



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

**Sunflowers Nursery (Usk) Ltd
Adult Education Centre
Maryport St
Usk
Monmouthshire
NP15 1AB
United Kingdom**

Date of inspection: September 2014

by

**Mary Dyas
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 2014: 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.

Publication date: 15/10/2014

Context

Sunflowers Nursery is an English-medium setting catering for children living in Usk and its surrounding villages. It is a well-established community group that operated under charitable status in the town for over thirty years. The present owner, who was then the manager, bought the business in September 2013 after financial difficulties had led to the dissolving of the charity. All the children on the register come from a rural area and have English as their first language. Currently there are no children with special educational needs. Sunflowers is registered for up to 26 children aged from two to four years. At the time of the inspection there were 25 children on roll with 12 three-year-olds all of whom were in receipt of funded educational provision.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales last inspected the setting in April 2014. Estyn last inspected the setting in January 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- nearly all children make good progress in their learning from their starting points;
- relationships between adults and children are warm and caring;
- teaching is good;
- practitioners provide a good range of interesting and stimulating activities to engage and motivate children to learn; and
- the setting is well led.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- practitioners work effectively as a team with a shared commitment to children's development and wellbeing;
- the setting improvement plan identifies relevant areas for development;
- the current targets for improvement are realistic and manageable with good evidence that they are being positively addressed: and
- leadership is effective and efficient.

Recommendations

- R1 Embed the recently established system of recording planning and evaluations.
- R2 Develop the consistent use of incidental Welsh by all staff members throughout the sessions.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
---	-------------

Standards: Good

All three-year olds are developing appropriately across the areas of learning and achieve good standards from their starting points. Most are confident communicators and are able to express their wants and ideas. They concentrate for increasing lengths of time on their chosen activities and are confident to use their knowledge and skills to try out new experiences. Most children are developing good independent and are able to choose and make decisions for themselves.

Nearly all children are developing good literacy skills. They express their feelings using appropriate vocabulary and carry out instructions willingly. Many children choose to look at books during free play and enjoy sharing familiar stories with their friends and with the adults in the setting. Most children sit quietly to listen to a group story and show their interest and understanding through the comments they make and the questions they ask. Most children enjoy experimenting with basic writing skills through scribbling with a range of different implements and most are able to recognise their name when they self-register on arrival and when they have their morning snack.

Nearly all children count confidently to ten and the more able recognise number in single figures. Many children are beginning to use mathematical language to identify size and positional language "big" and "small" and "under" and "over". Most children recognise and match patterns and a few transfer these skills to other activities, for example when making a fruit caterpillar. Nearly all children use electronic toys confidently using buttons and switches to operate equipment such as voice recorders, cameras, a video recorder and music centre. They use computers to draw or to play age appropriate games and most manipulate a mouse skilfully to select and move items on the screen.

Most children make appropriate progress in the Welsh language. They understand basic words and phrases and show that they understand more words than they can speak. They repeat words spoken by adults and join in with singing familiar Welsh action songs.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children enjoy their time in the setting and are fully and happily engaged in the activities on offer. They interact well with one another and often collaborate on an activity together such as when building dens outside in the garden. Children are consulted during circle time about what they would like to learn about at the start of each topic and their ideas are included in the planned provision. There are also opportunities for them to express their likes and dislikes regarding the activities in the setting. There are smiley and sad faces for them to place in the relevant areas; for example one little boy likes playing with wooden blocks but was clear that he does not like playing with the dolls' house in the nursery while one of the girls likes playing

with the farm animals but finds the instruments too noisy. Behaviour in the setting is good. The children understand that they have 'golden rules' that help everyone to be kind and caring to each other.

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

Learning experiences: Good

Practitioners are experienced and knowledgeable about children's development and the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They plan together, sharing ideas to ensure that the individual needs of the children are met. They know the children well and the provision is good but systems are still in their early stages and need to be embedded. Individual staff members have recently taken on responsibility for particular areas of learning while still contributing ideas to the planning as a whole. This is proving to be effective and ensures that all areas of learning are addressed over time with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Although the planning does not specifically identify provision for children of different abilities, staff know the children well and this is achieved informally.

Practitioners encourage children to use the Welsh they have learned during circle time and when interacting with individual and groups. However, there is no consistent use of incidental Welsh throughout the session to support and encourage the children. Welsh customs and traditions are positively promoted during the setting's celebrations of St Dwynwen's Day and St David's Day and most children are aware that they live in Wales.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners are experienced and knowledgeable about child development and about the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They interact effectively with the children using a range of teaching methods supported by appropriate resources to support their learning. All practitioners have an appropriate understanding of the Foundation Phase curriculum and of child development. They make appropriate use of a range of teaching methods and suitable resources to support children's learning. During activities, the practitioners interact effectively with the children. They intervene sensitively in children's play when required and ensure that all children receive individual support. There is good use of questioning to enable children to develop their thinking skills and to establish their level of understanding.

