



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Blessed William Davies Playgroup
Bodnant Crescent
Llandudno
Conwy
LL30 1LL**

Date of inspection: June 2016

by

**Mary Dyas
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

Blessed William Davies Playgroup is an independent setting based in the Catholic primary school of the same name in Llandudno in Conwy. The setting is registered to take up to 26 children aged from two to four years. In March 2013 it was also registered as part of Flying Start. The supervisor has worked at the setting for nearly fourteen years. There have been considerable changes in staffing over the past year and the staff team of a deputy and two staff members, one of whom is a volunteer, have all been in position for less than twelve months.

Sessions take place every weekday during school terms. Children in receipt of funded educational provision from the local authority attend in the afternoon alongside some older children who attend the school's morning nursery. Younger children are able to attend in the mornings. Eight three-year-olds are in receipt of funding. While many children who attend in the afternoons speak English as their main home language, a few have additional home languages. No children come from homes where Welsh is spoken. No children attending the setting in the afternoon have additional learning needs.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales last inspected the setting in February 2016. Estyn last inspected the setting in March 2012.

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:

- Practitioners provide a range of interesting and stimulating experiences which motivate children well
- Most children make realistic progress in line with their age and stage of development
- There are good opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills
- Practitioners know the children well and provide good quality support
- The setting provides good quality care, support and guidance for all children
- There is a happy and caring ethos and all children enjoy their time in the setting

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The supervisor provides strong leadership with clear direction and a sense of purpose
- Practitioners work well together as a team
- The expertise of individual practitioners is used well to provide worthwhile learning experiences for the children
- The setting demonstrates a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development
- Practitioners make good use of training opportunities to improve their practice
- Finances are well managed

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that planning identifies learning opportunities for children of different abilities
- R2 Further develop the roles and responsibilities of recently appointed staff members
- R3 Strengthen links with the primary school to support children's transition

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?	N/A
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Standards: Not applicable

There is no report on children's progress, standards in the development of their skills, the Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection upon whom to report without identifying individual children.

Wellbeing: Not applicable

There is no report on children's progress, standards in the development of their skills, the Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection upon whom to report without identifying individual children.

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

Practitioners work collaboratively to plan a wide range of interesting learning experiences that meet the needs of the children well. The curriculum builds appropriately on children's existing knowledge using broad themes that stimulate and engage their interest. As a result, children make good progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. Planning identifies appropriate learning objectives and contains sufficient detail. However, there is too little detail about how activities could be adapted for children of different abilities. There are effective opportunities for children to develop their early literacy skills, for example through self-registration when they arrive and when writing their name on a completed piece of work. Children's develop their numeracy skills well through activities such as ordering bandages by length or when paying for their shopping on the market stall. A range of beneficial resources supports children in developing their skills in information and communication technology; for example, when they use electronic metal detectors to identify what objects are made of metal.

All practitioners provide daily opportunities for children to develop and use their Welsh vocabulary and, as a result, children respond by answering simple questions and following Welsh instructions. The consistent and repetitive use of Welsh words and phrases by practitioners has given the children the confidence to begin to use them independently during the sessions. Celebrations on St David's Day, stories and information books all provide opportunities for children to learn about Welsh culture and traditions. Other celebrations such as Chinese New Year help children to develop their awareness of global citizenship. Children learn to care for living things by gardening and looking after their pet land snail and make regular visits to the outdoor areas available to them around the school.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a good knowledge of child development and the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They have high expectations and are good language models for the children. There is an appropriate balance between adult led activities and those chosen by the children. Practitioners are experienced in working with young children and know when to intervene and when to allow children to explore and investigate for themselves. Children have valuable opportunities to develop their independence and have plenty of time to complete tasks. Practitioners work closely together as a team with shared goals. As a result, they provide a clear consistency of approach with the children and practitioners deal calmly and sensitively with any instances of difficult behaviour. Practitioners challenge and support the children well in their activities and demonstrate good questioning techniques.

Practitioners know the children well and carry out useful observations of their achievements during planned activities and free play. They record this information in the child's personal profile, which provides a valuable record of individual achievement. From these records practitioners identify each child's next steps and are beginning to use this information to feed productively into future planning. Parents receive regular information about their child's progress through informal discussion at the beginning and end of the sessions. When the children move on to the next stage in their education, parents receive an informative written report based on the Foundation Phase areas of learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting makes good provision for children's health and wellbeing. Practitioners place a strong emphasis on children's wellbeing and their personal and social development. They promote positive attitudes such as being fair or treating one another nicely and deal sensitively and calmly with the few instances of difficult behaviour that arise. Day-to-day activities promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Healthy eating is strongly encouraged through the range of foods offered at snack time. Children eat lunch together during the session. This is a beneficial opportunity for social interaction and children show through their conversations that they know which foods are healthy and which they should save for an occasional treat. Children learn about sustainability as they independently sort their left over food and packaging into boxes labelled 'food', 'plastic', 'cardboard' and 'packets'.

