



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

**Llanfairfechan Playgroup
Ysgol Babanod Llanfairfechan
Village Road
Llanfairfechan
LL33 0AA**

Date of inspection: June 2015

by

**Anne Elizabeth Manning
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

This setting is based in the village of Llanfairfechan and is managed by a committee and the general day to day running is carried out by a team of practitioners. All practitioners are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children.

There were 11 funded 3-year-old children present during the inspection. All of the children attending the setting are from the local community and nearly all speak English as their first language. A small percentage has additional help for their learning.

The playgroup receives support from the local authority Early Education Team and is a member of Wales Pre-school Providers Association.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in November 2013 and this is the second inspection by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- standards of children's wellbeing are excellent;
- behaviour in the setting is exceptional;
- learning experiences are varied and interesting
- the quality of teaching is excellent; and
- the setting provides good quality care, support and guidance for all children.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is effective leadership;
- leaders pay effective attention to local and national priorities and there is a strong focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills;
- the setting has a range of highly successful partnerships that it uses to excellent effect to improve learning outcomes for children;
- practitioners work very flexibly as a team for the benefit of the children; and
- the setting has made good progress since the last inspection.

Recommendations

R1. To enable children to develop their own learning, for example by ensuring all resources are easily accessible and there is a choice of learning outdoors.

R2. To ensure that self-evaluation links more effectively to improvements in standards and outcomes for the children.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.' 'Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

Nearly all children make good progress and achieve good standards from their starting points towards the Foundation Phase outcomes in all areas of learning. All children are successful in concentrating and persevering with activities and they are constantly engaged and working at full capacity.

Nearly all children develop good skills in communication, numeracy and information communication technology needed to access the wider curriculum. They express their feelings and are confident when speaking to adults in the setting. All children show good interest in books and stories and a few will recap the story to an adult whilst holding the book as a reader. All enjoy and experiment with mark make successfully and understand the functions of writing.

All children use a range of materials to solve problems and use mathematical language in an appropriate and relevant context. They count their friends in English and in Welsh and can recognise and re-create patterns in their play. A few children are beginning to understand simple addition and subtraction through songs and rhymes.

Nearly all are successful, confident children who use a variety of technology well as part of their play including i pads. They control battery operated equipment effectively and they successfully develop skills in information communication technology. All children make good use of the indoor and outdoor environments to develop an appropriate range of physical skills. These children use a range of bikes and other equipment successfully to develop gross motor skills.

Most children use simple Welsh words and phrases effectively and understand instructions. All join in enthusiastically with songs and stories that effectively develop their Welsh vocabulary. The setting promotes the Welsh language and as a result most make good progress. Children develop a good understanding of Welsh culture and traditions through celebrating festivals, such as St David's Day.

Wellbeing: Excellent

Nearly all children show high levels of self-esteem and are highly motivated and engaged in their learning. Children are highly confident in their play and all sustain high levels of concentration and perseverance and their time spent in the playgroup results in highly competent and independent learners.

All children settle very quickly to activities and follow the setting's routines exceptionally well. All concentrate well and take part highly enthusiastically in different learning experiences such as visiting the town hall or becoming a cornflake in the carnival. As a result they feel safe, secure and ready to learn. All children are

extremely well behaved and kind and courteous to each other. Without exception, children are busy, enthusiastic and highly involved in activities.

All children learn about sharing and taking turns, for example when using play dough. They know how to distinguish right from wrong and are aware of and show great respect for the needs of others. Most are confident thinkers and they are keen to talk about what they are doing such as when working as a team of nine to put a train track together. Nearly all have very positive relationships with each other and the setting's practitioners. Most children are starting to help their friends effectively, for example when tidying away equipment.

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

Practitioners plan together a range of interesting learning experiences that provide a challenge for the children and successfully take into account their differing learning needs and ideas.

Indoors and outdoors are used to develop skills effectively and children make good progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. The curriculum builds effectively on children's existing knowledge and understanding.

Good organisation ensures children learn successfully. Activities are focussed well and the children have good opportunities to try things for themselves and problem solve, for example how to make a large train track by putting together different pieces. As a result children acquire good thinking skills across all areas of learning. Children learn successfully about caring for living things through a range of different activities, such as planting and watering their garden, observing mini beasts and caring for the birds.

Skills in literacy and numeracy are embedded successfully into the planning and the experiences of the children and develop effectively through a consistently good range of activities. Practitioners develop children's literacy skills by visiting the library, sharing books including those written in Welsh and by both adults and children story telling. Practitioners use a suitable range of mathematical equipment and activities to develop children's numeracy skills effectively, such as the five sticker chart. The setting provides valuable opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills through a range of equipment such as battery operated toys and an i pad which is shared with the school.

Practitioners make exceptional use of visits in the community and visitors to the setting which enhance children's learning experiences highly effectively.

