



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

A report on

**Teddy Bear Towers Day Nursery
Trelawney Towers
Chester Road
Flint
Flintshire
CH6 5DU**

Date of inspection: February 2018

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:

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

Teddy Bear Towers Day Nursery is a privately owned, English medium setting, near the town of Flint, in Flintshire local authority. The setting provides funded education between January and July, with sessions held Monday to Friday. The pre-school room is registered for 30 children, of which 13 currently receive funded education from the local authority.

There are four part-time members of staff. Two members of staff share the role of senior pre-school supervisor for the whole nursery.

Nearly all children speak English as their home language. The setting has not currently identified any children as having additional learning needs.

The setting was last inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in April 2017 and by Estyn in November 2011.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Nearly all children make good progress during their time at the setting
- Nearly all children listen with sustained concentration and are keen to answer questions and talk about what they have done
- Many children develop good counting skills
- Many children use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills confidently
- All children are confident and happy within the setting
- All children behave well and are respectful of each other and adults
- All children respond well to instructions and demonstrate sustained perseverance
- The setting offers a stimulating variety of worthwhile learning experiences to develop children's skills
- All practitioners are involved in planning interesting activities across the foundation phase areas of learning
- Children's interests and needs are taken into account and they have suitable opportunities to make informed decisions about their own learning
- The mutual respect and positive relationships between children and adults are a strength of the setting

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The proprietor and leaders are very well motivated and dedicated
- Leaders have a clear sense of purpose to ensure that all children make good progress during their time at the setting
- Leaders focus suitably on raising standards and improving provision, with the needs of the children at the centre of everything the session does
- The setting uses appraisal systems to support and challenge practitioners well
- The setting has made good progress in taking forward national initiatives
- Leaders and managers know their setting well and use self-evaluation regularly to support them in making improvements
- All practitioners engage in regular professional development opportunities to enhance their understanding of good foundation phase practice
- Processes to plan, monitor and review spending link clearly to priorities in the setting's improvement plan

Recommendations

- R1 Increase opportunities for children to develop their problem-solving skills across areas of learning
- R2 Develop children's understanding of the wider world
- R3 Consistently monitor the impact of initiatives on outcomes for children

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
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Standards: Good

Nearly all children make good progress during their time at the setting. They develop knowledge and skills that are at least appropriate for their age in all areas of learning.

Nearly all children listen with sustained concentration and are keen to answer questions and talk about what they have done. They participate in singing songs and rhymes in English and Welsh enthusiastically. Many children develop good early reading skills, choosing a book independently and turning the pages correctly. They talk happily about books they have read. For example, they talked about the scary Gruffalo. Many children are beginning to recognise their name and understand that letters have meaning. They use a variety of resources to develop their early mark making and writing skills both indoors and outdoors, and a few children are able to write sounds.

Many children develop good counting skills. Many count to ten, and a few beyond, independently. Nearly all children join in counting rhymes, for example when giving plates out during snack time.

Many children use their ICT skills confidently. For example, they solve problems using a programmable toy and take photographs using a camera. They are beginning to gain confidence in the use of computer tablets through playing simple counting and matching games.

Nearly all children's understanding of Welsh is good. They join in enthusiastically with songs and rhymes, answer questions and follow instructions appropriately. For example, they respond with please and thankyou and ask for water or milk in Welsh at snack time.

A few children develop suitable thinking skills, for example building a track with blocks to direct a programmable toy and testing if it will crash. However, this is at an early stage of development. Nearly all children are able to make individual choices independently about where they play.

Wellbeing: Good

All children are confident and happy within the setting. They engage eagerly in the good range of learning activities on offer, both indoors and outdoors.

All children behave well and are respectful of each other and adults. They play independently, in pairs and in groups, taking turns and sharing happily, for example

when taking on roles of caring for the baby in the house, sharing spades in the sand and using bug catchers outdoors when discussing what they have found in the soil.

All children respond well to instructions and demonstrate sustained perseverance in learning tasks, for example when building sand castles and counting the flags.

Nearly all children are developing a good understanding of health and hygiene. For example, they participate enthusiastically in the tooth brushing programme. They follow routines of washing their hands before having snack and enjoy eating a wide variety of healthy snacks.

