



*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**

**Blessed William Davies Play Group  
Bodnant Crescent  
Llandudno  
Conwy  
LL30 1LL**

**Date of inspection: March 2012**

**by**

**Anne Manning**

**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:

| <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                        |

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.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2012: 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 copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.**

## Context

Blessed William Davies Play Group meets in a classroom in Blessed William Davies School in Llandudno, North Wales and cares for children from the age of two up to full time school age. The children use a classroom with a small kitchen at one end and there are toilets and washing facilities for the children at one side of the room. Outside; there are different spaces that provide good opportunities for a variety of outdoor activities including a field, a garden with a pond and the school yard.

The playgroup opened in January 2000 and the running of the group is carried out by four practitioners and a volunteer. Two of the practitioners are supervisors and also registered persons for the group.

The playgroup is open term time only from 11.30am until 3pm. The group is registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales to provide day care for 26 children. Nursery education is offered every afternoon. At the time of the inspection there was one child present aged three, who was eligible for funding during this Spring Term. The playgroup also provides care for children who attend part time nursery in the school. The last Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales inspection was in January 2012 and this is the second inspection by Estyn.

The group is English speaking, with some Welsh, providing care and education for children from families for whom nearly all English is their first language. The early education group are all White British and no children have additional needs.

The playgroup has an equal opportunities policy and an admission procedure that welcomes all children both catholic and non catholic. The children attending come from a range of backgrounds and most of the children move on from the playgroup to attend the school.

Blessed William Davies Play Group receives support from Conwy Early Education.

## Summary

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>The Setting's current performance</b>       | <b>Good</b> |
| <b>The Setting's prospects for improvement</b> | <b>Good</b> |

### Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

There is a good range of learning experiences.  
Care, support and guidance for the children are good.  
Children are happy and safe in the playgroup.  
All children behave well and form good relationships with one another.  
The level and frequency of Welsh used in the setting are good.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

There is a focus on the learning and achievement of the children.  
Leadership and management of the setting are good.  
Self evaluation is effective and identifies areas for development.  
Partnership working is good.  
Resources effectively support the provision.

## **Recommendations**

R1. Extend the opportunities for ICT.

R2. Limit adult direction and provide more opportunities for the children to explore, experiment and become independent learners.

R3. Strengthen the planning to include the ideas and interests of the children and introduce a more effective evaluation.

### **What happens next?**

The setting will form an action plan showing how it will address the recommendations.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skill development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

### Key Question 2: How good is provision?

**Good**

#### Learning experiences: Good

Comprehensive planning successfully engages all children and practitioners plan flexible, responsive and innovative activities for the children, for example, find the mouse. All children make good progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. Although activities take into account the interests and ideas of the children, these are not always included in the planning. Planning also needs to include a more effective evaluation.

The curriculum builds on children's existing knowledge and understanding and most are beginning to acquire good thinking skills across all areas of learning. Children are confident to try new experiences such as a sound tube and were happy to explain how it worked to the inspector. Activities and experiences effectively encourage children to form relationships with each other and with adults around them. They show respect for all cultural backgrounds.

Practitioners provide good opportunities to look at books including those written in Welsh. They use a good level and frequency of Welsh and effectively encourage the children both during circle time and throughout the session. The children are confident and keen to respond spontaneously in Welsh. There are good opportunities for mark making with a range of methods including mud and blackberries. A few children are starting to write their own name.

Although there is a remote control car and B Bot, a programmable toy, the children do not have sufficient opportunity or resources to develop their skills in ICT. They do not use a computer or have opportunities to operate equipment such as a CD player or camera.

Learning experiences actively enable children to develop literacy, physical and creative skills and to widen their understanding of the world around them as they celebrate festivals such as St David's Day and St Patrick's Day. There are good opportunities for outdoor play in the nursery garden that include planting, short walks and playing on large equipment. Children learn about caring for living things by observing a hamster, crickets, planting flowers, and helping to grow vegetables.

Visits in the locality and visitors to the setting, including a baby, extend the learning of the children. There are good opportunities provided for role play and the children had re-created a train from boxes and a station as a result of a train ride from Llandudno to Colwyn Bay.

Children learn about re-cycling through their junk modelling and reclaiming items such as tyres to use as flower planters.

### **Teaching: Good**

Practitioners have knowledge of child development and manage the behaviour of the children well. There are four staff, three qualified to level 3, one qualified to level 1 and a volunteer who is undertaking training.

Practitioners use language well and are very good role models for the children. They use both indoors and outdoors for challenging activities that meet the needs of the children, for example, an egg hunt. The practitioners use a high level and frequency of Welsh with the children throughout the session and actively encourage the children to respond.

