



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

A report on

**Little Sunflowers Early Education
Rhosymedre Community Primary School
Park Rd
Rhosymedre
Wrexham
LL14 3EG**

Date of inspection: May 2016

by

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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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Context

Little Sunflowers Early Education is a non-maintained English medium setting situated in Rhosymedre Primary School, near Wrexham. It is registered to provide day care and education for a maximum of 24 children. Four morning sessions are provided each week during school terms. The Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham runs the setting.

At the time of the inspection 22 three year olds were registered. The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership fund these children, up to 10 hours per week.

The setting confirms the community it serves is socially and economically disadvantaged. Most children are English speaking and British born; a few are from ethnic minorities and are learning English as a second language. No families speak Welsh at home. At present, no children receive additional support with their learning.

There are three appropriately qualified and experienced practitioners, including the supervisor, who was appointed in September 2015.

The setting operated as Plas Madoc Lil Stars Playgroup until August 2015. It was re-registered on becoming part of Little Sunflowers Day Care that provides full day care for up to 48 children. The manager of Little Sunflowers is the registered person. This provision includes two Flying Start groups for children aged 2 – 3 years of age, a group for children attending the school nursery class part-time, an after school club and holiday care for children. The trustees of the managing organisation are responsible for this provision, including the setting.

The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales last inspected the Little Sunflowers in December 2015. Estyn has not inspected the setting since it was re-registered, although the previous playgroup was inspected in June 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

Performance is good:

- Most children make good progress and achieve well
- A good range of learning experiences promotes children's interest
- Teaching sets high expectations and skilfully ensures learning is fun
- The setting successfully promotes children's health and wellbeing
- Practitioners and children have good relationships
- Children experience a stimulating and well resourced learning environment

Prospects for improvement

Improvement is good:

- Leadership is enthusiastic and skilfully promotes effective teamwork
- Practitioners are reflective and have a clear sense of purpose
- Procedures for self-evaluation are securely established
- Recent improvements impact very well on the quality of provision
- Strong partnerships ensure children's transition to school is seamless
- Goals identified by the setting provide a good basis for further improvement

Recommendations

- R1 Continue to improve achievement in basic skills
- R2 Embed procedures for planning and assessment for learning
- R3 Ensure trustees fulfil their responsibilities as an effective critical partner
- R4 Plan for future training and the provision of resources

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Nearly all children enter the setting with achievements significantly below expectations for their age. Most make very good progress from their starting point. In particular, they develop well the skills to play and interact with adults and their peers. This enables them to engage in learning activities and make choices with confidence and independence. As a result most children achieve well across the areas of learning. However, a few have social and developmental needs that limit progress.

Most children develop speaking and listening skills well. This is particularly evident in activities where many join in songs and rhymes with enthusiasm. They listen attentively and follow instructions. A few confidently initiate simple conversations, such as during role-play or when supported by an adult. Many make their needs known, ask questions using simple vocabulary and express themselves clearly. With few exceptions children listen attentively to stories and a few are beginning to look at books as they play. A majority recognise their name when prompted by a photograph. They experiment with mark making in different contexts, but for most early writing skills are at an early stage.

Progress in early mathematical skills is good. Most children confidently recite number songs and rhymes and develop counting skills, such as during registration. A few count by rote to 10. A minority recognise numbers to 10 and a few, for example count up to four bricks accurately. They read numbers on a tape measure and many are beginning to use simple mathematical vocabulary, such as to describe long and short blocks. Most children develop an appropriate awareness of time in the context of the setting's routines.

Most children appropriately develop a narrow range of skills in information and communication technology (ICT).

Children respond well to everyday Welsh, particularly during group activities, but few spontaneously speak using familiar Welsh vocabulary during play.

Wellbeing: Good

Most children have positive attitudes and enjoy learning activities. Levels of engagement are high during free choice play. Many confidently make choices as they move between tasks. With few exceptions children remain busy, sustaining interest and concentration for appropriate periods of time. Most are well motivated, happy and at ease in the setting.

With few exceptions children have good relationships with practitioners and with each other. A few show consideration and courtesy, such as during snack time. Standards of behaviour are good, although a few occasionally present challenging

behaviour. Most relate well to other children and play in a calm and settled manner. They respond very well to daily routines and most participate in whole group activities with enthusiasm.

Practitioners encourage children to express their preferences as they play. Most readily help tidy resources at the end of each session, but opportunities for them to undertake simple responsibilities are limited.

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

A good range of stimulating learning experiences successfully engages children's interest. The Foundation Phase is implemented well and planning promotes progression in line with children's needs. All areas of learning are well represented. Both indoor and outdoor activities are very well structured.

Broad themes, such as Spring provide an interesting context for learning. Planning is detailed and activities are linked to appropriate learning objectives. Long and short term planning is well structured and is implemented flexibly. Planning provides a good basis to guide practitioners in how and what children may learn.

Strong emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy skills. For example, stories are used skilfully to promote early reading skills and counting skills are promoted in well-chosen activities. The focus on ICT skills is developing.