Children have good opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions through learning a range of Welsh songs, listening to stories and celebrating festivals, such as St David's Day.

Teaching: Excellent

There are very high expectations of the children and without exception practitioners are highly skilled at knowing when to intervene in children's play and when to let them discover independently. They enable the children to introduce new ideas or problems to solve and they are aware of what to do to encourage the children to improve. All are highly motivated and enthusiastic about the children's achievements.

Practitioners have very good knowledge of child development and of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. A range of activities and innovative learning experiences provides effective challenge and practitioners make creative and imaginative use of resources to keep the children's interest and focus on task, for example using puppets in a story.

All practitioners meet together and are exceptionally well briefed before the session and well deployed to extend children's play successfully. By using a highly effective range of teaching strategies that support the children they are able to become confident learners. Adult support is exceptionally well focussed but highly flexible and makes a significant contribution to the quality of the children's learning.

All practitioners use Welsh regularly and they encourage the children to answer simple questions and to respond to Welsh instructions. Circle times are used highly effectively to share stories, re-cap on the session and listen to the views of others. All practitioners understand how children learn and are very clear about the development opportunities and expected outcomes from each activity. Questioning techniques are highly effective in extending the learning and achievements of the children.

All practitioners work superbly well as a team and constantly review and evaluate their practice and the progress of the children during the session. This is highly effective and as a result they are flexible and able to continually adapt an activity to extend individual achievement or provide a different level of skill or way of working to successfully meet the developing needs of the children.

Practitioners make useful observations of the children which focus on the outcomes from planned activities, however on occasion there is not always sufficient supporting evidence. Parents are involved in the achievements of their children and they are aware of their progress by speaking to the practitioners each day or looking at their child's assessment records and as a result know what to do to help them improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are highly effective transition arrangements to move on to school and the playgroup has a range of policies and procedures that support the children and promote successfully their health and wellbeing including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are appropriate policies and procedures in respect of safeguarding and the practitioners have undertaken training and as a result the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meets requirements and gives no cause for concern.

The playgroup provides a good level of care, support and guidance for the children, because practitioners know the children well they respond successfully to all their needs and as a result children feel secure and learn effectively. Interesting activities and experiences ensure that all children learn about sharing and taking turns, for example when listening to each other during circle time. The children know how to distinguish right from wrong very successfully and the playgroup fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect and develops an understanding of living and working with others as they share the school premises and resources.

The playgroup introduces healthy foods, some of which have been grown by the children in their garden. Children show good levels of initiative and help each other highly effectively by working as a team to put a train track together. Daily outdoor sessions and weekly visits to the town hall encourage children to be active and to use physical apparatus with increasing control.

The children respect and are involved in caring for their environment and have a sense of awe and wonder about the world in which they live by growing vegetables in their garden for the Gruffalo and observing birds and other wildlife on their visits to the beach and the woods.

The playgroup draws upon external professional expertise successfully and practitioners employ positive behaviour strategies that encourage the children to learn. Without exception practitioners provide consistency and a good level of individual support to assist children with additional learning needs and work well with parents. As a result all children achieve and there are effective links with their homes.

Learning environment: Good

Resources including those shared with the school are of high quality, used in an innovative way and are well matched to the needs of all the children. Although the resources are appropriate and sufficient to address the requirements of the Foundation Phase and successfully support the learning of all the children they are sometimes not easily accessible for children to develop their own learning. For example the children are not able to choose when they want to play outside and the painting aprons were located too high for the children to reach and put on by themselves.

The playgroup has effectively developed a well established ethos that is inclusive and values all. The setting actively develops tolerant attitudes through a range of different learning experiences and good day-to-day practice. Equal access to the activities and experiences is offered and there is an effective range of policies and procedures that actively supports the children, and promotes their health and wellbeing.

The practitioners have knowledge of child development and the Foundation Phase requirements. They create a stimulating learning environment indoors and out making effective use of space and know what they need to do to help the children to succeed. They have relevant qualifications and experience of working with children.

All children are kept safe and the accommodation is used highly effectively, secure and well maintained to support the learning of the children. Indoors and outdoors are used well to develop play and learning and the visits in the community and those to the woodland are used exceptionally well to enhance the facilities at the setting and enrich the learning of the children.

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

Good leadership contributes to the wellbeing and levels of progress and achievements of the children. Learning and teaching are well managed because leaders are kept well informed by regular committee meetings and children have continuity of care, so they settle quickly and learn well in the playgroup.

The committee supports the setting effectively and leaders respond to any advice and guidance promptly and ensure that any changes impact positively on the provision. As a result practitioners and children are valued, enthusiastic and well motivated. A strong culture of self-reflection develops the setting and leads to successful improvements in practice. Leaders set targets and relevant legislation, guidance and national and local priorities are taken into account and used to effectively improve the standards and care of the children, for example literacy and numeracy and healthy eating.

