



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

A report on

**Kimberley Nursery School
Blaenypant Crescent
Malpas
NP20 5QB**

Date of inspection: April 2019

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

About Kimberley Nursery School

Kimberley Nursery School is in Malpas in Newport local authority.

There are 69 children on roll aged from three to four years, all of whom attend on a part time basis. The school hosts a special needs communication class funded by the local authority for pupils with complex and specific educational needs.

Around 17% of children are eligible for free school meals, which is similar to the national average of 18%. The school identifies about 31% of children as having additional learning needs. This is well above the national average of 21%. A very few children come from an ethnic minority background or have English as an additional language. No pupils speak Welsh at home.

The executive headteacher was appointed in September 2018 and also manages another local nursery school. Estyn last inspected the school in October 2012.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

Kimberley Nursery School is a friendly, caring and inclusive learning community. In their time at the school, most children develop their skills and understanding successfully. They enjoy interesting and positive learning experiences, and are eager to share what they have learnt with adults. The provision for children with additional learning needs is a real strength of the school. In the Communication Class, most pupils make sound progress in a stimulating and purposeful learning environment.

Teachers work effectively as a team and plan engaging learning activities, using the school's creative indoor and outdoor environments skilfully. Staff use questioning effectively to move children on in their learning. They ensure that children have enriched opportunities to learn through adult-led and independent play activities. As a result, children are happy and enthusiastic and they enjoy school.

The executive headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership. She has established an effective learning community. Leaders understand the needs of pupils exceptionally well. They support staff effectively and ensure that they all have meaningful training that ensures effective provision for all pupils.

Leaders work successfully with parents and provide relevant information through a variety of worthwhile events, for example 'stay and play' events. The school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress and provides constructive information on how to help them at home. This contributes beneficially to pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

- R1 Address the health and safety issues highlighted during the inspection
- R2 Develop the role of the governing body so that they are more involved in monitoring and evaluating progress
- R3 Refine assessment and tracking processes to identify clearly the specific progress of children with additional learning needs
- R4 Ensure that planning enables children to develop the full range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills systematically across all areas of learning

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection

Main findings

Standards: Good

Many children enter the nursery class with skills and knowledge in line with those expected for their age. A few begin school with speech and language difficulties. Despite this, most settle quickly into school life and soon learn the daily routines and the expectations of staff. During their time in the nursery, most make at least expected progress from their differing starting points. Most children listen to, understand and respond well to instructions. Many join in enthusiastically with songs and rhymes. They like talking to visitors and eagerly explain what they are doing with appropriate clarity, for example 'I am collecting soft yellow chicks hiding in the straw with these pincers,' and 'I push this button to turn the torch on and then it shines the light'.

Many children enjoy listening to stories and respond appropriately to questions. A few children handle books with care, independently. They talk with confidence about the pictures when looking at a book about dinosaurs and make sensible predictions about what comes next. However, only a few children use the book corner without adult encouragement.

Children's early writing skills are developing well. Many 'write' and mark-make for a range of purposes. Most children use a variety of media and tools carefully, including paint, crayons and chalk to make patterns. Many understand the purpose of writing, for example when making shopping lists in the role-play areas.

The Welsh oracy skills of most children are appropriate for their age. Many name colours and follow simple commands and instructions accurately. Most join in with a range of Welsh songs and rhymes enthusiastically.

Children's numeracy skills are well developed. Many recite numbers in order to ten. They count accurately the number of children at the start of the day and the number of pine cones and pebbles on display. Many children make effective use of mathematical vocabulary linked to size, in the role-play shoe shop. For example, they confidently discuss who has the biggest or smallest feet, when buying shoes. A few children understand that they can exchange money for goods when buying items from the outdoor garden centre.

Many children have effective physical and coordination skills. They manipulate a range of smaller items, such as chinks and glue sticks, with little support. They balance well when walking along different obstacles outside. Most enjoy creating magic potions, carefully pouring water from different sized containers to make and mix their potions. Many demonstrate good hand-eye coordination when digging and planting potatoes and small seeds into pots.

Many children have a limited range of age-appropriate ICT skills to support their learning. They operate a range of electronic devices purposefully, for example using a tablet computer to take photographs of their own work independently. A few children use headsets, switching them on and off, to listen to songs. However, overall children's ICT skills are underdeveloped.

Most children show creativity in their work and play. For instance, they choose to paint paper Easter eggs and access craft workstations independently to enhance their pictures with imaginative patterns. Most enjoy dance sessions and move freely with long ribbons, in different directions. This supports their understanding of spatial awareness and positional language well, as many understand high, low, in front of and to the side.

Children's thinking and problem solving skills are developing successfully. For example, children enjoy using a variety of different sized cardboard boxes outdoors, to construct a truck. When they think a box is too small to sit in, they look for a bigger one in case they get stuck.

