



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

**Tavernspite Playgroup
Tavernspite Village Hall
Tavernspite
Pemborkeshire
SA34 0NL**

Date of inspection: October 2014

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:

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

The setting meets in the village hall in Tavernspite, near the town of Whitland. It provides three hour sessions for children between two and a half and four years of age. The setting has seen a significant increase in numbers recently.

There are five full-time members of staff. Nearly all staff are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children. The playgroup leader has been in post since 2006.

The setting is registered to take up to 28 children per session. Currently, there are 34 children on roll including ten children who receive funded early years education.

All children speak English as their first language. No child speaks Welsh at home. There are a very few children with additional learning needs.

The setting was previously inspected by Estyn in February 2009 and by CSSIW in November 2013.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is judged to be good because:

- most children make sound progress from their starting points;
- most children's speaking and listening skills develop well;
- most children have good attitudes towards learning and play an active part in their learning;
- the practitioners provide a range of experiences that motivate and engage children's interest;
- the teaching is generally good; and
- practitioners create a happy and supportive environment for children.

Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because:

- the leader manages the setting effectively;
- practitioners work well together with a shared sense of purpose;
- the management committee undertakes its role efficiently;
- practitioners have an appropriate understanding of the setting's main strengths and areas for improvement;
- the setting development plan includes relevant targets for improvement;
- the recent investment in the outdoor play areas provides children with purposeful learning opportunities; and
- there is good use of a range of partnerships that support children's learning and wellbeing effectively.

Recommendations

- R1. Improve planning to develop children's numeracy and Welsh skills further
- R2. Plan tasks that offer children, particularly the more able, appropriate challenge to extend their learning
- R3. Make better use of assessment outcomes to inform planning
- R4. Focus evaluation processes more on measuring progress in children's learning

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that 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

Most children make sound progress in their learning from their starting point.

Most children listen attentively and follow instructions well. The majority of children speak clearly, and readily engage in conversation with each other and with adults. During role-play situations in the cafe, for example, many children ask questions, share experiences and offer their ideas using appropriate vocabulary. Most children are developing an interest in books and know how to handle books properly. The majority of children can recognise their names in print. Most children use marking tools confidently to draw pictures, make lists or to take customers' orders in the cafe. A few can write their names independently.

The majority of children understand a growing range of Welsh vocabulary including basic colours, numbers, greetings and instructions. During group activities, for example, they respond with reasonable accuracy when describing the weather. They sing songs and rhymes with clear expression. Older children do not make enough use of their developing vocabulary independently in their activities.

The majority of children understand mathematical terms, such as full an empty, when using different containers in the sand tray. They sort apples and leaves according to size and colour confidently on the harvest display. They identify and name two dimensional shapes accurately. They understand well that money is exchanged when buying food in a cafe. Many children can recite numbers up to 10 and the majority can count up to five objects with support. Many children, however, do not develop and extend their number skills enough in their activities. The majority of children use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills appropriately to gather information about animals, for example, and to guide programmable toys.

Most children use tools and equipment with increasing competence. As part of their theme on transport, for example, most children cut, paint and glue different materials confidently to make different vehicles. Most children demonstrate appropriate control and co-ordination when steering a range of wheeled toys when playing outdoors and when practising their movement skills during dance activities.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children settle well into the setting. They are happy and feel safe in the company of adults. Most children play and work together well, sharing, taking turns and adhering to simple rules. They show respect and affection for each other. For example, when children arrive at the beginning of the session, they greet one another warmly.

Nearly all children demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and are keen to undertake new experiences. Most children concentrate and persevere for an

appropriate period of time when completing tasks such as creating a rocket out of different materials, planting seeds in the flower troughs or listening to a story.

Most children have a developing awareness of the importance of physical exercise and healthy eating. During snack time, most children can name the fruits on their plate and know that we should eat fruit regularly. They participate energetically in their outdoor activity sessions. They take increasing responsibility for their personal hygiene and understand the importance of washing their hands regularly.

Most children are confident in selecting activities and use equipment sensibly. Nearly all children take responsibility for tidying up at the end of activities and complete this task well.

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

The practitioners plan together and provide a range of interesting learning activities which gain children's interest well. The activities are based on a series of topics that are suitable for the children's age range. There is appropriate use of the skills framework to identify learning objectives and the skills to be promoted across the areas of learning. At times, the planning of tasks is too general to ensure that all activities offer children, particularly the more able, sufficient challenge to extend their learning.

There is good use of visits to enhance children's learning experiences further. These include visits to a local garden centre to learn more about plants, and to the beach to study different shells.

Practitioners offer children appropriate opportunities to develop their communication, and number and ICT skills. There is effective use of the role play areas and the book corner, for example, to develop children's speaking, listening and marking skills. More focussed activities and the outdoor areas are used appropriately to develop children's mathematical skills. However, the planning to develop children's number skills consistently is not sufficiently embedded.

The Welsh language is promoted positively through singing sessions and group activities, for example, when discussing the weather. The majority of practitioners use incidental Welsh appropriately during the session. Planning does not ensure that children are encouraged to use their Welsh vocabulary independently during activities.

There is suitable attention to developing the children's awareness of Welsh traditions through celebrating St David's Day and St. Dwynwen's Day. Visits to a range of places, including trips by bus and train, develop children's awareness of their locality successfully.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a secure understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. They make effective use of a range of teaching methods and resources to support the learning. There is an appropriate balance overall between activities chosen by the children and those led by practitioners.