Visits to the outdoor areas in the school foster children's sense of awe and wonder about the world in which they live and give good opportunities for children to take physical exercise. The settings arrangements for safeguarding children meets requirements and gives no cause for concern. There are no children with additional learning needs. However, the supervisor is very experienced and has effective systems in place to access support from the local authority and specialised services if required.

Learning environment: Good

The setting has a caring and inclusive ethos. Practitioners treat one another and the children with respect. This successfully fosters positive relationships and creates an environment where children feel safe and free from undue anxiety. Practitioners take

good account of children's different backgrounds and encourage understanding towards others. There are arrangements in place to ensure that children with disabilities would not experience less favourable treatment. There are sufficient practitioners with relevant qualifications for the number of children. There is a wide range of appropriate learning resources that support the needs of the children and the Foundation Phase. The accommodation is well maintained and provides a safe and secure environment. Practitioners make good use of the small outdoor area adjoining the main classroom and of the school grounds to enhance learning. Visits to nearby resources, such as an indoor/outdoor activity centre, and visitors to the setting further extend the children's learning experiences.

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

The playgroup is well managed and organised. Strong leadership has ensured that the recent changes in staffing after several years of stability have maintained the high standards and positive ethos of the setting. There is a strong sense of teamwork and staff members are beginning to take on areas of responsibility, which they are developing effectively. This is still in the early stages of development. The supervisor communicates a positive sense of purpose that effectively promotes and sustains improvement. All practitioners have a good understanding of their responsibilities and support children's learning appropriately. A suitable range of policies and procedures is in place. Annual appraisal systems effectively identify individual needs and set appropriate targets. These targets link well to the setting's own targets for improvement. The setting takes good account of national and local priorities such as literacy and numeracy and is involved in the Heathy Pre-school scheme.

Improving quality: Good

The supervisor has a clear understanding of the strengths of the setting and of the areas that need to be improved, for example strengthening the planning process to ensure observations of children's progress feed into the next steps. She has developed systematic procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement. All practitioners are involved in self-evaluation and the process ensures that they take into account the views of parents and carers. The leader makes effective use of the information gained from the self-evaluation process to compile an effective setting development plan. The current targets for development are relevant and realistic and arise directly from the self-evaluation. All staff are fully involved in this process and discuss progress towards meeting the targets at every staff meeting. The setting is making positive progress towards achieving the targets. They have recognised the need to improve Welsh language provision and have ensured that all staff have accessed training to improve their overall confidence and competence. This has had a beneficial effect on the children's use of Welsh independently in the setting.

Partnership working: Good

The setting benefits from a range of strong partnerships that have a positive effect on children's standards and wellbeing.

Partnerships with parents are strong. Results from the pre-inspection questionnaires were very positive with positive responses to all questions. Practitioners keep parents informed about what they are doing through a half-termly newsletter and informal conversations on arrival and collection of their children. For those children who are less talkative at home the setting has developed helpful daily diaries to give parents information they can use to develop conversations with their child. Parents accompany the playgroup on visits to the local community such as a local farm and attend events in the setting. Following their sports day activities, practitioners invite parents into the setting to look through their child's work and development profile.

The setting benefits from the use of different areas of the school grounds, which enables the children to become familiar with the school environment. However, there are no opportunities for pre-school children to become familiar with the school building or staff of the school during their time in the setting.

The support and quality assurance provided by the local authority is valued by the setting and has a positive impact on improvement. The setting also benefits from close contact and support from Flying Start.

Resource management: Good

The setting makes good use of available resources to support teaching and learning effectively. The supervisor deploys practitioners successfully during the sessions to support learning and they are fully aware of their roles. There is a comprehensive range of good quality resources that practitioners use well to support the planned learning activities. These meet the needs and abilities of the children well and include both natural and manufactured materials.

Practitioners attend appropriate training. Staff select training courses carefully to support the improvement of provision and this has had a positive impact, particularly on the use of the Welsh language throughout the sessions.

The supervisor also takes the role of treasurer of the management committee and has full control of the budget. She ensures that purchases are in line with planned action for improvement, prioritised to develop the provision and improve outcomes for the children. The setting has enough money set by in the budget to allow for contingencies.

In view of the efficient use of funds and the successful outcomes achieved by the children during their time in the playgroup, the setting gives 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

Mrs Mary Elspeth 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.wales)

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.