



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

**A report on**

**Brambles Day Nursery  
Yew Tree House  
Rogers Lane  
Gwersyllt  
LL11 4SG**

**Date of inspection: July 2017**

**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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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## Context

Brambles Day Nursey is a private day care setting operating from Yew Tree House in Wrexham local authority.

The setting is registered to take up to 36 children from three months to eight years of age, for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 11 three-year-old children receiving funded early years education.

All children have English as their first language and no children come from homes where Welsh is spoken. At the time of the inspection, the setting identified no children as having additional learning needs.

The proprietor, supported by an experienced manager who leads the pre-school team, manages the setting. There is one full-time member of staff and three part-time staff working in the pre-school room. This includes the room supervisor, who has been in post for a year. All staff working are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in October 2015. Estyn's last inspection of the setting was in June 2011.

## Summary

<b>The setting's current performance</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
<b>The setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Adequate</b>

### Current performance

The current performance of the setting is adequate because:

- During their time in the setting, most children make appropriate progress from their starting points
- Many children speak clearly and with confidence
- Most children are developing appropriate early numeracy skills
- Almost all children have a positive attitude to learning and are enthusiastic about activities; they behave well and are kind and considerate towards each other
- Most children are happy and enjoy their time in the setting
- Practitioners provide a suitable range of interesting activities to engage children in learning successfully
- Working relationships between practitioners and children are good
- There is a very good partnership with parents and carers, which is beneficial to children's learning and wellbeing

However:

- Assessment information is not used well enough to support children with their next steps in learning
- Opportunities for children to learn about different cultures are underdeveloped
- Planning does not include opportunities to develop children's ICT skills systematically
- Children's independent use of familiar Welsh words and phrases is underdeveloped across areas of learning
- The development of children's writing and numeracy skills is inconsistent across areas of learning

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- There is a clear vision for the setting, which is shared well with practitioners and parents
- Practitioners are hardworking and work well as a team to support children
- The setting is working appropriately with partners to secure improvements in key areas
- Practitioners benefit from effective training and professional development opportunities
- Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall

However:

- Strategic leadership is insufficiently formalised
- The current self-evaluation document does not cover all aspects of the work of the setting well enough
- Planning to secure improvement lacks rigour
- Assessment processes are at an early stage of development and are not always effective in supporting children to make as much progress as they could
- There is a lack of formal systems to monitor the impact of the setting's work on improving children's outcomes

## Recommendations

- R1 Improve children's use of incidental Welsh across areas of learning
- R2 Plan regular opportunities to develop children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- R3 Develop practitioner use of assessment to plan for individual children's next steps in learning more consistently
- R4 Develop and implement an appropriate safeguarding policy
- R5 Develop the role of managers in monitoring the impact of initiatives on improving children's outcomes
- R6 Develop robust processes for self-evaluation so that it becomes an effective tool to monitor and secure improvements

### What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that 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

Most children achieve appropriate standards and make satisfactory progress for their individual starting points. Many persevere well for sustained periods with activities they enjoy. Nearly all children engage with their learning enthusiastically.

Most children have good communication skills. They engage appropriately in conversations with each other, and willingly talk to practitioners and visitors about what they are doing. Many children speak clearly and with confidence about their tasks, for example when hunting for bugs in the woodland area. Most children listen suitably and follow simple instructions well. Many children listen attentively and with enjoyment to stories such as 'The Shark in the Dark', responding appropriately to direct questions and joining in with familiar phrases. Many children treat books with respect and handle them well as readers, turning pages correctly. However, only a few children select books independently. Many children join in with familiar songs and rhymes in English and Welsh enthusiastically. This develops their oracy skills effectively.

Many children enjoy mark-making activities, which develop their early writing skills beneficially. For example, they write letters to take to the post box and a majority are beginning to understand that writing has a purpose. However, children's application of these skills is inconsistent across areas of learning. Most children recognise their written name when prompted with a photograph, and a few can find their name on their going home tray, independently.

Most children are developing appropriate early numeracy skills. For example, they count to ten with adult support, as part of daily routines in the setting. Many children correctly recognise numbers up to three and touch count independently. Many are beginning to use suitable mathematical language during their play, for example when making longer and shorter roads, and most can accurately name squares, circles, and triangles. A few children count backwards from five with adult support.

Nearly all children enjoy physical activities and display suitable control when using wheeled toys and when jumping over logs and tyres. Many children use small instruments, such as tweezers and scissors, correctly and safely. Most children pour their chosen snack drink carefully, demonstrating good levels of concentration and control.

A few children demonstrate suitable thinking skills when answering such questions as 'who do you think lived in this shell?' confidently. A few children use their problem-solving skills effectively, for example when considering a range of solutions to enable a remote controlled car to drive through a 'car wash'.

Many children are confident in using a narrow range of technology in everyday activities, for example an electronic till in the role-play area, or a digital camera to

take photographs. However, opportunities for children to develop literacy and numeracy skills using computers or tablets are underdeveloped.