Practitioners have a good understanding of the objectives of the activities they lead or support. During role-play, building and craft activities, for example, practitioners interact effectively with children. They make good use of questioning and encourage children to talk about what they know and can do. They make effective use of praise and encouragement and succeed well in developing children's confidence as learners.

The practitioners know the children well and have a sound knowledge of each child's needs and ability. An initial assessment on children's skills and development is completed appropriately when children begin at the playgroup. This offers a good starting point to measure progress. Children are observed when participating in their daily activities and practitioners regularly record and discuss significant developments. Practitioners generally do not make enough use of assessment processes and the information gained to inform the next steps in children's learning.

Parents are kept suitably informed of their children's development through informal discussions at the beginning and end of sessions, open days and through an informative annual written report on their child's progress in all areas of learning. An appropriate transition form is completed as the child moves on to the primary school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's awareness of the need to be kind and courteous. The setting's involvement in collecting for charity develops children's awareness of the importance of helping others. This also includes collecting and distributing fruit and vegetables as part of the harvest festival. Children's cultural development is developed appropriately through celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year and tasting foods from other countries.

Practitioners promote positive attitudes towards healthy eating and drinking by providing daily snacks including fresh fruit, milk and water. Good attention is given to the development of personal hygiene. There are suitable opportunities for children to take exercise through the regular use of the outdoor learning areas.

There are appropriate arrangements to support children with additional learning needs. The setting has a designated special needs co-ordinator and there are clear lines of communication with key agencies such as speech and language therapists.

The settings arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause

for concern. Practitioners undertake regular risk assessments of the setting and prior to all visits.

The setting encourages children to learn about sustainability and the importance of caring for all living things. For example, they recycle boxes and paper to make colourful models. They plant and grow vegetables, feed the birds and care for worms in the wormery.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. Practitioners consider and appreciate children's varying backgrounds and they act appropriately in accordance with this information. They succeed well in creating a warm and welcoming environment for all the children.

The setting has an appropriate number of suitably qualified practitioners. There are sufficient resources overall although equipment to develop children's ICT skills is more limited. Accommodation is spacious and secure. Practitioners and children make full use of the space available. The displays and samples of children's work help create an attractive environment.

The setting makes good use of the outdoor play areas to support a range of learning activities effectively. There is good use of the local area to extend children's learning experiences and of the adjoining school's outdoor learning area for activities such as pond dipping and sports activities.

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

Practitioners share common values and a sense of purpose. They work effectively as a team and are fully committed to children's development and wellbeing. They have clear job descriptions and undertake their roles and responsibilities conscientiously. The leader provides clear direction and succeeds in creating a positive ethos for staff and children. Daily routines operate smoothly and relevant policies are implemented appropriately.

The management committee and its officers undertake their responsibilities effectively. Members have a good understanding of the setting's work and contribute appropriately to development planning. There is a suitable system to appraise the work of practitioners which identifies appropriate areas for their further professional development.

The practitioners give suitable attention to national and local priorities. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing outdoor learning, promoting healthy living, and establishing good links with the local primary school.

Improving quality: Adequate

Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of the setting's main strengths and areas for development. They are open to new ideas and are ready to try out new methods of working. They discuss and record children's responses to activities daily. Processes to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning, however, do not focus enough on the development of children's skills.

The setting improvement plan includes relevant targets. The action plans are clear but progress in working towards achieving the targets is more uneven. Recent improvements have included enhancing Welsh language provision and improving the outdoor learning areas. However, strategies to develop children's number skills, for example, lack the rigour to ensure consistent progress.

The setting takes suitable account of the views of parents and of relevant support agencies. Aspects of provision are discussed fully with the local authority link teacher and areas for development are agreed. This process is contributing appropriately to developing provision further. The setting has addressed most of the recommendations of the previous report. The use of assessment information to guide the planning has not been addressed fully.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a number of strategic partnerships that make an effective contribution to the quality of provision and to children's development. The setting's aims and objectives are shared with its partners.

There is a productive partnership with parents and this was confirmed during the inspection. Parents are offered relevant information through pamphlets, newsletters and the notice board in the foyer. Practitioners are regularly available for discussion at the beginning and end of sessions.

There are good links with the adjacent school. Close liaison and a sharing of facilities help to ensure a smooth transition for children to the next stage in their education. There is good use of the local area to extend children's experiences and of the links with local agencies and organisations to support fund raising activities.

The partnership with the local authority and other agencies is beneficial in providing guidance and support.

Resource management: Good

Resources are managed effectively. The setting is staffed appropriately and there is productive use of the practitioners' time and skills. The suitable range of learning resources is used fully.

The practitioners attend relevant training opportunities which are developing their knowledge and skills appropriately. This is reflected, for example, in the introduction of numeracy equipment and the development of the outdoor learning areas.

The leader and management committee have a good understanding of the budget and prioritise spending according to the setting's needs. There is regular use of fundraising events and of grants to supplement resources. Overall, in view of the generally good provision and quality of leadership, the setting offers good value for money.

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

Dorothy Morris	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	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	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.
Foundation Phase	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.
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.
Local authority advisory teacher	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.
Mudiad Meithrin	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.

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.