There are well established and successful links with parents that support consistently well the learning of the children and parents are kept effectively up to date with the progress of their children. Practitioners are well trained and well deployed and their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. There is a positive ethos with high expectations for all the children and as a result they achieve and make good progress in the Foundation Phase.

There are effective relationships with children and their families. The playgroup is managed to a good standard and values, aims and objectives are effectively shared through day-to-day working practice and there is a positive ethos, clear direction and sense of purpose that effectively promotes and sustains improvement

Improving quality: Good

The setting has made good progress since their previous Estyn inspection. Although all practitioners are involved in self-evaluation which identifies strengths and areas for improvement it does not always link effectively to show improvements in outcomes and standards for the children.

Practitioners are able however to show how successful changes in their work practice, have had a positive impact on the standards achieved and the progress of the children. Practitioners, parents, the registered person and local authority teacher are able to evidence how the provision has been improved by the regular

opportunities to learn and how the highly effective links with the school and local community have improved outcomes and the wellbeing of the children.

All changes and developments in the group have the children at the centre of the provision and practitioners constantly review their practice and support each other, providing flexible teaching approaches. They make adaptations to the activities and resources and as a result improvements are used successfully to develop the provision and enable all children to achieve.

There is a positive culture of self-reflection and practitioners are open to new ideas and try different ways of working. All practitioners are engaged in professional development, and actively share their expertise and knowledge to benefit each other and as a result they effectively raise standards and support the learning of the children.

Partnership working: Excellent

The setting has an exceptional range of successful partnerships that impact highly effectively on children's wellbeing and the standards that they achieve.

The playgroup works very effectively with partners for the benefit of the children and as a result a successful range of partnerships within the local community and the school makes a strong contribution to the progress of the children and successfully enhances and supports their development.

Partnerships with parents are strong. There is clear communication between parents and the playgroup and as a result many take an active role in the running of the group. Parental feedback is encouraged to ensure issues are identified and the provision is monitored. As a result consistently good links between home and playgroup are maintained and learning is effectively supported. Assessment records and speaking to practitioners actively ensure that parents are well informed of their child's progress.

There is an effective partnership with the local authority advisory teacher who visits the setting, providing guidance, which impacts very positively on the achievements of the children and enhances the work of the setting.

There is a highly efficient partnership with the school for the benefit of the children. Not only are there excellent transition arrangements but there are also opportunities for the setting to use and share resources such as ICT and outdoor spaces in the school. The children share special celebrations such as the harvest festival which also strengthen their relationship. There is an exceptionally successful relationship with the local community that ensures high quality effective learning opportunities for the children such as the village carnival, fortnightly visits to the library and weekly visits to the town hall which superbly add another dimension to the children's learning.

The setting works effectively in partnership with other professionals to ensure a good level of support for any children with additional learning needs. Practitioners work highly successfully together as a team and effectively share information for the benefit of all the children. The playgroup is an active member of the Wales Pre-

school Providers Association and partnership working ensures exceptionally good support for the children.

The playgroup is well resourced and managed to deliver the Foundation Phase curriculum successfully. The playgroup has the use of a shared annexe joined to the school and practitioners set out the areas indoors and outdoors consistently well for the children's play and learning. .

Resource management: Good

The setting has a rich stimulating learning environment and high quality resources to deliver the Foundation Phase curriculum. Innovative and interesting activities encourage all the children to learn effectively. The setting makes good use of the outdoors and exceptional use of the community to support the children and enable them to learn successfully and to develop different skills across all areas of learning.

All practitioners have good opportunities to learn from others and share good practice. They are well prepared and well deployed. They are very flexible in their approach and move effectively round the areas of learning to successfully develop ideas and encourage the children.

Leaders have a good understanding of budget matters and successfully take into account the developing needs of the children. This means that future resource needs are well planned for and any extra resources and equipment benefit the children and improve standards.

The setting successfully promotes activities that encourage children to learn and progress. The funding that is received is used well and as a result, the setting provides 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.	11	9 82%	2 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	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.	11	9 82%	2 18%	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.	11	9 82%	2 18%	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.	11	10 91%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		69%	26%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	11	10 91%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		79%	18%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	11	9 82%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		82%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	11	10 91%	1 9%	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.	11	10 91%	1 9%	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.	11	8 73%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae fy mhentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		64%	25%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed	10	7	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.		70%	30%	0%	0%		gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		62%	30%	6%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	11	9	1	1	0	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		82%	9%	9%	0%		
		80%	19%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	11	7	3	0	0	1	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		64%	27%	0%	0%		
		62%	29%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	11	9	1	1	0	0	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		82%	9%	9%	0%		
		70%	24%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	11	9	2	0	0	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		82%	18%	0%	0%		
		61%	30%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	11	10	1	0	0	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		91%	9%	0%	0%		
		81%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mrs Anne Elizabeth Manning	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 partnership's 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.