



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

**Usk Nursery
Old School Building
Usk Primary School
Monmouth Rd
Usk
NP15 1SE**

Date of inspection: November 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

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Publication date: 17/12/2014

About the setting

Usk Nursery first opened in 1997 as a private Nursery. In September 2014 the present owners/managers took over the running of the Nursery, having worked with the previous owner for two and a half years. The nursery is based in the old school buildings adjacent to the grounds of Usk Church in Wales Primary school.

The children who attend are mostly from the local area and the nursery is registered to accept up to 30 children at any one session. The morning session is generally structured to provide for pre-school children. At the time of the inspection there were thirty three-year-olds and four four-year-olds in receipt of funded educational provision from the local authority. Nearly all speak English as their home language. The nursery is experienced in working with children with additional learning needs and practitioners provide good support for the very few in their care.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales last inspected the setting in July 2014. Estyn last inspected the setting in February 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:

- there is a warm and caring ethos where all children are respected as individuals;
- staff work well together;
- teaching is of a consistently good standard;
- the range of activities successfully engages and supports children's learning;
- there are strong partnerships with parents and with the local school; and
- nearly all children enjoy their learning and make good progress.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- leadership is effective and efficient;
- practitioners are committed to improving the provision;
- the current self-evaluation document accurately reflects the current practice in the setting;
- practitioners have set realistic and manageable targets for improvement; and
- there is good evidence that they are working towards meeting current targets.

Recommendations

R1. Further develop the use of Welsh throughout the sessions to support and encourage the children to use the words and phrases they have learned.

R2. Ensure there is a good range of resources that reflect the diversity of the society in which the children are growing up.

R3. Provide parents with information about the next steps in their children's learning and how they can help them to improve.

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

Nearly all children achieve well and make good progress in relation to their age and starting points across the Foundation Phase areas of learning. Most children demonstrate good levels of knowledge and understanding. Nearly all children persevere well with the tasks set during free choice activities. They listen attentively and communicate articulately. Many are beginning to use complex sentence structures to express themselves. Nearly all children join in with songs and rhymes enthusiastically and enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with adults. All enjoy mark-making both inside and in the outside area and they experiment confidently with a wide range of materials. All children develop their knowledge of technology, for example when programming a toy to move around a grid. They also use simple programs on the computer to select and move items on the screen.

All children use early mathematical skills effectively to count by rote up to ten and most are able to do this independently. Many count objects accurately to at least three. They are beginning to use correct mathematical language and skills correctly in their play, for example describing objects as being 'behind' 'under' or 'on top of' something. Many children are beginning to recognise and name numbers and a few are able to do this to ten.

Nearly all children are making appropriate progress in Welsh. They understand the words and phrases used by adults in the setting and know it is a different way of saying things. They are not yet using the words and phrases they have learned spontaneously in their play.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children are relaxed and happy in the setting. They come in eager to see what the day holds for them and are keen to try new experiences. Most are beginning to understand that it is important to eat healthily and are able to name healthy foods and things that should be kept for treats. They enjoy their snack time and are developing good independence as they pour their own drinks and help themselves to the healthy snacks. Children are polite to each other and to adults. Most children take turns and understand the need to share toys and objects without having to be reminded. They play happily on their own, in pairs and in small groups and many concentrate on a chosen task for good lengths of time.

Nearly all children are happy to talk about what they have been doing and are confident to ask for help from adults. Most children make sensible suggestions about what they would like to learn at the beginning of a new topic. A recent example of this is when planning for a new role play kitchen children suggested items such as a waste bin and a notice board.

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

Planning is well organized and a wide range of activities stimulates, engages and challenges most children to learn effectively. Plans are based on ensuring coverage of the areas of learning using the Foundation Phase skills and on specific needs identified from observations of children's learning. Practitioners know the children very well and respond appropriately to their varying needs, abilities and interests. Planning clearly addresses the needs and interests of the children and, overall, learning experiences successfully enable children to develop communication, numeracy and ICT skills every day.

Practitioners promote the Welsh language well during group times and use a good range of vocabulary and resources. However, the use of Welsh words and phrases informally during the rest of the session is limited. Good attention is paid to teaching the children that they live in Wales and practitioners make good use of their St David's day celebrations to promote the culture and traditions of Wales.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good. Practitioners are well qualified and have a good understanding of Foundation Phase principles and practice. They use a wide range of approaches to stimulate play and active learning experiences which interest and appeal to children of all abilities. Children respond particularly well to staff efforts to make learning fun. Practitioners give children sufficient time to complete a task or to develop an idea and intervene appropriately and sensitively when needed. Teaching is most effective when practitioners use open-ended questions to challenge children's thinking. They take good account of children's interests and abilities and adapt well to individual levels of development when interacting with them.

