



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

Little Treasures
Victoria Community Primary School
Poyser Street
Wrexham
LL13 7R

Date of inspection: June 2012

by

Mary Dyas

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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About the setting

Little Treasures is an English-medium setting based in Victoria Community Primary School in Wrexham. The setting is in its second year and only opens from January to July to accommodate the three-year-olds in the local area who are eligible for funding from the Wrexham Early Education team. The accommodation available to the setting comprises a single room with a small kitchen area for food preparation and a dedicated outdoor space with additional access to a larger playground when it is not being used by the school's Foundation Phase.

The setting is open from 9am to 11.30am from Monday to Friday and is registered for up to 18 children per session. At the time of the inspection there were 19 children on roll all of whom were in receipt of funded educational provision and registered for four sessions each a week.

The setting serves the local area and children are considered to come from a wide range of social backgrounds which are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Thirty-seven per cent of children currently attending the setting do not speak English as their home language which is more than double the percentage for the school. The setting welcomes all children and makes good provision for those with additional learning needs. At the time of the inspection there were three children who had been identified as having additional learning needs.

The nursery was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in June 2012 and this is the first 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 judged to be good because:

- all children are happy in the setting and enjoy their activities;
- all children make good progress from their starting points;
- the setting provides a good range of stimulating and interesting planned experiences to stimulate the children's interest; relationships between adults and children are warm and caring;
- the staff team is enthusiastic and committed to providing high quality education and care; and
- the supervisor has put good quality provision in place to support all children including those with English as an Additional Language, those with additional learning needs and those with high ability.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the supervisor, supported by the management committee, has a clear vision and strategic direction for the setting;
- although the setting has only been running for less than four terms, good quality provision is already firmly in place with many aspects showing work of a high standard;
- the supervisor and her assistants are fully committed to providing high quality care and education;
- the self-evaluation process, although relatively recent, is of good quality; and
- there is evidence that targets for improvement are already being positively addressed.

Recommendations

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

What happens next?

In order to improve the setting needs to:

R1 continue to refine the systems for observation of children's progress to inform pupil's profiles and reporting to parents;

R2 continue to develop and embed practitioners' skills in high quality questioning and appropriate intervention;

R3 continue to improve information to parents about the activities planned and ways in which they can support their children's learning.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

During their time in Little Treasures all children make good progress and achieve well in relation to their starting points. Most make good progress with numeracy and mathematical skills. They count confidently to ten by rote and many are able to count objects accurately to at least three. A few children are beginning to recognise some written numerals, for example when parking their bikes outside.

Many children communicate clearly and are confident to talk to adults about what they are doing and most carry out instructions promptly. Almost all children enjoy stories in both English and Welsh, show an interest in books and their content and handle them correctly. The majority practise mark making in a range of media and a minority are beginning to write their names independently. Many children express themselves to music, dancing joyfully along and also making sounds themselves with the range of outdoor musical instruments.

Most children are making good progress in their understanding and use of ICT as they play confidently with a range of electronic toys and equipment. A majority of children understand the simple Welsh words and phrases to which they have been introduced and most join in singing Welsh songs with enthusiasm.

Wellbeing: Good

All children are happy in the setting and enjoy their experiences. The warm relationships they have with their practitioners make them feel safe, happy and confident. Most have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and that good food and exercise are important to make them healthy. Most identify healthy foods and things they should not eat.

All children develop a positive attitude towards learning which they demonstrate by taking an active and enthusiastic part in their learning experiences. Most concentrate on an activity for age appropriate lengths of time and become absorbed in their tasks which they complete to their satisfaction. All children behave well and respond positively to the bell which tells them it is time to tidy up.

Most children make friendships in the setting and show care and concern for one another. They are developing an understanding of the needs of other people in the community and around the world through their involvement in fund raising activities.

Children play in self selecting groups, in pairs and independently depending on the activity in which they are involved. They understand the need to play sensibly and to be considerate of others and most share and take turns well; for example when wanting to ride one of the bikes out doors or to have an apron to play in the water tray.

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

The playgroup provides children with a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities. Planning is done collaboratively but does not yet include children's ideas. It is flexible and provides for continuity in children's learning. There is good provision to develop children's communication, numeracy and information technology skills and the curriculum meets the Foundation Phase learning outcomes. Good use is made of the available outdoor areas to extend the children's learning experiences.

Welsh is well used during registration time and practitioners use Welsh words incidentally throughout the sessions. Children count in Welsh when prompted and a majority know some colours in Welsh when asked. All children celebrate and learn about Welsh culture and traditions when they celebrate St David's Day.