Children who attend the school's 'rising threes' groups and those in the Communication Class, make sound progress, particularly in the development of their mathematical, creative and personal and social skills. Most children in the Communication Class follow visual schedules well. They take and replace activity cards to indicate where they would like to learn, confidently. Many match the shapes in simple puzzles and sequence numbers in numerical order, accurately. Many enjoy craft activities and painting and can manipulate smaller objects such as small building bricks skilfully.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all children feel safe, secure and enjoy coming to nursery school. They engage confidently with staff and visitors. Most interact appropriately with one another, playing together co-operatively whilst undertaking a wide range of tasks.

A majority of children have a basic understanding of the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods and understand the importance of exercise. All enjoy preparing healthy snacks and most are willing to try different foods.

Nearly all children enthusiastically and actively engage in a range of outdoor activities, such as fetching water for the plants and using wheelbarrows to transport gardening tools from one place to another. Many sustain concentration and persevere well with a range of tasks and activities, for example filling plant pots with compost and planting small seeds.

Nearly all children have an increasing understanding of the importance of caring for the environment through activities such as 'trash or treasure', where they learn about living and non-living things. Older children willingly take on responsibility for looking after their younger classmates and those in the Communication Class. For instance, they help them pour drinks, turn taps on and off and put on their wellingtons. Nearly all pupils behave well, and are polite and well-mannered. Most are sensitive to the needs of others.

Nearly all children take on new learning opportunities confidently. They work independently, accessing appropriate tools and resources as they need them. Most happily work in pairs and small groups, taking care when trying out experiences that involve reasonable risk. For example, they work cautiously when peeling carrots as part of a forest school activity.

Many children actively explore their own ideas and initiate their own learning. For example, they suggest 'stomp' activities when looking at dinosaurs. Another group of children choose to develop making a magic potion into a tea making game.

In the Communication Class, all children engage well with the diverse range of activities on offer. They respond to visual and verbal prompts and timetables appropriately, for example following picture cards to move from one activity to another. They develop their personal and social skills successfully.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

All teachers and learning support assistants adopt a caring and nurturing approach towards the children. They understand their individual academic and emotional needs exceptionally well. This enables children to settle quickly and happily, at the start of each session. Staff have a solid understanding of early years' foundation phase principles and practice. They use 'talking and thinking books' well to encourage children to share their ideas. All understand the needs of young children, and thoughtfully adapt their planning to take account of the children's changing interests and suggestions. Staff praise children regularly, this helps to support high levels of engagement. Most staff know when to intervene to move children's learning on, and when to step back to allow them time to investigate. This helps promote high levels of independence, curiosity and perseverance.

Many staff ask open-ended questions skilfully to check children's understanding. The use of 'in the moment', when staff observe and records children's independent learning, provides a valuable opportunity for them to move children on to their next step or to help reinforce a particular skill if they are struggling. All staff encourage children to develop their thinking skills. For example, when investigating what happens to an ice cube if it is held, thoughtful teacher questioning prompts children to give sensible explanations of why the ice starts to melt, stating that their hands are hot. Staff use stories as a useful starting point to encourage children to find solutions to problems. When reading the story of Geronimo, about a penguin who thought he could fly, children enjoy discussing how they could help him to fly.

The nursery regularly uses its local environment and trips, to enrich children's learning experiences, such as a visit to Newport Wetlands as part of their work on living things. Children took part in pond dipping and observed how seasonal changes affected the trees. Visits to the local church to take part in celebrations and craft activities with parents foster a real sense of community.

Staff are effective language role models who develop and extend children's vocabulary and mathematical language successfully. When planting seeds outside children stated, 'if I plant this bean it will grow tall, but it needs water, do you think it will be huge like Jim's magic bean?'

Opportunities to support the development of children's communication skills are particularly effective, in both the nursery class and the Communication Class. The use of group discussions and story time encourages children's speaking and listening skills in a fun and interactive way. In the Communication Class staff use daily 'bucket time' to encourage good sitting and listening. They create an air of excitement and anticipation as they pull toys, such as a wind up chick and a penguin that shoots a

small ball from its mouth, from the bucket. The use of visual cues enables many children that are non-verbal, to independently choose which activities they wish to undertake.

Staff provide interesting opportunities for mark making, which children take part in readily. For example, they use shaving foam to make patterns with their fingers. Most staff model Welsh well and, as a result, children clearly enjoy trying to use Welsh words and sing songs in their play.

Staff encourage children to use tablet computers in many areas of learning. They offer opportunities for children to operate a remote control caterpillar and robot, with increasing independence. This develops children's understanding of direction and simple programming suitably. However, in general planning for the systematic development of children's ICT skills is at an early stage.

There is effective planning for children to develop their numeracy skills. Resources such as an outdoor sand pit, a variety of different sized containers, and wooden blocks, develop children's mathematical concepts and language well. Children undertake a shape hunt and count and tally the different shapes they find. Staff use stories such as 'We Are Going on a Bear Hunt' imaginatively, to encourage children to count and sort bears by size and colour.

Staff plan regular opportunities for children to develop their creative and physical skills. For example, children make and decorate plant pots from recycling plastic milk containers. Staff ensure the outdoor environment has plentiful opportunities for balancing and digging, which children engage in enthusiastically. Children in the Communication Class enjoy jumping on the small trampoline.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a friendly and inclusive environment with a warm and caring family ethos. Staff know the children and their families exceptionally well as a result of the strong links they establish with them before and during their time at the nursery. The school integrates children that attend the Communication Class into the wider life of the school effectively.