Most children join in with familiar Welsh songs, such as 'Prynhawn Da Frindiau' and 'Hwyl Fawr Frindiau', enthusiastically. Almost all children are able to count to ten in Welsh with adult support, and a few can count to six independently. Many children name primary colours in Welsh and respond to simple instructions with adult support. However, only a very few children are confident enough to use familiar Welsh words or phrases without significant encouragement from an adult.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all children enter the setting happily and settle quickly. Almost all children are confident in their learning, and are enthusiastic about activities. They have good working relationships with practitioners and each other, and respond positively to instructions. Many children concentrate well and for appropriate periods, for example when trying to 'hook' number ducks onto a rod.

Most children demonstrate good social skills. They play co-operatively with peers sharing a painting easel and toys amiably, and take turns to use hoops and digging tools, willingly. Most children show an appropriate awareness of good hygiene and know to wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. They are developing a good understanding of the need to help one another, and work co-operatively to tidy up.

Many children are developing appropriate levels of independence, for example when putting on aprons and outdoor clothes. Most children have a suitable understanding of how they can stay healthy and are happy to drink water or milk and eat a healthy snack.

Nearly all children behave well in the setting. They are kind and considerate to each other and show respect to practitioners and visitors.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Adequate**

Practitioners work well together to plan and deliver an interesting range of learning experiences, which engage children suitably, and develop literacy and numeracy skills appropriately. For example, the use of stories and outdoor reading areas promotes early reading skills well. Practitioners develop children's counting skills suitably through a range of practical activities, for example when counting bugs and comparing the size of natural objects found outdoors. However, practitioners do not plan to develop children's ICT skills well enough.

Nearly all children have regular opportunities to develop their physical skills when using outdoor equipment, such as wheeled toys, hoops, a trampoline, and a small slide. The recently developed woodland area is successful in engaging the interest of almost all learners. It provides beneficial learning opportunities to develop children's literacy skills, for example when practising giving and following instructions when using walkie-talkies during woodland hunts.

The setting makes appropriate use of visits to the local church and the library to enhance children's learning experiences. Practitioners regularly take children to post letters and to donate items to a local charity shop. Visitors from the community, such as a police officer and a parent who brought in chickens, enrich learning experiences for children effectively.

Practitioners provide suitable opportunities to help children learn about Welsh culture, for example when visiting the library to look at Welsh books, making Welsh cakes and Welsh flags and listening to traditional Welsh stories. They provide good opportunities for children to learn about other cultures when celebrating Chinese New Year.

All practitioners model and promote the use of Welsh appropriately during group sessions. However, most practitioners do not use incidental Welsh consistently during free-play and focused tasks and, as a result, children do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their skills.

### **Teaching: Adequate**

All practitioners have an appropriate up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase curriculum and are well qualified and suitably experienced.

Practitioners work well as a team. They use an appropriate range of teaching strategies to ensure that children learn through play and active involvement. As a result, there is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning. Most practitioners know the children well and recognise when they need to intervene to help move them forward and when they need to step back. However, practitioner use of effective questioning skills to extend children's learning and develop their thinking skills, particularly for older and more able children, is underdeveloped.

All practitioners are good language models and speak clearly, using appropriate language.

The setting has recently begun to make use of the Foundation Phase Profile to track and monitor individual children's progress. Practitioners carry out observations regularly and routinely share outcomes. However, the information gained from these observations is not used well enough to identify what individual children can do and what they need to do next in order to improve.

The setting has established sound procedures to ensure that parents and carers are well informed about their child's progress and that they know what they can do to help and support their child at home.

### **Care, support and guidance: Unsatisfactory**

The setting provides a welcoming and caring environment that supports children's spiritual, moral, and cultural development well. Practitioners plan suitable opportunities for children's spiritual development through regular visits to the local church.

Practitioners provide useful opportunities for children to learn about keeping healthy and clean and reinforce this well within daily routines. For example, they use snack time effectively to promote healthy eating and drinking and the importance of washing hands before eating. The setting provides worthwhile opportunities to promote children's understanding of sustainability. The Helpur Heddiw is responsible for turning off lights to save electricity.

There are suitable opportunities for children to learn and develop important values such as respect, kindness, and fairness. All practitioners are positive role models and show respect towards children and listen carefully to their ideas and views. Practitioners encourage children to take turns and to share toys and most respond well, showing consideration for others.

Children develop an appropriate sense of awe and wonder about the world when exploring outside, for example when looking for hidden objects in the woodland area. The setting helps children to develop a suitable sense of care and concern by involving them in looking after a pet rabbit.

There are currently no children in the setting identified as having additional learning needs. The setting has a suitable policy in place should the need arise; however, it does not set out appropriate arrangements for how it would support and integrate children with additional learning needs well enough.

The setting does not have an appropriate policy for safeguarding in place. As a result, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children do not meet requirements and are a cause for concern.

