



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Bradley Playgroup  
Bradley Village Hall  
Glanllyn Road  
Bradley  
Wrexham  
LL11 4BB**

**Date of inspection: June 2016**

**by**

**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

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**Publication date: 16/08/2016**

## Context

Bradley Playgroup is in Bradley Village Hall, approximately three miles from Wrexham. The setting employs three part-time staff, all of whom are registered with the care and Social Services Inspectorate, Wales (CSSIW) as being responsible for the setting. The setting's leader has run the playgroup since September 2013. A voluntary committee manages the playgroup. The playgroup shares its accommodation with the local community and this means that the practitioners have to set out and clear away the equipment before and after most sessions.

The playgroup operates from Monday to Thursday during term time. The setting's registration with the CSSIW allows it to provide sessional care for up to a maximum of 52 children from the age of two years and three months. At the time of the inspection, there were 10 three-year-old children on role, seven of whom were eligible for local authority funding.

The playgroup is English speaking. Nearly all children are white British and speak English as their first language. No families speak Welsh at home. Currently, the setting identifies no child as having additional learning needs.

Estyn last inspected the playgroup in June 2011. CSSIW last inspected the setting in October 2015.

## 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:

- Most children make effective progress in their time at the setting
- Most children develop worthwhile literacy and communication skills
- A majority of older children are developing early reading and writing skills well
- Most children are beginning to develop useful early mathematics and ICT skills
- Nearly all the children come to the setting confidently and happily
- Most children behave well and are polite to others
- All children respond to adults' instructions well during learning activities
- Most children are developing a strong understanding of health and hygiene
- The setting offers a worthwhile range of learning experiences that engage nearly all children's interests well
- All practitioners interact enthusiastically with the children, have strong relationships with them and manage their behaviour capably

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The setting's leader manages the playgroup effectively
- All staff work together effectively as a team and understand their roles and responsibilities well
- Practitioners create an effective learning environment for the children
- Regular staff meetings focus on relevant priorities, such as planning children's learning, effectively
- The setting's leader and management committee ensure that they provide regular appraisals for all staff
- Leaders organise training for staff appropriately
- The setting's leader and management committee have a detailed oversight of the running of the setting
- The setting's leader and management committee have an appropriate understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement
- The setting's development plan outlines satisfactory improvement targets that fit well with national priorities

## Recommendations

- R1 Improve further children's ability to speak confidently in English and Welsh
- R2 Ensure that all planning focuses clearly on developing children's skills
- R3 Develop more formal processes for leaders to monitor the quality of teaching
- R4 Ensure that self-evaluation activities and improvement plans focus more sharply on outcomes for children and that improvement targets have clear criteria for success

### **What happens next?**

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### Standards: Good

Most children make worthwhile progress in their time at the setting. They gain new skills readily, and demonstrate effective knowledge and understanding for their age, in nearly all areas of the Foundation Phase.

Most children develop worthwhile literacy and communication skills. They listen with suitable concentration to adults and are ready to express their thoughts and opinions. They join in happily with songs and rhymes, in Welsh and English throughout the session. They use an appropriate range of words and phrases during their play to make themselves understood. However, a few older children do not explain their thoughts and ideas clearly enough. A majority of older children are developing early reading skills well. They look at books spontaneously and inquisitively. They turn pages suitably, recognising the importance of the words and pictures. Many children engage readily with opportunities to develop their early writing skills. They use a variety of resources, such as paintbrushes, to demonstrate well that they are beginning to gain control of mark-making resources.

Most children are beginning to develop useful early mathematical skills. They are beginning to recognise a range of basic shapes, such as squares and circles, and notice these shapes in everyday objects. Many children join in with rote counting effectively and are beginning to count a few objects suitably, for example when counting mini-beasts in the garden area.

Many older children are developing their information and communication technology (ICT) skills competently. They are able to control games on the screen of a tablet computer well, for example to load a train in a game-playing application. They use a computer mouse suitably to control a paintbrush on a screen and use a camera to record moving images.

Many children's Welsh language skills are improving competently. They respond well to the words and phrases used within everyday songs and routines, for example answering a register in Welsh and saying thank-you for their snacks. They are beginning to understand and use a wider range of words, such as those that relate to the weather, and use these purposefully. However, few children use the language spontaneously or in their play activities.

Many children develop useful thinking skills. They are beginning to make considered choices when given a range of options and are starting to be able to justify those choices simply, for example when considering what to pack in a case for their holiday.

**Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all the children come in to the setting confidently and happily. They are eager to greet the adults in the setting and to engage in the learning activities on offer. Most children behave well and are polite to others. They play together in pairs and small groups successfully, and share toys and equipment suitably, for example when cooking on the barbeque in the home corner.

All children respond to adults' instructions well during learning activities. They make choices about the activities that they would like to undertake and which snacks they would like positively. For example, they choose which toppings to spread on their crackers. Nearly all children engage in physical activities readily. They enjoy playing outside and use equipment, such as bikes and scooters, beneficially.

Most children are developing a strong understanding of health and hygiene. For example, most children know that they need to wash their hands after playing with salt-dough and before they have their snack. During snack time, nearly all children demonstrate effective social skills. Most children sit together successfully and say please and thank-you consistently, sharing the food on offer well.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Learning experiences: Good**

The setting offers a worthwhile range of learning experiences that engage nearly all children's interests well. Practitioners plan interesting activities across the Foundation Phase areas of learning, and children have worthwhile opportunities to make decisions and initiate their own learning. As a result, most children are beginning to develop as independent learners appropriately. However, in a few sessions, adults do not place a high enough priority on focused learning opportunities. As a result, in these sessions a minority of children's learning is not always at an appropriately high level. The setting provides useful opportunities for children to learn out of doors, for example to grow vegetables in the garden area. As a result, nearly all children are developing a curiosity and awareness of nature and the environment well.

Throughout each session, practitioners provide a wide range of opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills, for example through joining in with songs and rhymes. The setting has a suitable range of books that children can access independently. As a result, many children handle books carefully and understand that stories move from page to page. Practitioners ensure that there are appropriate opportunities for children to use mark-making resources both indoors and outdoors, such as paint and chalk. However, planning for focused activities does not always pay enough attention to which specific skills practitioners want to develop.

Through focused and independent activities, children have an effective range of opportunities to develop their numeracy skills, for example through counting mini-beasts in the outdoors and matching shapes with adults. The setting's provision for ICT is effective. Practitioners provide children with useful opportunities to gain competence in using a worthwhile range of ICT equipment through their play activities. For example, children take photographs and use the tablet computer capably.

Many practitioners provide suitable opportunities for children to hear and use the Welsh language, for example when they give children praise or discuss the weather. They use a suitable range of Welsh songs and rhymes to help children begin to say a few Welsh words appropriately. However, practitioners plan few focused activities to develop children's Welsh skills.

### **Teaching: Good**

All practitioners interact enthusiastically with the children at the setting. They demonstrate a beneficial understanding of Foundation Phase principles, including the need for children to learn through active play. All practitioners are good language role models. They engage the children throughout the session, developing their thinking and extending their vocabulary well, for example when making and discussing salt-dough figures of football players. All practitioners have strong relationships with the children and manage their behaviour capably. However, in a few sessions, they do not ensure that all children have an effective balance between adult-led learning and independent play activities.

The setting has efficient processes to monitor, assess and track children's progress. All practitioners monitor children's learning regularly. They observe children during focused and independent play activities carefully and make note of their individual achievements suitably. However, they do not always use this information well enough to plan future learning and ensure that they challenge all children highly. The setting has suitable procedures for keeping parents informed well about their children's achievements and progress.

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

The setting has clear and useful arrangements in place to promote children's health and wellbeing. For example, practitioners ensure that all children wash their hands before eating and put on their coats before going outside in poor weather. The setting provides healthy foods at snack time, such as cheese and tomatoes, and children drink milk or water. The setting plans carefully for children to take part in outdoor, physical activities safely, such as riding bikes and scooters. These activities help them to stay fit and develop body awareness successfully. The setting provides suitable opportunities for children to develop moral and social skills, and spiritual and cultural awareness. For example, children learn about other cultures well when celebrating Chinese New Year. They work in their own small garden, which allows them to learn about mini-beasts and sustainability.

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

Currently, the setting has no children with additional learning needs. However, the setting makes effective arrangements to support children with additional learning needs when required. The setting leader liaises beneficially with specialist services when necessary. As a result, the setting is able to integrate and support children who need extra help with their learning well.



## **Learning environment: Good**

The setting is an inclusive community with a strong, positive ethos. Practitioners know the children well, show respect for their individuality and listen to their views. They ensure that each child has equal access to all learning experiences. The setting works well to ensure that all children value cultural diversity, for example through providing resources, such as dolls, that reflect a range of cultures and races.

