



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

**Wick and District Playgroup
Village Hall
Wick
Vale of Glamorgan
CF71 7QH**

Date of inspection: February 2015

by

**Mr 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

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Context

Wick and District Playgroup is a non-maintained English medium setting in the Vale of Glamorgan. It meets in Wick Village Hall and is run by a voluntary committee. It is registered for 28 children between two and a half and five years of age and runs morning sessions from Monday to Thursday during school term time.

At the time of the inspection 12 three year olds were registered. The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership funds these children up to 10 hours per week.

Most families using the playgroup live in Wick and surrounding hamlets and a few live in Llantwit Major and St Athan. The children attending have a range of backgrounds and capabilities. All are English speaking and British born. None are from ethnic minorities. No families speak Welsh at home. A very few children receive additional support for learning.

The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales last inspected the setting in July 2014 and Estyn in March 2009. The playgroup manager was appointed in April 2014. The setting is a Fairtrade Playgroup and holds the Eco Schools Platinum Award for long-term achievement.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- nearly all children make very good progress and achieve well;
- exemplary care, support and guidance assures children's wellbeing;
- a wide range of stimulating learning experiences are provided;
- teaching is often very good;
- the learning environment is inclusive and very well organised; and
- partnerships with parents and supporting agencies are very well developed.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for further improvement are good because:

- the setting is skilfully led, managed and developed;
- practitioners' professional development is effective;
- strong teamwork and clear strategic direction are evident;
- self-evaluation and planning for improvement are well established;
- strong emphasis is placed on developing professional practice; and
- there is a good track record of improvement since the last inspection.

Recommendations

R1 improve children's competence in speaking Welsh and in using information and communication technology (ICT);

R2 formalise finance procedures and develop forward planning to meet future resource needs.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that 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

Many children begin the Foundation Phase with well-developed skills for their age and stage of development. Nearly all achieve well and make very good progress in all areas of learning. They enthusiastically explore their surroundings, try out new experiences and become confident learners.

Competence in literacy and numeracy is good. Nearly all have well developed speaking, listening and thinking skills. They spontaneously begin conversations, for example in role-play in the 'cafe.' They ask and answer questions, express themselves clearly and use a wide vocabulary. Most readily engage in extended conversations about what they are doing. With few exceptions children enjoy listening to stories and enthusiastically recite familiar rhymes. Most handle books as readers and successfully develop early reading and writing skills. They understand text conveys meaning, begin to recognise letters and sounds and form letters when writing their name.

In numeracy nearly all develop increasing accuracy when counting and ordering numbers to at least 10. A few have a good understanding of one-to-one correspondence. Children's wider mathematical development is also good. For example, nearly all confidently name and talk about the properties of a wide range of two and three-dimensional shapes. Furthermore, they confidently use a wide range of mathematical terms when sorting and comparing objects and exploring capacity.

Most children's competence in using a narrow range of ICT is steadily developing.

Most children's competence in Welsh is increasing. For example, many confidently use familiar vocabulary in group activities, but very few speak Welsh spontaneously.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children have positive attitudes to keeping healthy and safe. They enthusiastically participate in a wide range of activities, often showing great enjoyment. Most sustain interest and concentration well and with few exceptions behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good.

Children are encouraged to express their feelings and preferences within the setting and most do so with increasing confidence. Children have very good relationships with each other and with adults. They increasingly show consideration and courtesy, such as when sharing resources and during snack time. With few exceptions children work and play very well together. They develop high self-esteem and gain in self-confidence.

Most children express their preferences when asked about activities in the setting. They confidently take turns to assist practitioners during whole group activities and with few exceptions children readily help with tidying resources at the end of sessions.

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

A wide range of stimulating learning experiences successfully meets the needs of children and the community. The Foundation Phase is embedded and well structured planning successfully ensures progression in line with children's needs. All areas of learning are well represented.

Carefully chosen themes provide relevant contexts for learning, such as activities linked to Chinese New Year. Long and short-term planning provides an effective framework that is implemented flexibly. A good range of indoor and outdoor activities build appropriately on children's prior knowledge and skills. Adult led focused tasks and the enhanced activities offered are well defined with appropriate learning objectives.

Strong emphasis on developing skills in literacy, numeracy and communication is evident in imaginative role-play activities. Similarly, children's numeracy skills are developed well when sorting and matching objects. The focus on skills in ICT is steadily developing.

The current focus on improving provision for Welsh language development is having a positive impact and provision to celebrate Welsh traditions is good.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a good understanding of the Foundation Phase. All provide good models of language and skilfully promote learning through play. They have high expectations of behaviour and achievement. A collaborative approach to planning ensures a good balance of child selected and practitioner led activities. Effective use is made of indoor and outdoor activities. Practitioners skilfully use a good range of strategies to challenge and support children to achieve their best. For example, questioning is used well to develop children's mathematical understanding. Children are given plenty of time to complete tasks and practitioners intervene appropriately.

Practitioners keep parents well informed about their child's progress. They conscientiously implement a range of appropriate assessment procedures. Day-to-day assessments are recorded and the key worker for each child compiles informative records. This information is increasingly used effectively to focus the next steps in learning. Individual assessment booklets record achievement on entry to the Foundation Phase and provide a detailed record of progress. Progress is further exemplified in annotated profiles of work. These are presented to parents together with a written report when their child transfers to school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The provision for health and wellbeing is particularly effective. Strong emphasis is placed on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision for personal development is exemplary.