Assessment of children's learning and development is developing well. Good records are kept through the child's time in the setting and the setting has invested in a record keeping programme to support their recording of children's progress. Observations from adult led activities together with individual observations are collated and used to inform the nursery's assessment documentation. There is a daily verbal exchange of information with parents and carers during the handover at the beginning and end of sessions. Parents receive an informative written report when their child leaves to move on to primary school. There are currently no arrangements to inform parents of the next steps in their child's learning or how they can help them to improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Good arrangements are in place to support children's health and wellbeing. Practitioners value children as individuals and strive to enable each child to develop their potential and personality. A range of policies relating directly to the practice within the nursery ensures that children settle quickly when they start at the setting and are kept safe from harm and bullying.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no reason for concern. Procedures for checking the suitability of staff are robust and adhered to and there are good procedures for managing children's arrival at and leaving the setting.

Provision for ensuring children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Practitioners are good role models and foster a sense of right and wrong and of treating one other with respect. The setting has good arrangements for the support of children with additional learning needs and has good relationships with outside agencies.

Learning environment: Good

The nursery displays a positive inclusive ethos that provides equality of access to all children whatever their background. Practitioners know their children well, are sensitive to their needs and show children affection, consideration and understanding. They succeed in providing a calm and secure environment where children are relaxed and enabled to learn. Policies and procedures for dealing with specific instances of discrimination are in place. However, there are very few resources available that reflect the diversity of the society in which the children are growing up.

The nursery is able to accept children with any form of disability and has policies in place to promote equal opportunities. The nursery is generously staffed with well qualified and experienced practitioners. Resources are well matched to the demands of the Foundation Phase curriculum and accessible to the children. There is a generous supply of resources and materials which are well focused on the specific needs of the children. Overall, the accommodation provides a good environment for children's learning and is used effectively. The local environment is used well to support learning.

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

The nursery has a clear management structure. The newly established managers are providing direction and a sense of purpose that promotes and sustains improvement. All practitioners have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They share values, aims and objectives and are effective in meeting the needs of the children.

There are effective procedures in place to induct, appraise and improve practitioners. Staff are appraised annually and their professional needs and the expectations of the nursery addressed. Overall, the impact of the leadership provides the nursery with clear direction and a fully committed staff.

The nursery is effective in meeting both national and local priorities. They have gained the healthy snack award and are working towards the Welsh Assembly Healthy and Sustainable Pre-school Scheme.

Improving quality: Good

The setting makes effective use of its self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The current self-evaluation report leads to appropriate strategies for improvement which ensure positive outcomes for all children. The setting has used the information collected from parents' questionnaires to gather opinions and to identify areas for improvement. There is good evidence that current targets for improvement are being positively addressed for example the involvement of children in planning their choices at snack time.

Practitioners attend training courses regularly and the positive impact of this is seen in the teaching and the children's wellbeing as they implement what they have learned

Partnership working: Good

Most parents are appreciative of the work of the nursery and feel that their children are well supported both educationally and emotionally. Practitioners take positive steps to involve parents and carers in the setting. Parents are kept informed about all aspects of the setting's activities through regular newsletters and a daily notice board.

Usk Nursery has good links with the neighbouring primary school and these facilitate the children's transfer to mainstream education. Good relationships with the teachers in the school ensure sharing of information and the school has worked with the setting to formulate an effective transition policy. Pre-school children are taken to use the school hall once a week for a physical education lesson and from the spring term they join the Foundation Phase children for morning break time one day a week.

The setting welcomes the support they receive from the local authority advisory teacher and there is clear evidence that they have acted positively on the advice she has given.

Resource management: Good

The setting is well staffed and has a good range of resources which are used effectively to support different learning experiences. Staff within the pre-school group deploy themselves informally and make good use of their individual interests and abilities.

The nursery owners manage the finances carefully. Priority is given to meeting the targets in the setting improvement plan. All larger requirements are carefully considered against need and the potential impact on children's learning.

In view of the good progress made by nearly all children, the clear management structure and the careful management for finances the setting gives good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	18	11 61%	7 39%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	18	16 89%	2 11%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	18	15 83%	3 17%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	18	14 78%	3 17%	1 6%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	18	10 56%	6 33%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		69%	27%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	18	12 67%	5 28%	1 6%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		79%	18%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	18	13 72%	5 28%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		82%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	18	10 56%	8 44%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		73%	22%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	18	16 89%	2 11%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	14%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	15	9 60%	3 20%	0 0%	0 0%	3	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		65%	24%	1%	0%		

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	18	9 50%	7 39%	2 11%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	18	13 72%	5 28%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		80%	19%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	17	10 59%	6 35%	1 6%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		62%	30%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	18	10 56%	7 39%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		71%	24%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	18	7 39%	10 56%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		61%	30%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	18	13 72%	5 28%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mrs Mary Elspeth 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)

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.