



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

A report on

**Martine's Child Care Ltd
Ysgol Llywelyn
Trellewelyn Road
Rhyl
LL18 4EU**

Date of inspection: February 2018

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:

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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website.

© Crown Copyright 2018: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 04/05/2018

Context

Martine's Child Care Ltd is an English medium private nursery in the grounds of Ysgol Llywelyn near Rhyl, in Denbighshire local authority. The nursery is open 51 weeks a year for childcare and provides funded education between January and July, with sessions held Monday to Friday in school term time. The sessions run from 8.50am-11.20am and 12.30pm-3.00pm.

The setting is registered for up to 70 children. At the time of the inspection, there were 25 three-year-olds on roll, of which 17 are funded by the local authority. Nearly all children speak English as their first language. The setting has not currently identified any children as having additional learning needs.

There are eight full-time members of staff and one part-time member. The owner manages the setting and two members of staff share the deputy manager role.

The Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) last inspected the setting in October 2015 and Estyn last inspected it in May 2011.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Most children make good progress in developing their skills and understanding
- Most children develop effective numeracy skills
- Most children use a range of information and communication technology (ICT) equipment independently
- Many children develop their thinking skills successfully
- Nearly all children enter the setting confidently, settle quickly and behave well
- Most children demonstrate high levels of interest in, and persevere with, learning tasks
- The setting provides an outstanding range of stimulating and interesting activities across the foundation phase areas of learning
- Practitioners include innovative opportunities to develop children's literacy, numeracy and thinking skills as they play independently
- All practitioners have high expectations of children and demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of the importance of learning through play and exploration
- High quality observational assessments enable practitioners to identify children's next steps in learning and to inform future planning and provision, exceptionally well
- The setting creates a friendly and inclusive ethos and ensures that children have equal access to all activities and resources

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Managers communicate a clear vision for the setting that focuses on ensuring high quality teaching and learning for all children
- Staff work together as a strong team and support each other in improving their performance highly effectively
- All practitioners have exceptionally high expectations of themselves and others; they reflect well on their own performance and understand the need to offer and sustain improvements
- Managers pay very good attention to local and national priorities and there is a strong focus on developing children's literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills; this supports practitioners in delivering exceptionally high quality learning experiences
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning are a regular and effective part of the work of all staff
- Managers model effective practice regularly

- The setting has a strong partnership with parents and families and parents find practitioners very approachable
- In view of the standards children achieve and the high quality provision, good quality teaching and effective leadership, the setting provides good value for money

Recommendations

R1 Improve children's Welsh language skills

R2 Strengthen self-evaluation procedures to ensure a clear focus on outcomes for 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
---	-------------

Standards: Good

During their time at the setting, most children make good progress in developing their skills and understanding in line with their age and ability. Many speak clearly in sentences and are eager to talk in detail about their activities. Most join in enthusiastically when singing familiar songs and rhymes. Nearly all enjoy listening to stories and many sit and listen for sustained periods to each other and adults. Many children talk about pictures in books they study as part of their topic work. For example, they talk excitedly about how the tiger in the snow was really a kitten. Most children enjoy mark-making activities, for example when writing recipes for a magic potion.

Most children develop effective numeracy skills. Many count to five accurately and join in enthusiastically when counting the number of dinosaur eggs found in an outdoor treasure hunt. Many children use mathematical language, such as full, empty, heavy and light correctly, and can find and identify big and small dinosaur bones hidden in the sand.

Many children develop suitable Welsh language skills. They use simple words during routine activities, with adult support. Many children respond correctly to instructions at tidy up time. However, very few use Welsh independently as part of their play.

Most children use a range of ICT equipment independently. Many programme a toy to change direction confidently and take pictures of learning activities and their friends.

Most children develop their physical skills well. They cut out shapes with good levels of co-ordination, and pedal bikes quickly, demonstrating good awareness of space. Many enjoy dancing on the stage, showing a good awareness of rhythm and beat.

Many children develop their thinking skills successfully and use these appropriately to work out how to put on their coats, wellingtons and waterproofs suits independently. When acting as archaeologists looking for dinosaur bones in the sand, many work out that they need to use a small brush and magnifying glass to uncover them carefully.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children enter the setting confidently, settle quickly and behave well. Most share resources readily and take turns when building castles with blocks and when using the computer to play simple counting and matching games. Most demonstrate high levels of interest in, and persevere with, learning tasks. Nearly all children display good levels of social skills and co-operation when they share tidying up tasks and enjoy talking together at snack time.

Most children choose where they would like to play independently. They are confident to express their views about what they enjoy doing and what they would like to do next. Nearly all respond positively to instructions and most play with resources imaginatively, for example when role-playing at being a knight in the castle. Most children form good relationships with the adults at the setting and ask for help politely when required.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
---	-------------

Learning experiences: Excellent

The setting provides an outstanding range of stimulating and interesting activities across the foundation phase areas of learning. Practitioners work closely with the children to record their ideas at the start of every topic. This contributes significantly to children's motivation and engagement in learning, and develops their independent learning skills very effectively. Practitioners include innovative opportunities to develop children's literacy, numeracy and thinking skills as they play independently. Children make dragons from dough, spontaneously counting the number of eyes and spikes they use, describing their dragon in detailed terms and naming them imaginatively.