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

The setting offers a stimulating variety of worthwhile learning experiences to develop children's skills. All practitioners are involved in planning interesting activities across the foundation phase areas of learning. They take children's interests and needs into account and they provide suitable opportunities for children to make informed decisions about their own learning. For example, they provide appropriate resources when children want to wash the cars. Planning provides a good balance of focused activities and opportunities for independent play. This allows children to develop and consolidate skills taught successfully. The setting works hard to ensure that children gain valuable experiences. Practitioners plan effectively for learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors. They develop curiosity by planting seeds in the garden and watching them grow and searching for mini beasts.

Throughout the sessions, practitioners provide a wealth of good opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills, for example through encouraging children to join in songs and rhymes during established routines. They provide a variety of reading materials indoors and outdoors. As a result, children handle books with care, turning pages appropriately. Opportunities for mark making are available indoors and outdoors, enabling children to develop early writing skills successfully.

Practitioners provide a stimulating range of learning activities to develop children's numeracy skills. For example, children match minibeasts to the pictures outdoors, and match place settings in the role-play house.

The provision for ICT provides exciting opportunities to develop children's skills. For example, children have useful opportunities to use programmable toys, computer tablets and cameras confidently during their play.

The use of Welsh by practitioners is a strength and, as a result, nearly all children have a very good understanding of instructions and use simple phrases spontaneously in their play. A Welsh phrase of the week for parents to use reinforces this vocabulary at home.

Practitioners use the immediate locality to enhance children's learning experiences. Children visit the local park to explore the changing seasons and to develop their physical skills. Visits to the library help to develop their early reading skills effectively. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to develop an understanding of the wider world.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners interact effectively with the children. They demonstrate a good working knowledge of the foundation phase philosophy. The positive working relationships create a calm, yet fun working atmosphere.

All practitioners are good language role models. For example, they use mathematical vocabulary correctly when asking children which is longer or shorter and which number comes next.

Practitioners monitor children's achievements during their learning regularly and challenge and support them with effective questioning. They provide a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Practitioners have a good understanding of when to intervene in activities and when to let children work independently.

Practitioners monitor children's progress regularly and record observations and assessments using the foundation phase profile effectively. They use this information well to plan future activities to meet children's needs and interests successfully, for example when enhancing a bakery with money to challenge more able children. The setting organises regular useful meetings to update parents about their child's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has clear routines for promoting children's health and wellbeing. For example, children wash their hands after going to the toilet and before they brush their teeth. They wear appropriate clothing when playing outdoors in cold weather. The setting provides healthy snacks, such as apples and pears, and children have a choice of milk or water to drink. There are daily opportunities to work in the garden area, which develops children's understanding and knowledge of living things well.

The setting provides many useful opportunities to support children's spiritual, moral and social development throughout areas of learning. Children develop a sense of curiosity through visits to the park, exploring the changing seasons. The setting provides very good opportunities for moral development. All practitioners and children show respect towards each other. There are many opportunities for children to show initiative, and to understand the rules, for example sharing and taking turns when looking at books in the reading area and when playing in the mud kitchen.

At the time of the inspection there were no children with additional learning needs. However, the setting has good arrangements for supporting children with additional needs and practitioners are proactive in engaging with external agencies.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting has a strong positive and welcoming ethos. Practitioners know the children and their families well. The mutual respect and positive relationships between children and adults are a strength of the setting. The views of the children are valued highly. For example, their ideas were taken into account to plan a bakery. All practitioners ensure that each child has access to all learning experiences.

The setting provides a wide variety of resources that are organised efficiently to promote the children's independence. Effective use is made of the indoor and outdoor environment. The stimulating outdoor environment allows children to learn about the world around them well. Children make good use of the outdoor area to plant seeds, play in the mud kitchen and experience the snow.

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

The proprietor and leaders are very well motivated and dedicated. Leaders have a clear sense of purpose to ensure that all children make good progress during their time at the setting. They communicate and demonstrate high expectations to all practitioners and have a firm understanding of the requirements of the foundation phase. There is a positive working atmosphere where practitioners share roles and responsibilities readily. As a result, daily routines are well established and this helps to create a calm and enjoyable learning atmosphere, where children feel respected and valued.