Questioning techniques are effective and extend the learning and the achievements of the children. Although they use techniques to develop and progress their learning, practitioners do not always intervene appropriately to let the children discover for themselves and there is often too much emphasis on adult directed play and teaching strategies that do not always promote independent learning.

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

The playgroup has a range of policies and procedures to support the children and actively promotes their health and wellbeing including their moral, social and cultural development. There are appropriate policies and procedures in respect of safeguarding and practitioners have undertaken training.

The group encourages the children to distinguish right from wrong and fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect and effectively develops an understanding of living and sharing with others.

The children are starting to develop a sense of awe and wonder about the world in which they live and their spiritual development is taken into account by saying a short prayer before eating using Makaton sign language.

A key worker system in the setting effectively provides consistency and strategies are in place to assist children and to work with parents and other professionals. There is a named special needs/behaviour co-ordinator in the group and children and their families are well supported.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The playgroup uses a classroom in the school and there is a small outdoor area for play directly outside the room. The group also have use of a large playing field and school yard and a small garden with picnic benches and a pond. These provide good opportunities for different outdoor activities, for example, picking blackberries.

There is a well established ethos and the group has developed an inclusive setting that values the diversity of background of the children.

Equal access to the curriculum is offered and there is a range of policies and procedures to support the children including equal opportunities and complaints. Resources are appropriate and suitable and sufficient to address the requirements of the Foundation Phase and the needs of the children. Accommodation is used effectively and the local environment is used to enhance the facilities at the setting.

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b> | <b>Good</b> |
|--|-------------|

### **Leadership: Good**

The setting is well managed with a very low staff turn over. The majority of the practitioners have been in the setting for many years. There is a positive ethos, clear direction and purpose that effectively promotes and sustains improvement. Values, aims and objectives are shared and all are working for the benefit of the children. Practitioners and children are valued and managed well.

There are high expectations and well established links with parents that effectively support the learning of the children. Appraisals ensure that practitioners can improve their practice.

The leaders fully understand their role, are involved in the day to day running of the playgroup and are well informed about the performance of the setting. Relevant legislation and guidance are taken into account and information is used well to make informed decisions. Pre-inspection information was very well organised and presented giving a complete and reflective view of the service.

Leaders are successful in meeting national and local priorities, for example, healthy eating.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Self-evaluation effectively identifies strengths and areas for improvement and the setting actively uses information to prioritise changes. Development programmes for the practitioners and the provision result in positive gains for the children. The setting has made good progress since their previous Estyn inspection.

Practitioners are engaged in professional development and attend courses that effectively raise standards and the support the well being of the children.



Practitioners share their expertise and knowledge to benefit each other and ensure a positive impact on the setting.

**Partnership working: Good**

A successful range of partnership working effectively enhances and supports the learning and achievements of the children and improves standards. There is a good relationship with the school and when the children are ready to leave the setting they make visits to the nursery.

The playgroup are keen to further extend their partnership with the school by working together more closely to include sharing ICT resources and community visits to develop the learning and progress the children.

Parents have information about the playgroup and the Foundation Phase that is displayed on a window of the room and on an information board. There is a news letter every half term to effectively let parents know what is happening in the group. Parents complete questionnaires about the playgroup within six weeks of their children attending and are actively informed of their progress by speaking to the practitioners and an assessment booklet, Me and a Treasure Book.

There is a good working relationship with the local authority teacher who visits the setting, providing support and guidance and suggesting learning experiences that impact positively on the progress and achievements of the children.

The playgroup is an active member of the Wales Pre-School Providers Association, and partnership working with other professionals ensures active support for any children with additional needs.

Practitioners undertake training and meet up with colleagues from other groups and share good practice. The group have recently developed their outdoor space and have visited a resource centre to get ideas to effectively develop this provision.

**Resource management: Good**

Practitioners including volunteers are well deployed and resources are used well. The setting has a range of resources that are effective in motivating the children to learn. Future resource needs are planned for and take into account the developing needs of the children.

The outdoors is used well to develop the skills of the children across the areas of learning.

Leaders effectively deploy the setting's own resources and use initiative to develop their own, for example, the new Easter mat to use with B Bot the programmable toy. There is a good understanding of budget matters and spending is prioritised to develop the setting and improve outcomes for the children.

The funding that is received is used well and the playgroup provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received. (This is because there were only a small number of relevant children at the time of the inspection.)

### Responses to discussions with children

Children are happy and confident and enjoy coming to the group. They like all the staff and the activities particularly outside such as the egg hunt and going on the train.

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

|              |                     |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Anne Manning | Reporting Inspector |
|--------------|---------------------|

### Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.

## 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 partnership's 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>National Childminding Association (NCMA)</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 (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.  |