The setting has a beneficial range of resources, which are organised efficiently to help promote children's independent learning. Practitioners make effective use of the space in and around the hall. For example, they have created a suitable range of learning areas inside and a small but stimulating garden outdoors. As a result, children are able to plant and grow food, and learn about nature and mini-beasts. Although the yard area is not freely accessible to children, practitioners ensure that the children go outside regularly to develop their physical skills. Practitioners use the local area effectively to help provide children with useful learning opportunities. For example, they visit a nearby animal sanctuary and take local train rides to teach children about transport. The building and site are safe and maintained well.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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## **Leadership: Good**

The setting's leader manages the playgroup efficiently. She ensures that all staff at the setting work together well as a team and understand their roles and responsibilities. Together they create an effective learning environment for the children. The setting's leader ensures that the setting runs smoothly and manages it successfully on a day-to-day basis. Regular staff meetings focus on relevant priorities, such as planning children's learning, effectively. However, staff's job descriptions are not clear enough about individuals' roles and responsibilities.

The setting's leader and management committee ensure that they provide regular appraisals for all staff. Through this process, leaders identify staff strengths efficiently. However, there are no formal processes for the setting leader to monitor the quality of the teaching staff's work and identify individual improvement priorities effectively enough. The setting's leader organises training for staff appropriately. As a result, all practitioners have a worthwhile understanding of the Foundation Phase principles and ethos.

The setting's leader and management committee have a detailed oversight of the running of the setting. As a result, they run playgroup efficiently. For example, strong oversight of the budget and effective fundraising help to ensure that the setting is on a stable financial footing, and that the leaders are able to purchase resources when needed, such as tablet computers.

## **Improving quality: Adequate**

Staff meet suitably to discuss important areas of the setting's work, such as the success of lesson plans and their observations of children's learning. From this, the setting's leader has an appropriate understanding of the strengths and areas for

improvement at the playgroup. However, the setting's practices for evaluating itself are not systematic enough and do not focus well enough on evaluating children's standards. Leaders do not consider in close enough detail the progress that children make and do not monitor the quality of practitioners' interactions with children. As a result, self-evaluation procedures do not identify shortcomings at the setting robustly enough, such as a lack of confidence in a few older children's oracy skills. Where leaders identify shortcomings in provision, they take suitable action in a timely manner, for example purchasing a tablet computer to improve provision for ICT.

The setting's development plan outlines satisfactory improvement targets. These fit well with national priorities, such as developing children's Welsh language and numeracy skills. The plan identifies well those who are responsible for leading improvement actions. However, the setting's priorities focus too heavily on what practitioners are going to do, rather than on outcomes for children. Allied to this, the plan has no measurable success criteria. As a result, the setting has no goals by which to measure whether its work has been successful.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting has developed a range of useful partnerships to enhance its provision and support children's wellbeing effectively. For example, close links with the nearby school, to which most of the children transfer, and useful visits for events such as sports' day, enable children to settle quickly when they begin school.

A strong partnership with parents ensures that the setting has an effective group of volunteer helpers who support the setting beneficially. This partnership allows parents to gain effective, first-hand knowledge of how their children develop in the setting. Practitioners also provide parents with a useful range of information about the setting and their children's work, for example through useful photographs on the setting's website.

The setting has a close relationship with its advisory teacher. This provides practitioners with useful ideas on how to develop the setting's provision. For example, useful training led to the implementation of effective assessment processes. As a result, the setting tracks children's progress well.

The setting uses its partnership with businesses within the community well to help develop children's skills and learning experiences, and to raise useful funds. For example, an evening with a local fortune-teller at a nearby Indian restaurant helps to raise important funds for the playgroup, which supplement resources effectively.

### **Resource management: Good**

The setting has a sufficient number of experienced, qualified staff to ensure the effective teaching of children at the setting. Staff appraisal helps to identify practitioners' development needs suitably. Leaders ensure that staff have an effective range of training linked to local and national priorities. For example, training for all staff on effective planning leads to practitioners providing interesting learning experiences, such as mini-beast hunts in the garden.

The setting's leader and management committee monitor the setting's funds carefully. They undertake fund-raising effectively and use the money raised well. As a result, the setting employs a good number of adults and has plenty of interesting resources to support children's learning well.

In view of the good standards attained by most children, the setting provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

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

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

Andrew Thorne	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.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

## 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 partnerships 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>Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)</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 Day Nurseries Association (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.