All children are beginning to learn about sustainability and global citizenship as they use the water from the water play to water the plants. The setting is planning to take part in the school's paper recycling. There are many opportunities for children to learn about other cultures and communities through celebration of a range of festivals.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners demonstrate an understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase and support the children well in their learning. Due to the fact that there have been staff changes over a short period of time, the use of good-quality questioning skills has not yet been embedded. There is an appropriate balance of child-selected and adult-led activities and adult support is well directed at developing children's language. Resources are well used to support the teaching and learning. Practitioners are very concerned about the welfare of the children and provide a warm and caring environment which enables children to thrive and to make good all round progress.

Practitioners make useful and evaluative observations of children's learning and achievements during the sessions. These comments are used to inform the completion of the Local Authority's 'This is Me' profile and parents and carers have an opportunity to visit the setting to discuss their child's progress in the summer term. Evaluations of focus activities clearly reflect the intended learning and identify the next steps for the group and/or individuals. A note is added when this has been addressed in future planned activities. This is excellent practice.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has good arrangements to ensure children's health and wellbeing and arrangements for the support of children with additional learning needs. Good procedures are in place to ensure that children settle well when they start. The setting provides a warm and welcoming environment for the children and staff are particularly attentive at the beginning of the session to support individual children. Almost all children attending the setting move on to the primary school and practitioners work closely with staff from the Early Years department to ensure a smooth transition.

The setting has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding. All practitioners have received up to date training and understand their roles and responsibilities. Other policies are appropriately detailed and relevant. Learning experiences promote children's personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The children visit places outside the setting, such as the post office and library, and learn from visitors to the setting.

Learning environment: Good

Little treasures is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to all areas of the settings provision. A particularly strong feature of the setting is the very positive ethos where staff and children are valued and respected. Behaviour is good and few examples of inappropriate behaviour were seen during the inspection. Most children share well and take an interest in each other. The physical environment is appropriate for physical disabilities and enables full participation in all activities.

The setting employs sufficient appropriately qualified practitioners to deliver the Foundation Phase curriculum. Practitioners work together as a strong team to create a stimulating learning environment and make effective use of the good range of available resources. They guide and support the children well in their chosen activities. The resources available support the teaching and learning and are readily accessible to the children. The accommodation is in good decorative order with recent examples of children's work on display and interesting activities, both indoors and outside, which encourage children's involvement.

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

The setting supervisor is very committed and enthusiastic. She knows her setting well and motivates her staff positively. All staff are warm and friendly and this creates a caring environment where children are enabled to thrive. A clear sense of purpose and a desire for improvement is shared by the whole staff team. All are keen to receive and act on advice and suggestions in order to raise standards in the playgroup. The setting is managed by a management committee which includes the

headteacher and chair of governors of the primary school who provide strong, positive and practical support. The committee meets regularly and is well informed about the work of the setting.

The setting has clear policies and aims which are understood and implemented by all practitioners. There is a well established appraisal system in place to support and improve staff. Practitioners respond appropriately to national and local priorities and are fully involved in training and developments connected with the Foundation Phase.

Improving quality: Good

Self evaluation in the setting is developing and practitioners know their setting well. They have discussed the strengths and areas of relative weakness across the setting and the subsequent self-evaluation document is honest and clearly identifies areas for improvement. These are already being addressed. As the setting has only recently been established this is the first formal self-evaluation and parent's views were not sought.

Practitioners have undertaken training with the local authority regarding aspects of the Foundation Phase, and they effectively evaluate and share ideas with one another. The setting leader has good links with other registered providers in the area and has met and visited them to share good practice.

Partnership working: Good

Practitioners have developed positive relationships with parents of the children in their care and are always available at the beginning and end of each session for informal discussions. Newsletters provide information of some of the activities that are planned.

Very good links exist between the setting and the primary school to which almost all children transfer. The setting is very much part of the school and the headteacher, children and staff regularly pass through the room. There is good communication with the Early Years department in the school to ensure they are well informed about the children and staff from the nursery visit to talk to the children. Taster sessions are also arranged for the children to attend the nursery with their parents. Overall, such arrangements are very beneficial and also ease the transfer of children to the next stage of their education.

The setting enjoys a very positive relationship with the Early Years link teacher from the local authority who provides support and advice. There is clear evidence that this advice has been acted on to improve provision for the children.

Resource management: Good

The management committee manages the setting's budget efficiently and has targeted finances effectively to develop the resources for the outdoors.

The indoor and outdoor areas available to the setting have resources of a good quality that are appropriate for the age of the children and are used appropriately to support the planned activities.

Overall, the setting achieves good outcomes for children and 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.

Responses to discussions with children

All children thoroughly enjoy their sessions in the setting. They say that they like the things they do there and also like playing with their friends. They feel safe and know that if they have a problem they would tell an adult.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mary Dyas	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)

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

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	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	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.
Foundation Phase	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.
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.
Local authority advisory teacher	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.
Mudiad Meithrin	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.

National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National (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.