



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

**Llanfaes Tots
Llanfaes C. P. School
Beilihelig Road
Brecon
Powys
LD3 8EB**

Date of inspection: February 2012

by

**Michael T. Ridout
Reporting Inspector**

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

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

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: 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

Llanfaes Tots is an English-medium setting. It is situated on the outskirts of the market town of Brecon. The setting meets in Llanfaes Primary School and provides sessional day care and education for three year olds. Most families live in Brecon and a few come from the surrounding area.

The children who attend the setting have a range of backgrounds. The locality is described as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Nearly all children have English as their home language. A very few speak English as an additional language. No families speak Welsh at home. A very few have additional learning needs (ALN).

The setting is open daily during school terms. It is registered for 16 children between the age of three and admission to school. At the time of the inspection there were 23 children on roll. The local authority (LA) funds places up to 10 hours per week.

The setting moved into purpose built accommodation in November 2011.

The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in November 2011. This is the setting's first inspection by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's performance is good because:

- most children achieve good standards;
- they are happy, confident and well motivated;
- teaching is effective;
- high quality support and guidance assures children's wellbeing; and
- the setting is well led and organised.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- good leadership ensures clear direction;
- a teamwork ethos and shared sense of purpose are evident;
- the setting improvement plan (SIP) identifies relevant goals; and
- there is an established record of improvement.

Recommendations

In order to improve further the setting should:

- R1 enhance children's competence in Welsh and information communication technology (ICT);
- R2 sharpen planning and assessments to identify small steps in learning for children of different abilities;
- R3 guide the work of practitioners in leading activities and maximise learning opportunities in the new accommodation.

Most elements of these recommendations are identified in the SIP.

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most children come to the setting with well developed skills for their age and stage of development. They make good overall progress as they acquire new knowledge and successfully develop their skills. They appear happy, confident learners as they eagerly explore their surroundings and try out new experiences. All children apply their skills well to a wide range of structured play activities.

Nearly all children have very good communication skills. They listen attentively and use a wide vocabulary and simple sentences to express themselves clearly. Most are inquisitive and readily ask questions and initiate simple conversations. A few engage in extended dialogues. Most readily contribute to group discussions, join in with songs and engage in role play. They enjoy listening to stories and show good awareness that text and pictures convey the story. Nearly all recognise their name and a few identify letters and sounds. Most steadily develop early writing skills through mark making, for example when 'writing' a letter to the vet.

Children make good progress in early mathematical skills. Most confidently count to at least ten and many beyond, but a few are less secure in matching and ordering numbers. Most use appropriate mathematical language to describe shapes including, square, rectangle, triangle and circle, and steadily develop their understanding of mathematical concepts through structured activities.

Progress in knowledge and understanding and in the creative and physical aspects of learning is generally good, but children's skills in using a range of ICT are less well developed.

Children's progress in Welsh language is good. Many show increasing understanding of phrases and instructions within daily routines. Their competence in counting, naming colours and describing the weather is often good during group activities, but few use Welsh spontaneously when engaged in activities.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children enter the setting confidently and readily engage in the activities provided. For their ages almost all the children show very good levels of independence. They are well motivated, have positive attitudes and sustain interest and concentration well. Most readily make choices about how and what they learn within the setting, but their involvement in helping to plan and develop activities is limited.

In line with their age nearly all children have an appropriate understanding of the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise. They are aware of the need to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Nearly all develop good social skills, eat a range of healthy foods prepared for them by their parents and enthusiastically participate in energetic activities.

All children demonstrate high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Friendly and supportive relationships and the development of children's collaborative skills during play activities are strong features. The positive role models set by adults helps children to feel safe and secure. They participate enthusiastically in structured games and their behaviour is very good. Nearly all show courtesy and appropriate consideration for others. They take turns, share equipment, look after resources and develop responsibility, for example as Helpwer Heddiw.

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

Learning experiences: Good

The setting provides a wide variety of learning experiences that meets the range of most children's needs well. Activities successfully engage their interest and appropriately promote progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes. The provision meets well the needs of the community.