### **Learning environment: Adequate**

The setting has a positive and inclusive ethos. Children enjoy coming and are happy and confident. Practitioners treat all children fairly and are skilled in managing behaviour and supporting children to develop good relationships. All children have equal access to most areas of the curriculum.

Displays in the setting are appropriate, reflecting current themes and supporting children's learning suitably, for example a large caterpillar marking children's birthdays across the months of the year. The setting celebrates children's achievements well.

Practitioners make suitable use of the environment to support learning and meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase well. Indoor and outdoor spaces are appropriately organised and most resources are easily accessible to children. The setting has a suitable range of resources, which enable children to experiment and play imaginatively, for example an outdoor 'mud kitchen' and music area.

The building and grounds are in good condition and there are satisfactory arrangements in place to ensure that the site is well maintained, safe, and secure.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>
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<b>Adequate</b>
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**Leadership: Adequate**

The proprietor has a clear vision for the setting as a caring and safe environment for children and staff. They communicate this well to practitioners and parents and create a positive ethos. The setting reviews its practice regularly to ensure that it is effective in realising its vision and is sustaining improvements. Regular meetings with the manager and practitioners focus on sharing good practice and provide worthwhile advice and support to improve provision.

Relevant policies are in place and implemented appropriately. However, many are in need of updating to meet current requirements and a few do not reflect current practice in the setting well enough.

The setting has a range of generic job descriptions but specific ones for pre-school practitioners are under review to reflect recent changes of staff. At times, this leads to a lack of understanding about specific roles and responsibilities. Suitable procedures for the induction of new staff and annual appraisals are in place. However, leaders do not routinely monitor and evaluate the impact of these arrangements on staff performance and ultimately on outcomes for children robustly enough.

The setting considers national and local priorities appropriately, including promoting healthy living and sustainability.

**Improving quality: Adequate**

Self-evaluation processes are new to the setting and consequently are at an early stage of development. The current self-evaluation report focuses on provision issues and does not always evaluate the setting's strengths and areas for development well enough. As a result, it does not include all aspects of the work of the setting appropriately, and does not focus on standards, the quality of teaching, or the impact of leadership clearly enough. Systems for gathering evidence are underdeveloped and practitioners and other stakeholders are not currently involved in this process.

The setting's action plan identifies a suitable number of areas for development. However, these do not link to areas identified in the self-evaluation process well enough. The setting does not identify specific funding to support these areas of development and targets for improvements are unclear.

The setting manager monitors progress in addressing areas for development monthly and provides the proprietor with a verbal update regularly. Practitioners readily accept advice from the local authority advisory teacher and recognise the need to maintain this input to improve and embed self-evaluation systems and processes.

The setting has made satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendations from the last inspection.

### **Partnership working: Adequate**

Practitioners work successfully to involve parents and carers in supporting their children. They operate an 'open door' policy, providing daily updates on progress and suggesting ideas for parents on how to support their child's learning at home. Communication and engagement with parents are strong; they receive a welcome pack as a new starter and monthly newsletters informing them of all aspects of the setting's work, including new Welsh words of the month. Most parents and carers feel comfortable approaching the setting if they have queries or worries. Parents and carers regularly attend social events to raise money for local charities, such as Hope House and Alder Hey Hospital. This positive relationship has a beneficial impact on children's wellbeing.

Practitioners work appropriately with the local authority advisory teacher, responding positively to advice and support. They regularly attend training events and use ideas from these events to improve learning experiences for children, for example promoting child-initiated learning through the use of interest bags and 'Dewi the hedgehog', as an effective home-school link.

The setting has appropriate transition arrangements in place and, as a result, most children settle quickly and confidently when they progress into local primary schools.

The setting makes appropriate use of visitors from the local community to enrich learning experiences. For example, the setting invites a parent or community member into the setting monthly as a 'mystery reader', to read a story to the children and answer their questions.

### **Resource management: Adequate**

Practitioners are well qualified and experienced. They engage in relevant professional development opportunities to enhance their understanding of the Foundation Phase and to maintain required qualifications such as food hygiene and first aid, successfully. There are suitable performance management systems in place. However, they are not fully effective in assuring improvements as they do not always happen regularly enough.

The setting has an appropriate range of resources to support children's learning across nearly all areas of learning. However, systems and processes to plan, monitor and review spending are very informal and do not always link clearly to priorities in the setting's action plan.

The setting has experienced notable changes to staffing over the last year. At the same time, the setting has also introduced several new processes for planning, assessment, and self-evaluation. Consequently, these changes have not had time to impact fully on raising children's outcomes and developing clear leadership systems.

In view of the standards achieved, the setting provides adequate 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

Sharon Randall-Smith	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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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"> <li>• personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li> <li>• language, literacy and communications skills</li> <li>• mathematical development</li> <li>• Welsh language development</li> <li>• knowledge and understanding of the world</li> <li>• physical development</li> <li>• creative development</li> </ul>
<b>CSSIW</b>	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	<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>

<b>Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)</b>	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
<b>National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)</b>	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
<b>Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)</b>	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.