Curriculum planning builds systematically on children's existing knowledge, understanding and skills exceptionally well. Practitioners use indoors and outdoor areas highly effectively. An outdoor mud kitchen develops children's hand eye co-ordination and oracy skills successfully as they make and describe a dinosaur swamp. Dinosaur nest building in the garden area develops children's sense of curiosity and mathematical skills effectively as they look for long and short twigs and count the eggs. Practitioners provide outstanding opportunities for children to learn new skills, and to practise and embed them in a variety of ways. They regularly assess children's progress to adapt planning in order to challenge and support children of all abilities robustly.

Practitioners plan exceptionally well to foster children's independent skills and resources are readily accessible. Children choose where they wish to learn confidently and move around activities purposefully. For example, when making magic potions to help the dinosaur eggs hatch, children add ingredients, fetch water and stir the potion independently. This activity develops their oracy skills exceptionally well as they describe the egg as fizzing and bubbling.

Practitioners make good progress in developing children's Welsh language skills and use Welsh well at specific times and for instructions regularly. As a result, many children are beginning to understand simple Welsh phrases. The setting promotes children's awareness of the traditions and culture of Wales very successfully. When celebrating Saint David's Day children eat traditional Welsh foods, and create cards and act out the folk tale on Saint Dwynwen's Day. This develops their understanding of their culture in a fun and practical way.

Practitioners regularly provide high quality problem solving activities to support the development of children's literacy, numeracy and thinking skills. Most children work out correctly how to fill their bucket using different lengths of drainpipe. The setting promotes children's physical development very well both indoors and outside.

Children have daily access to outdoor activities, such as when learning in the secret garden and when pedalling bikes on the yard. This is highly beneficial to their health and wellbeing.

Practitioners plan numerous opportunities for children to take calculated risks, and to develop as confident learners, for example, when choosing materials to make a shelter outdoors.

The setting makes effective use of their locality and visits and visitors to enrich children's learning. Visits to the local beach add interest and develop children's numeracy skills in exciting ways when they sort different sized and count, shells, stones and crabs legs.

Practitioners promote children's awareness of the cultures and beliefs of other people effectively through celebrating Chinese New Year, Diwali and Holi.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners have high expectations of children and demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of the importance of learning through play and exploration. Practitioners know when to intervene to extend children's learning and when to allow them opportunities to discover for themselves and do this skilfully. They make effective use of questioning to develop children's thinking skills when deciding how to help baby dinosaurs hatch out of their eggs. Sessions progress at a lively pace, which keeps children interested and engaged. Learning experiences have clear expected outcomes, enabling practitioners to focus well on the specific skills that they are developing.

Practitioners are good language role models and this contributes to improving children's oracy skills and enhances their vocabulary successfully. Practitioners have supportive relationships with the children, allowing them to feel safe and to develop in confidence to try new experiences. As a result, there is a calm and purposeful learning atmosphere.

Practitioners use positive reinforcement effectively helping children to be familiar with expectations and daily routines, to try new experiences and to become more confident and independent learners, for example when putting on their coats, serving themselves drinks at snack time and when tidying up.

Practitioners know the children very well, and observe and assess their progress regularly. These high quality observational assessments enable practitioners to identify children's next steps in learning and to inform future planning and provision, exceptionally well. This has a positive impact on children's progress over time.

Practitioners involve parents in children's learning well, both formally and informally, providing regular opportunities for parents to see what their children are achieving at the setting.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. It offers healthy snacks and develops children's understanding about the need to wash their hands and brush their teeth successfully. Learning experiences promote children's personal development well. For example, daily snack time provides children with useful opportunities to pour their drinks and wash their plates and dishes independently and to take turns.

Practitioners develop children's sense of curiosity about their own and the lives of other people appropriately. They encourage children to talk about what they have been doing at home and their interests. They foster a sense of awe and wonder well when pointing out seasonal changes and when creating magic potions to help the baby dinosaur eggs hatch. Practitioners plan regular opportunities to develop children's cultural and creative skills, for example when creating prints and collages with autumn leaves, exploring patterns in the snow, making tigers with different coloured spaghetti and performing carols at Christmas time.

There is a suitable focus on recycling at the end of snack time, when children recycle waste fruit into the compost bin. The children use this to grow their own vegetables, developing their understanding of sustainability in a practical way.

At the time of the inspection, there were no children with additional learning needs. However, the setting has good arrangements for supporting children with additional needs and practitioners are proactive in engaging with external agencies.

The setting's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

Staff create a friendly and inclusive ethos and ensure that children have equal access to all activities and resources.

The accommodation is well maintained, safe and secure. The indoor area is bright and welcoming. Practitioners make good use of children's work and photographs to create attractive displays. Outdoor areas, such as the secret garden and playground areas are attractive and stimulating. This encourages children to be active, to explore and investigate.