Detailed planning is systematic and securely based on the Foundation Phase Child Development Profile and Skills Framework. Weekly plans provide a sound basis to guide teaching and the setting leader has begun to identify specific skills to develop with individual children. The implementation of planning is flexible and the ways of developing activities identified are helpful in guiding practitioners. Broad themes link key activities and all areas of learning are clearly evident. There is an appropriate balance of focused and continuous activities. Opportunities for children to consolidate skills in different contexts are developing well in the new setting. Planning builds on children's prior knowledge and skills, but levels of challenge to enhance the skills of more able children vary. There is good emphasis on promoting skills in literacy and numeracy, but the promotion of skills in ICT is less well developed.

Planning shows a good understanding of the Foundation Phase and is well structured to ensure the progressive development of skills. On occasions practitioners develop children's learning very well, but planning provides too few details of the small steps in learning to achieve a learning outcome.

Good opportunities are planned for children to encounter new experiences, solve problems and encourage them to become independent. Practitioners know the children very well and the provision nurtures respect and tolerance and appropriately promotes awareness of different cultures. The use of visitors to promote wider awareness of the world is limited and this is a focus for development. Activities such as recycling and composting well promote awareness of sustainability and the impact we have on the environment.

Good provision is made to promote awareness of the culture and traditions of Wales and practitioners, who are all learners of Welsh, successfully promote the language during focused sessions. However, the spontaneous use of Welsh within the setting is less evident.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is effective and the setting leader provides a good role model. All practitioners are aware of the planned activities and have a sound understanding of

the Foundation Phase and child development. They provide good language models and use a range of approaches to stimulate play and active learning. Activities are well structured and the children respond well to this. They are given sufficient time to complete tasks and practitioners intervene sensitively and appropriately when needed. On occasions practitioners use open-ended questioning well to challenge children's thinking. Teaching is most effective when practitioners encourage children to extend their learning and feedback is given to celebrate achievement. There is an appropriate balance between child selected and practitioner led activities. Planning provides sound guidance for teaching, but details of the expected steps in learning for children of different abilities are not always well enough defined.

There are regular and comprehensive arrangements to assess children's learning. Practitioners record day-to-day observations that contribute to individual learning records. This information is discussed and increasingly used to adjust provision and guide learning. In addition the setting leader implements focused assessments. The detailed records compiled provide a good basis to link assessments to the learning objectives for different activities and to help plan the next steps in learning.

Practitioners make time, on an informal basis, to be available for parents or carers to discuss their child's progress before and after sessions. A detailed report of progress is provided when children leave the setting.

Care, support and guidance: Good

High quality care, support and guidance is provided. Arrangements to ensure children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. This provision contributes very well to children's personal and social development. It nurtures a sense of curiosity about the world, fosters the values of honesty and fairness and strongly promotes good behaviour. The celebration of festivals, including the making and tasting of different foods, promotes cultural development well, but the spiritual aspect is less evident.

There are effective induction and transition arrangements for children joining or leaving the setting. Liaison with staff in the primary school is good.

Arrangements to provide children with personal and specialist support when required are appropriate. These include beneficial links with the primary school and relevant LA services that assist the integration of children with ALN. The support provided for more able children is sound, but opportunities to tailor provision to their particular needs are not always fully developed.

Systematic procedures ensure the setting is safe and secure. Appropriate risk assessments are implemented and practitioners have valid criminal records bureau checks. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The setting has an inclusive ethos that helps to ensure children are happy, safe and free from undue anxiety. It is a caring, friendly and supportive environment where children are treated as individuals. Very good relationships permeate the setting. Practitioners promote awareness of diversity and sensitively encourage understanding towards others. They consistently promote good behaviour and

ensure equal access to all activities. Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that any children with disabilities are not disadvantaged.