Practitioners know the children well. They make relevant observations of individual progress during focussed teaching sessions and also record incidental achievements. These observations are used to inform the children's Learning Journey development profiles and also to plan future activities. Observations are signed and dated and, together with samples of work, form a useful picture of each child's individual development. Parents receive information about their children's achievements, wellbeing and development through informal discussion at the beginning and end of sessions and through a short termly written report.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides effective all round support for the children. There is a good range of clear and relevant policies in place to ensure the children's safety including consistently applied daily routines such as the arrangements for receiving and collecting children. There are good procedures in place to develop children's awareness of the importance of eating fresh fruit and vegetables. Children bring in a healthy snack to share each day which provides an interesting and varied daily choice.

The importance of caring for the environment and living things is promoted through growing plants in the garden which are then sold in the setting and the proceeds used to buy new outdoor equipment. Children also help to care for the setting's guinea pigs and hens that live in the outdoor area.

There are suitable arrangements for supporting children with additional learning needs when required. Clear lines of communication with key agencies are in place to address any specific needs. They include speech and language support staff, the health visitor and social services.

Suitable learning experiences promote children's personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children have opportunities to help others less fortunate than themselves through activities to raise money for good causes. Their awareness of the wider world is developed through celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year and Divali. A particular strength of the setting is the attention that is paid to developing the children's awareness of the necessity for sustainability.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting has a warm and caring ethos where every child is valued. It is an inclusive community where all children receive equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided.

The indoor accommodation is well laid out with the different areas of learning and provides a bright and welcoming environment. Children are able to access the areas and equipment freely during the sessions. The walls are covered with examples current children's work and this provides a colourful backdrop to the working areas.

There are sufficient resources which are in good condition and are used well to support the planned activities.

The setting has the use of a large garden area that has been well developed to support outdoor learning. There are well defined areas which are well resourced to provide a full range of activities including gardening, physical play, investigation and planned activities to support the indoor learning.

The outdoor area is safely fenced around the perimeter and all doors to the building have chain locks to ensure security.

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

Leadership: Good

Staff in the setting have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They share a vision to support and develop the children in their care. The owner has put together a strong staff structure where responsibilities are shared and individual expertise recognised. Meetings are held whenever possible but long working days make it difficult for all staff to be together and information is shared informally but effectively during the day. Staff meet together during school holidays for training and planning. Annual staff appraisals are managed by the owner and individual training needs are addressed. Strong induction procedures are in place for new members of staff.

The owner manages practitioners well. There is a programme of regular appraisal of staff who have access to suitable professional courses. Induction procedures are in place for new staff.

The setting has an open door policy and effective links with parents. A notice board in the hallway informs parents of activities and serves as an encouragement for them to support their children's learning.

The setting pays good attention to national and local priorities

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners know their setting well and share a desire to ensure good practice in their provision. Self-evaluation procedures are effective, are shared by all staff and identify strengths and areas for improvement. The current self-evaluation exercise has prioritised appropriate areas for development. The targets are realistic and will result in improvement in the provision for the children. Practitioners are open to new ideas and suggestions for improvement. Practitioners attend training courses run in other settings and this gives them opportunities to observe different situations and to discuss their practice with other practitioners.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has good links with parents and carers. A good range of information is available in the hall when the parents bring and collect their children and practitioners share information informally when the children are collected. The termly newsletter is available on the parents' notice board.

Links with the local school, to which nearly all children move, are strong. They enable good transfer of information and support the children well in their transition to the nursery class. Good use is made of visitors to the setting and visits by the children to enhance their learning.

The local authority link teacher works closely with the setting and there is good evidence that practitioners have responded positively to advice and guidance.

Resource management: Good

Practitioners deploy themselves appropriately during the sessions to ensure children are supported in all areas of the setting. Good quality resources enhance the planned activities. Practitioners are well qualified and experienced in working with young children and the setting makes use of the Foundation Phase training provided by the local authority to support the continuous professional development of staff to improve the provision for the children. Good procedures are in place to ensure careful management of finances. Careful consideration is given to ensure spending is necessary and cost effective. In view of the good progress that children make during their time in the setting it is considered that the setting gives good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received were fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mrs Mary Elspeth Dyas

Reporting Inspector

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

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 partnerships 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>

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (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.