Staff provide good opportunities for parents to engage with their children's learning. For example, staff invite parents to various 'stay and play' activities, such as cookery sessions and a magic bean hunt. The school keeps parents informed well about their child's progress and provides them with useful support and ideas for activities to try at home, for example developing their numeracy skills through simple cooking activities.

The nursery school provides an effective range of learning experiences to support the personal and social needs of the children. For example, staff brought the theme of 'looking after yourself and others' to life by asking a mother to bring her baby to school. She showed the children how to care and look after the baby. This helped the children to consider how they care for others. Circle time is a regular feature that is reactive to the current needs of the children, for example in addressing issues over road safety and understanding the importance of showing respect to each other. They sing songs in the local church and listen to a variety of music from different parts of the world. This develops their spiritual, moral and cultural understanding effectively.

The provision for children with additional learning needs is effective. The additional needs co-ordinator has a solid knowledge of individual children's needs. She works closely with other staff, external agencies and parents, to produce detailed individual development plans that include measurable and challenging targets for children. Staff undertake on entry baseline assessments to gain a clear understanding of how they can move children's learning on. Leaders use an appropriate system for tracking children's progress against expected outcomes over time. The school keeps parents informed well about their child's progress and provides them with useful support and ideas for activities to try at home.

In the Communication Class, staff track children's progress suitably. They match individual targets well to the children's specific needs and review these regularly. However, across the school, current assessments and the tracking of progress for pupils with additional learning needs are too broad. This does not always enable staff to identify clearly the small but important steps children make or to be specific enough about the next steps in their learning.

Staff use links with a wide range of partners to provide support to children, for example speech and language specialists. Recently established links with two local special schools have helped to assist with transition arrangements for additional learning needs pupils. This also supports staff to develop their skills in supporting children with specific additional learning needs.

Staff use topics along with daily routines, to promote the importance of a healthy diet and exercise, for example eating healthy snacks at playtimes. Children have daily access to the outdoors and are encouraged to be active. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. Staff take good account of children's interests. For example, they organised a trip to Caerphilly Castle following their fascination with medieval knights.

Arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. However, the inspection team identified several areas of concern relating to site health and safety matters, which they brought to the attention of the headteacher and the governing body.

Leadership and management: Good

The executive headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership. She has established in a short time an effective learning community. Her clear communication skills contribute successfully to the school's productive relationships with all stakeholders. As a result, staff, parents and governors feel valued and share the school's vision for ensuring the wellbeing of children and raising standards.

Leaders base their vision for the school around placing the individual child's needs at the centre of learning. They create a welcoming family ethos where children are encouraged to achieve the best they can. All staff work successfully as a team to plan interesting learning activities to ensure they create a stimulating environment where children thrive.

Leaders put in place effective processes to ensure that teachers and learning support staff are clear about their responsibilities. Performance management targets link

closely to the nursery school's development plan priorities. This contributes successfully to ensuring that teaching and learning are consistent and highly effective. Leaders ensure beneficial professional learning opportunities for staff. For example, all staff take part in research around how best to support children with additional educational needs, for example with their letters and sounds.

The nursery has suitable processes to evaluate its performance and to plan for improvement. Leaders analyse information on children's performance and the quality of teaching and provision through looking at children's work and via lesson observations. They gather the views of stakeholders effectively. For example, staff and parents recently completed questionnaires about different aspects of school life. Leaders used this information skilfully to identify areas for improvement and incorporated them into a detailed action plan. The school is beginning to develop a positive track record of improvement. For example, self-evaluation and school improvement activities have led to more effective planning for children's skill development and better outcomes. However, in general, monitoring and evaluating the impact of school improvement targets is at an early stage of development.

The governing body supports the school suitably. Governors make valuable contributions to the day-to-day running of the nursery. For example, the resource and finance subcommittee members ensure effective staffing ratios and monitor the budget carefully. Governors have put in place suitable plans to reduce the school's deficit budget. They are fully aware of the deficit budget and are taking steps to address this. Governors work closely with the executive headteacher and carry out their duties diligently. However, currently they do not have a direct input into reviewing and evaluating progress. This impacts on their ability to act as a critical friend and to have an accurate understanding of how well children are achieving.

Leaders ensure that the school has worthwhile resources to support all children's learning needs, including an engaging learning environment. The outdoor area in the nursery provides a variety of valuable opportunities for children to develop their physical and creative skills. Parents regularly support the school in developing and enhancing different areas. For example, the recent Gardening Gang event helped the nursery to develop the garden further by planting flowers and vegetables.

The school uses the early years development grant to provide valuable individual and group support for vulnerable learners, which develops their skills and wellbeing effectively. For example, learning support assistants deliver support to small groups of children to develop their speaking and listening and concentration skills as part of their wellbeing development.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website www.estyn.gov.wales

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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