The provision for Welsh language development is well structured and awareness of Welsh history and culture is appropriately promoted.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is enthusiastic, fosters good relationships and successfully promotes incidental learning. Practitioners have high expectations and promote children's personal and social development particularly well. A very good feature is the quality of their interaction with children.

Structured planning helps ensure a good balance between child-selected and adult initiated tasks. Practitioners have a good knowledge of the Foundation Phase. They manage learning and behaviour well; provide good models of language and use a range of teaching strategies to good effect. They have an intuitive understanding of how children learn and their understanding of how to promote the next steps in learning is developing well.

The setting has appropriate procedures for assessment and is implementing the Foundation Phase Profile. Day-to-day observations are used well to compile individual learning records. The use of assessments to help plan the next steps in children's learning is developing. Parents value informal communication with practitioners about their child's progress before and after sessions.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides effective care, support and guidance. Arrangements to assure children's healthy development and wellbeing are well developed. The provision for children's personal development successfully encourages curiosity about the world and fosters positive values including honesty and fairness. Practitioners strongly promote good behaviour and enthusiastically engage children in a range of cultural activities. Moral and social development is very well promoted. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are offered, such as growing plants, observing creatures in the garden and celebrating festivals. Provision to raise awareness of sustainability is developing.

The setting has well-established procedures to provide personal and specialist support when required. Arrangements to support children who need extra help are carefully planned.

Appropriate procedures are implemented to ensure the setting is safe. Risk assessments are undertaken and these show an appropriate focus on specific activities.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting has a welcoming and inclusive ethos. Practitioners treat children with respect and foster positive relationships. They take good account of children's backgrounds and needs. This helps ensure children feel safe and free from undue anxiety.

Practitioners use positive approaches in managing incidents of challenging behaviour. They sensitively encourage understanding and tolerance towards others. Equal opportunities and awareness of diversity are appropriately promoted.

There are sufficient appropriately qualified practitioners for the number of children. The accommodation is well maintained and provides a safe and secure environment.

Since the setting was re-registered the restructuring of areas of learning, both indoors and outside, provides well for the Foundation Phase. The result is a stimulating environment and generally, a good range of resources provides well for the Foundation Phase. The outdoor space is used particularly well to enhance learning, but opportunities to build on resources in the community to enhance learning are overlooked.

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

The manager and supervisor provide very good leadership and management. This impacts well on the quality of provision. Leadership is enthusiastic and skilfully promotes effective teamwork. Practitioners are reflective, have a good

understanding of their roles and responsibilities and share a clear sense of purpose. They communicate effectively with parents.

An appropriate range of policies and procedures is in place. The manager has updated summary information for parents to ensure arrangements relate specifically to the setting. Arrangements for induction, supervision and the appraisal of practitioners are well implemented. The manager monitors teaching and learning and appropriate emphasis is placed on practitioners' professional development.

The trustees of the managing organisation have been slow to establish arrangements to ensure they fulfil their responsibilities as a critical partner and to implement procedures to assure strategic direction and accountability.

The setting takes forward national and local priorities well. It enthusiastically embraces the Foundation Phase and works hard to combat social disadvantage and improve achievement.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has recently established well-structured procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement. The manager and supervisor have a very good understanding of the setting's achievements since it opened. A reflective culture is evident among practitioners. They are suitably involved in self-evaluation and the views of parents and carers are sought informally.

The setting has successfully implemented an initial action plan, but it has not yet had time to monitor the impact of initiatives over a sufficient period. The evaluations recorded and first hand evidence confirms significant improvement in relation to the four targets set. The implementation of good practice impacts well on the quality of learning and teaching.

The setting's self-evaluation report and current planning to address further targets provides a strong basis to promote further improvement. The targets identified are relevant and the key elements of self-evaluation and quality improvement are securely established.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has strong partnerships with parents, community services and the school. These contribute effectively to children's learning and wellbeing and help ensure the transition to school is seamless

Parents are provided with a good range of information. Day-to-day contacts promote well the exchange of information and opportunities to discuss children's progress are offered before they transfer to school. The setting has beneficial links with the primary school. In particular, this partnership helps promote good practice and offers support in liaising with educational services.

The setting is a recognised provider of placements for students studying for child care qualifications. This impacts well on provision. Managers regularly attend training events with colleagues from other settings. The partnership with the local

authority and other agencies is beneficial in the provision of training and guidance. The advice and quality assurance provided by the local authority has a very positive impact.

Resource management: Good

Practitioners are well deployed and sessions well organised. Well-structured routines help ensure effective use of indoor and outdoor facilities. The pace of activities is good.

Practitioners attend training events and participate in courses to update their qualifications. They reflect on the practice discussed and consider strategies to improve practice in the setting. The supervisor ensures the use of resources is regularly reviewed.

The managing organisation has suitable financial procedures and the setting manager has access to funds for local purchases. There is clear evidence of significant expenditure to improve provision for outdoor learning. However, planning for future resource needs is insufficiently formalised.

Taking into account significant improvements since September 2015, the setting ensures resources and the funding received for early entitlement education, are used to good effect. This impacts well on children's outcomes and represents 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

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| Mr Michael T Ridout | 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)

Glossary of terms

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| 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> |

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| 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. |