Entitlement provision this year. The lead practitioners demonstrate strong commitment to provide well for children. All practitioners are well motivated. This reflects the enthusiastic leadership of the two lead practitioners. A happy teamwork ethos permeates the setting and all practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Day-to-day routines are well established and the organisation of playgroup activities is good.

A basic framework of policies and procedures, including a statement of purpose, are in place. A clear sense of purpose and shared values are evident in pastoral aspects, but strategic direction to improve educational provision lacks rigour. The contribution of the managing partnership in monitoring provision and assuring accountability is underdeveloped. There is little evidence of formalised arrangements to establish effective links with parents or involve them in their children's learning.

There are appropriate arrangements for appraisal, but little evidence of setting challenging targets. Records show the training courses attended, but there is no record of planning for future training in educational practice.

The setting is working to embrace national and local priorities. The provision is developing Foundation Phase approaches; there is strong emphasis on equality and combating disadvantage, but limited emphasis is placed on promoting awareness of diversity and sustainability.

Improving quality: Adequate

The recently implemented process of self-evaluation is successful in identifying what the setting does well and areas it needs to improve. Practitioners confirm their involvement in the process and the issues identified provide a good basis to improve provision.

The quality of self-evaluation is good, but the process is not embedded. The setting has not developed forward planning to show how targets will be achieved. Furthermore, arrangements for monitoring are not established.

Over the last term there is clear evidence of improving planning, the organisation of learning, promoting Welsh language development, managing behaviour and establishing daily routines. This results from the sharp focus of the lead practitioners.

Informal account is taken of the views of parents and the positive views expressed in a customer satisfaction survey.

Partnership working: Good

Partnership working has a positive impact on children's learning. The setting's relationship with parents is very positive. Informal and friendly day-to-day contacts encourage the exchange of information about the child. The nursery provides occasional newsletters and promotes events such as an open day and sports day to involve parents.

The setting has established links with children's services in the community. When the need arises parents and children benefit from these networks of support. The setting liaises appropriately with the schools to which children transfer.

Practitioners work closely and effectively with an advisory teacher from the local authority. This impacts well on the quality of learning experiences. Opportunities to attend events to share good practice and receive training with practitioners from other settings are taken by some practitioners.

The setting benefits from advice available from agencies such as the National Day Nurseries Association.

Resource management: Adequate

Practitioners are well deployed to motivate children to learn. The organisation of areas of play and the accessibility of learning resources continues to improve markedly. However, there is no evidence of formalised planning for future resource needs. On the one hand needs are clearly identified in self-evaluation, but there is no forward planning of expenditure. The impact is exemplified in the absence of well-resourced provision for outdoor learning.

Although the setting has identified further training for the Foundation Phase as a priority there is little evidence of planning. However, the lead practitioner has attended training and visited another setting this year.

Senior managers confirm income and expenditure for all partnership enterprises are monitored on a monthly basis and accounts audited annually. Expenditure within the setting is authorised as funding allows. However, the absence of financial planning makes it difficult for practitioners to secure investment in resources.

First hand evidence confirms the setting's practitioners deploy the resources available to them very well. This impacts well on the children's progress and wellbeing. However, financial procedures fall short in demonstrating value for money in relation to the funding received.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received were fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Michael T. Ridout	Reporting 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>

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (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.