There are sufficient practitioners for the number of children. The setting is generally well resourced to provide for the Foundation Phase curriculum, although provision for ICT is limited. Use of the new purpose built accommodation is increasingly effective with greater integration of indoor and outdoor provision. Opportunities to enhance learning activities in the school grounds are being developed. Appropriate use is made of some resources within the community and self-evaluation identifies this as an area for development.

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

Leadership: Good

The setting has a clear vision for improvement, sets high expectations and is well led. A strong teamwork ethos and a shared sense of purpose and direction are evident. Day-to-day management is effective and practitioners have a good understanding of their roles. Parents are provided with a statement of purpose together with a summary of the provision offered. Appropriate policies and routines are implemented well. Systematic procedures promote self-evaluation; this helps develop and maintain the good work of the setting. Day-to-day discussions ensure that practitioners contribute to planning and organisation and the school's headteacher and governing body are appropriately involved in determining the strategic direction of the setting. The setting leader draws together frameworks to guide and manage the work of achieving the setting's goals, but the strategies to achieve them are not always sufficiently detailed.

Close liaison with the school is particularly beneficial and the work of a link governor is very supportive. Arrangements for appraisal and to promote professional development are established and regarded as effective by practitioners. The setting reflects on professional advice and readily embraces national and local priorities. The provision incorporates Foundation Phase principles well.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has established procedures to identify its strengths and areas for development. Practitioners endeavour to take account of the views of parents and carers as much as possible. The self-evaluation report is a thorough document that matches closely the issues raised in an annual audit and the goals identified in the SIP. These documents provide a good basis to improve further the quality of provision and the SIP includes evaluations of progress. There is strong evidence of steady improvements in provision, but planning does not specify simple plans of action to clearly identify how further improvements in educational practice will be secured and resourced.

Networks of professional practice appropriately support practitioners' professional development. The setting has beneficial links developed through a local cluster of settings. Regular meetings successfully encourage the sharing of good practice.

Partnership working: Good

The setting maintains a range of beneficial partnerships that impact well on the quality of service it provides. Practitioners have positive relationships with parents and carers and informal day-to-day communication is friendly and effective in keeping them informed about their child's progress, the curriculum and planned activities. A notice board displays helpful information and in collaboration with the school regular newsletters include information about the setting. Parental involvement is well promoted through a link group for parents and toddlers and courses about developing literacy and numeracy skills with children. The strong partnership with parents contributes very well to children's progress and wellbeing.

Partnership working among practitioners is effective in developing the provision and established links with the nursery teacher helps to ensure a smooth transition to the primary school.

The setting makes some use of resources within the local community, for example a local vet. Self-evaluation recognises there is scope to enhance provision through greater use of visits and the local environment.

Partnerships with the LA and the school provide effective professional support and challenge. Practitioners value and respond positively to the support and advice received from external agencies. In particular they benefit from attending training provided by the LA.

Resource management: Good

The management and organisation of staff and resources is efficient and this impacts well on the quality of provision. Practitioners are well deployed, although some opportunities to guide their work when leading activities are insufficiently formalised. Taken overall the setting has sufficient good quality learning resources to match the needs of children. Since moving to purpose built accommodation good working routines have been established. Furthermore, the organisation of resources to support a range of focused and continuous activities across areas of learning has developed well. The integration of indoor and outdoor provision is becoming established.

The headteacher and the governing body maintain effective oversight of the settings' finances. The SIP identifies relevant goals for improvement, but the costs of meeting targets are not quantified. This limits the ability of leaders to evaluate the impact of expenditure.

The use of resources, including finance, impacts well on the quality of learning and the good standards achieved. This represents value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report:

Parents:

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received.

Learners:

During the sessions observed children settled happily in the setting. They have positive relationships with their peers and with the adults. A caring, inclusive ethos ensures children feel safe and secure. This was evident in their confidence to initiate conversations and choose activities. All children demonstrate a strong sense of trust and know that practitioners help and guide them.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Michael T. Ridout	Reporting Inspector
-------------------	---------------------

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	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) 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 partnership's 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 3 to 7 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 which 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>

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.