



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: focused improvement**

**St Asaph Community Playgroup
The Canteen
St Asaph Infant School
Upper Denbigh Rd
St Asaph
LL17 0RL**

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by

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

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Outcome of monitoring

St Asaph Community Playgroup is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in March 2017.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the setting from any further follow-up activity.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Plan to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills progressively across all areas of learning

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

In their interactions with the children, practitioners develop children's communication, listening and numeracy skills well. For example, they encourage children to use the correct mathematical vocabulary when they compare the different sized fish in their story at the beginning of the session. Practitioners engage in purposeful conversations with children to develop their language. For example, they extend children's vocabulary well when they encourage children to choose different flavours of ice cream in their play.

Practitioners plan worthwhile opportunities for children to develop a broad range of literacy and numeracy skills in their free play, and by adding resources to the different areas of learning, successfully. For example, they encourage children to recognise the initial letter of their name on placemats at snack time, and read stories to them regularly. Children use the bright and comfortable book area independently and are eager to look at the books linked to their seaside theme. As a result, many learn to handle and appreciate books appropriately. There are valuable opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills in different areas. For example, they learn to recognise the numbers on the back of their bikes in the outdoors, and match the different fish in the water tray with the correct photograph on a nearby board.

Practitioners use the foundation phase framework effectively to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills systematically over time. They plan regular opportunities for children to use and apply their numeracy skills across areas of learning, both indoors and outside. This leads to improvements in children's oracy, mark making and number skills. For example, practitioners encourage children to develop their mark making skills when they use the different sized paintbrushes and chalks to make patterns and pictures outdoors.

Recommendation 2: Plan regular opportunities to develop children's information and communication technology skills systematically

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The setting provides a worthwhile range of information and communication technology (ICT) resources that are continuously available to children. These include a tablet computer, remote control cars, illuminated writing pads and a laptop

computer. Practitioners identify regular opportunities for children to use the ICT equipment for different purposes as part of their fortnightly planning. For example, they encourage children to record themselves on portable devices and then play this back to others. As a result, children become familiar with the resources and develop their ability to use them independently.

Practitioners plan specific opportunities to develop children's ICT skills systematically. For example, over time they have focused on teaching children to use the computer mouse so that they can access games that develop their literacy skills on a laptop computer. Practitioners look for worthwhile opportunities to develop children's ICT skills progressively linked to topic work. For example, children use a simple computer programme to draw pictures of fish as part of their current theme. This impacts positively on improving children's skills and outcomes.

Recommendation 3: Improve the setting's use of assessment to evaluate children's attainment and measure their progress accurately to inform their next steps in learning

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

When children start their early education at the setting, practitioners observe and record useful information to establish their starting point. They transfer relevant information to children's individual assessment booklets, to show the progress they make over time in the different areas of learning.

During regular planning meetings, practitioners evaluate how well children achieve in developing specific skills in adult-led tasks, and in their free play. They record this effectively on the planning sheets. For example, they identify where children need more practice to use scissors successfully.

Practitioners have developed a useful system using different symbols to help track next steps in their planning documents. They use this system increasingly well to support children to make systematic progress. Practitioners keep an appropriate record of children's achievements on sticky notes in assessment booklets. These focus suitably on what children can do and help develop a useful picture of how well children progress during their time in the setting. However, they do not always use this information well enough to challenge children that are more able.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen the role of the management committee to fulfil their responsibilities as an effective critical friend

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

There is an established committee and elected key officers, who work well to challenge and support the work of the setting. Processes for involving the committee in the setting's work are effective. The committee and practitioners meet monthly which enables the setting leader and practitioners to keep the committee fully informed about how well the setting is progressing. The committee discusses important issues such as monitoring the progress the setting is making towards meeting recommendations from the core inspection and targets for improvement in

the setting development plan.

The experienced committee chairperson supports practitioners well. For example, through regular visits to the setting, she develops practitioners' understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for development. The committee analyse responses from questionnaires to parents, which helps the setting respond appropriately to their views. In response to parental feedback, practitioners send out informative newsletters to explain current topics. This helps parents to support their child at home successfully.

Steps to ensure that the management committee fulfils its responsibilities as an effective critical friend are successful. They play an active role in the setting's self-evaluation processes. For example, at each meeting they discuss the progress made against targets, the impact on provision and children's outcomes.

Recommendation 5: Develop rigorous self-evaluation procedures that focus clearly on teaching and learning to identify the setting's strengths and areas for development clearly

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Practitioners contribute successfully to evaluating the setting's work through informal discussions at staff meetings, and when evaluating progress in their fortnightly plans. This helps build up a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development and informs future planning well. Practitioners have attended training on self-evaluation and setting improvement planning. They have now taken full ownership of the process and adapted the document successfully to meet their needs. This supports the setting in making improvements to the provision for developing children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills successfully. Practitioners have identified accurately the need to improve and make better use of the outdoor area to support children in their skill development. As a result, practitioners provide a broad range of activities. For example, children develop beneficial co-ordination skills when they throw and catch balls, and improve their mathematical vocabulary as they empty and fill different sized containers in the sand and water area.

Processes for involving all practitioners in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning formally, are developing well. They use their knowledge and skills to learn from one another to improve standards of teaching. This has a beneficial impact on the delivery of whole group sessions and on planning activities to develop children's ICT skills.

The setting leader consults the committee regularly to seek their views about the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, the committee are more effective in supporting and challenging the setting to bring about improvements.

The setting monitors progress against its action plan regularly. Leaders are beginning to evaluate all areas of the setting's work systematically and analyse the impact of actions more robustly in terms of the progress children make. This is having a notable impact on improving provision, upskilling practitioners and raising children's outcomes.

Recommendation 6: Establish clear links between the self-evaluation document and the setting’s development plan and ensure that all actions for improvement are monitored and evaluated effectively

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

There are clear links between the setting’s development plan and findings from the self-evaluation process. The development plan includes suitable priorities for improvement that link well with recommendations from the core inspection and areas identified in need of improvement. The current document is manageable and supports practitioners in monitoring the impact of identified targets well. Practitioners have simplified the language used so that it is not overly complicated, making it more accessible to all stakeholders. The plan is very much a working document and generally evaluates the impact on children’s standards suitably. Findings feed into future planning, provision and staff development needs effectively.

The setting leader evaluates progress against the inspection recommendations and identified targets successfully in regular team meetings with other setting staff and the committee. This involves everyone in improving the quality of the setting’s work successfully.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the setting should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.