Children are strongly encouraged to develop a sense of curiosity about the natural world and to reflect on their experiences, such as in the Eco Garden. Guidance in distinguishing between right and wrong is consistent and social skills, such as sharing resources and showing consideration for others is very well promoted. Opportunities to learn about different cultures by celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year are imaginative.

Practitioners enthusiastically promote awareness of sustainability, such as through Eco and Fairtrade initiatives. Provision is particularly successful in engaging children in environmental projects and developing their awareness of the wider world.

The setting works closely with specialist services to ensure information and guidance is available when needed. Procedures to identify and support children with additional learning needs are well implemented.

Procedures for safeguarding are well considered and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting has a friendly and inclusive ethos. Practitioners treat children with respect. They successfully foster positive relationships and take good account of children's different backgrounds. This helps to ensure children feel safe and free from undue anxiety.

Practitioners encourage sensitivity and understanding towards others and use positive strategies to manage behaviour. Equal opportunities are well promoted. However, policies do not include details of steps to ensure that future children with disabilities do not experience less favourable treatment.

The ratio of practitioners to the number of children is maintained above the national minimum standard. A wide range of age appropriate learning resources provides well for the Foundation Phase. However, the range for ICT is limited. The accommodation is well maintained and provides a safe and secure environment. The setting is very well organised and practitioners create a stimulating environment. Effective use is made of outdoor areas, including an adjacent Eco garden. Resources in the community and occasional visitors are used particularly well to enrich the curriculum.

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

The setting is skilfully led managed and developed. A clear sense of purpose and shared values permeates the setting. Policies and procedures are implemented consistently and practitioners understand and fulfil their roles effectively.

The setting's manager skilfully communicates clear vision for improvement, promotes high expectations and successfully promotes improvement. A clear focus on children's needs, a teamwork ethos and strong emphasis on developing practitioners' expertise are key features that ensure high professional standards. Practitioners work closely with parents to encourage them to support their children's learning, such as through the provision of home tasks.

A voluntary committee maintains appropriate oversight of the playgroup. It is effectively involved in strategic planning, reviews policies and provides administrative support. Personnel records are up to date and appropriate arrangements for appraisal and staff development are implemented.

The setting enthusiastically embraces national and local priorities. The Foundation Phase philosophy and approach is embedded; there is strong emphasis on healthy development and awareness of diversity and sustainability are well promoted.

Improving quality: Good

There is a good track record in improving learning and teaching since the last inspection. A collaborative approach to self-improvement is well established and practitioners confidently exemplify the impact of initiatives, such as their greater involvement in planning.

Practitioners take careful account of the views of parents, carers and children as much as possible. Arrangements to discuss areas for improvement are well managed. The self-evaluation report and improvement plan developed prior to this inspection provide a good basis to prioritise key goals and structure initiatives. The goals identified are both relevant and achievable. However, the absence of planning to show how initiatives will be resourced limits the focus on their implementation.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has strong partnerships with parents and community organisations that impact well on children's learning and wellbeing. Parents are provided with a good range of information about the setting, including details about events and the curriculum. Friendly relationships promote well the exchange of information about children and more formal consultations are arranged to discuss children's progress before they transfer to school. The setting's partnerships with receiving primary schools are appropriate.

Practitioners take opportunities to share good practice with other settings, through attending training events, and have visited another setting to learn how they have

developed their wildlife garden. Furthermore, close links with Eco, Fair Trade and Wildlife organisations significantly enhances learning experiences provided in the Eco garden.

The partnership with the local authority and other agencies, including the Wales Pre-school Playgroups Association, is beneficial in the provision of training and guidance. The impact of support and quality assurance provided by the local authority is appropriate.

Resource management: Good

The deployment of practitioners and the use of learning resources are efficiently organised. Sessions are well structured and established routines ensure the effective use of indoor and outdoor facilities. The strong emphasis placed on practitioners' professional development is a particular feature. This impacts well on the quality of children's learning experiences. Practitioners undertake appropriate training to improve their qualifications and share good practice with other settings through training events and visits.

Procedures to monitor the setting's income and expenditure are secure. Annual accounts are audited and the committee prudently manages income and expenditure. However, procedures are not formalised and planning for future resource needs is insufficiently developed.

The setting deploys its own resources and the funding received for early entitlement education, to good effect. This impacts well on children's outcomes and represents 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.	12	9 75%	2 17%	1 8%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	12	9 75%	2 17%	1 8%	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.	12	11 92%	1 8%	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.	12	9 75%	3 25%	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.	12	9 75%	3 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		69%	27%	0%	0%		
Teaching is good.	12	9 75%	2 17%	1 8%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		79%	18%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	12	10 83%	2 17%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		82%	15%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	12	10 83%	2 17%	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.	12	11 92%	1 8%	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.	12	9 75%	1 8%	2 17%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		65%	24%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed	12	9	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.		75%	25%	0%	0%		gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	12	9	3	0	0	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		75%	25%	0%	0%		
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	12	9	2	0	0	1	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		75%	17%	0%	0%		
		62%	29%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	12	8	3	1	0	0	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		67%	25%	8%	0%		
		71%	24%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	12	8	4	0	0	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		67%	33%	0%	0%		
		62%	30%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	12	9	3	0	0	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		75%	25%	0%	0%		
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Michael T Ridout	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 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.