The setting has a range of good quality resources, which are well organised and accessible. Practitioners make very effective use of the different spaces available both indoors and outside. For example, a bug hotel and bird feeders encourage children to look after their environment and the animals in it. The setting makes effective use of the locality to enhance children's learning experiences, such as when visiting the local post office to purchase stamps and to post mail.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?
--

Good

Leadership: Excellent

Managers have a clear vision for the setting that focuses on ensuring high quality teaching and learning for all children. They communicate this exceptionally well and provide outstanding direction. As a result, all practitioners know what managers expect of them. Staff work together as a strong team and support each other in improving their performance highly effectively. All practitioners have regular opportunities to learn new skills, including those at a managerial level. Managers regularly involve staff in sessions to share ideas and to make suggestions. This is a strength of the setting and enables staff to feel happy and well supported, and provides consistency in teaching, provision and planning. This is outstanding practice.

All practitioners clearly enjoy their roles and willingly work in other areas of the setting, eagerly taking on new challenges and experiences. All practitioners have exceptionally high expectations of themselves and others. They reflect well on their own performance and understand the need to make and sustain improvements.

Managers provide all staff with detailed job descriptions that they review regularly. This contributes effectively to the calm and purposeful day-to-day running of the setting, as all staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Leaders coach and mentor staff effectively, including developing their leadership and management roles. This is excellent practice and develops a consistency in approach and expectation across the setting and shares the workload very successfully.

There are very good processes to manage the performance of staff. Appraisals clearly identify agreed targets for improvement and link to the setting's improvement priorities and staff development needs well. Managers actively seek out ways in which the setting can improve and respond quickly to any guidance and advice. Practitioners make beneficial use of meetings to discuss children's achievements and progress and to inform future planning.

Managers pay very good attention to local and national priorities and there is a strong focus on developing children's literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills. This supports practitioners in delivering exceptionally high quality learning experiences, and promotes healthy eating and the use of outdoor learning exceptionally well.

Improving quality: Good

Members of the management team know the setting very well. Self-evaluation and improvement planning are a regular and effective part of the work of all staff.

There are useful systems to identify what the setting does well and what it needs to do to improve. Practitioners analyse a wide range of assessments and monitor performance closely in order to bring about improvements. For example, managers identified a need to simplify planning to ensure effective coverage of skills across the areas of learning. This led to very strong practice in planning for the needs of all children both indoors and outside.

The setting has a set of clear guidelines and processes to make sure that all practitioners comply with the agreed teaching strategies. Managers model effective practice regularly, for example, in developing effective story telling techniques and recording observations of children to inform their next steps accurately. This supports the consistency of high quality teaching and learning very successfully.

The setting takes good account of the views of practitioners, parents and children in reviewing its performance. Resulting action plans are useful working documents that practitioners update and review regularly. They clearly show which staff are responsible for actions, resources required and set timescales for monitoring the impact of actions on provision. However, monitoring the impact of actions on children's outcomes is less well developed. The setting makes appropriate use of advice from external reviews to improve practice and has a record of making sustained improvements to its provision.

Managers and practitioners are open to new ideas and respond positively and quickly to advice, guidance and training. This is a strength of the setting and plays a significant part in its improvement.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a beneficial range of partnerships that contribute well to children's wellbeing and the quality of the provision. It has a strong partnership with parents and families. Practitioners share useful information about the setting's activities through social media regularly. Parents say that practitioners are very approachable and enjoy learning about their child's progress through daily informal feedback at the end of sessions, and through formal opportunities to talk about their achievements. During the summer term, the setting holds an open day where parents can observe activities, view photographs and discuss their child's achievements and next steps. Grandparents visit regularly to talk about photographs and toys from their youth with the children. This gives children good opportunities to develop an understanding of the past.

The setting has well established links with the local school, which is on the same site. This promotes a smooth transition for children to the next stage in their education, enabling them to settle quickly. Children enjoy opportunities to sing carols and to take part in an Easter egg hunt with the school. The school nursery teacher works closely with the setting to offer advice and support. For example, changes to assessments enable practitioners to establish a more manageable and useful tool to support future planning and to set clear next steps for individual children.

Practitioners establish a few worthwhile community links to support children's wellbeing. These include visits from the fire brigade and the police to talk about keeping safe.

The setting benefits from its constructive partnership with the local authority and from the training provided. This contributes to improvements over time in the quality of the learning experiences offered to the children very successfully. Training about healthy eating results in most children being aware of how to keep healthy and fit.

Resource management: Good

The setting deploys staff well and all practitioners are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children. Practitioners access a wide range of suitable training and development opportunities. They frequently share ideas learned from these in order to improve the quality of their teaching and the learning experiences offered to children. Leaders monitor the impact of training effectively and all staff complete an evaluation sheet outlining what they have learnt and how this can benefit provision and children's wellbeing.

The owner manages finances very efficiently to ensure that resources are plentiful, of good quality and meet the needs of young children. These include an attractive sensory area where children can relax, appealing small world toys to encourage role-play, such as a castle and knights, and ICT equipment that stimulates the children's interest and curiosity. In view of the standards children achieve, the high quality provision, good quality teaching and effective leadership, the setting provides good value for money.

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
CIW	<p>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 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 three to seven 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 that 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)	<p>This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.</p>

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation 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