Leaders focus suitably on raising standards and improving provision, with the needs of all children at the centre of everything the setting does. Monthly meetings and ongoing informal discussions enable practitioners to discuss and monitor improvements appropriately. Staff discuss children's achievements and develop future planning accordingly. The setting uses the guidance of outside agencies well. Leaders make beneficial use of advice and support from the local authority advisory teacher to monitor and develop the work of the setting. Practitioners feed back ideas from training activities and from visits to other settings successfully. This helps to ensure consistently good quality teaching and learning, particularly in developing children's numeracy and Welsh language skills.

The setting uses appraisal systems to support and challenge practitioners well. Appraisal targets generally link to the setting's improvement plan and to staff training needs successfully. This has a positive impact on raising outcomes for children. This is particularly evident for children's early mark making and ICT skills.

The setting has made good progress in taking forward national initiatives, especially the development of outdoor learning to support children's numeracy and literacy skills.

Improving quality: Good

Leaders and managers know their setting well and use self-evaluation processes regularly to support them in making improvements. This leads to worthwhile changes, which have a positive impact on the children's learning and wellbeing. For example, the development of the outdoors is particularly beneficial in developing children's sense of awe and wonder. They hatch chickens from eggs and take great pride in caring for them.

Practitioners make good use of training opportunities, which have had a positive impact on the setting's planning and assessment procedures in particular. As a result, they identify children's next steps in learning more effectively and adapt learning activities to meet the needs of individuals more clearly.

Leaders involve all practitioners in planning for and writing the setting's self-evaluation report. They all have a specific role in monitoring and addressing the actions. As a result, practitioners feel that their contributions are valued and understand their role in bringing about improvement clearly. Practitioners make good progress towards meeting these targets, for example in developing children's Welsh language, ICT and numeracy skills. The setting consults parents and children appropriately through questionnaires and a suggestion box. Parents greatly appreciate the opportunity to give their opinion. The setting acts upon the comments made to inform future practice.

The priorities identified for improvement in the self-evaluation report link closely to targets in the setting improvement plan. The plan identifies relevant actions, manageable timescales, realistic costs and responsibilities and highlights suitable methods of monitoring. Practitioners are very open to new ideas and respond well to support from the local authority advisory teacher, resulting in improvements in children's outcomes, particularly in improving their oracy skills.

Leaders use the local authority advisory teacher's visit notes effectively to improve provision and to focus on what the children do well. These reports and the setting's own findings provide a comprehensive overview of the setting's strengths and the areas to be developed. However, on a few occasions, evaluations of initiatives focus too much on the completion of actions, and not enough on measuring the impact that these improvements have on outcomes for children over time.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a broad range of beneficial partnerships. There is a very strong partnership with parents, which makes a valuable contribution to developing children's outcomes and wellbeing. For example, parents receive an informative booklet providing them with essential information about the setting and its main aims and objectives. In addition, they have access to online information. Practitioners are

always on hand to talk with parents informally about the day's activities as they collect their children at the end of the session. The setting holds regular coffee mornings across the year for parents to discuss their children's progress in more detail and to view photographs of children engaging in different activities.

The setting feeds several schools in the local area. It has established valuable links with a number of these through its drop-off service. These links, along with a good range of transition activities before children move on, enable children to settle quickly and well into school.

Practitioners work well with the local authority advisory teacher, responding positively to advice and support, for example on helping to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills outdoors.

The setting makes the most of a wide range of community links with local organisations. This provides additional and exciting experiences for children. For example, visits from the local fire station and vet give children a good understanding of how to keep safe and how to care for animals.

Resource management: Good

The setting makes effective use of staffing and resources. All practitioners are well qualified and experienced. They manage the sessions well, ensuring that children access the indoor and outdoor areas effectively. All engage in regular professional development opportunities to enhance their understanding of good foundation phase practice.

The sharing of ideas and professional knowledge among staff supports good quality teaching well. However, managers do not make regular enough use of direct observations when evaluating teaching.

Practitioners make appropriate use of training opportunities to improve provision and outcomes for children. For example, practitioners have attended a Welsh language course, improving their own skills and consequently those of the children.

The owner oversees the budget successfully. Practitioners consider all spending carefully to ensure efficient use of limited funds and to maximise the impact on children's learning. Processes to plan monitor and review spending link clearly to priorities in the setting's improvement plan.

In view of the positive outcomes for children and the range of good quality teaching and learning experiences available, the setting provides good value for money.

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
CIW	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	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.
Foundation Phase	The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from three to seven years of age
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012
Local authority advisory teacher	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings that provide education for three and four-year-olds.
Mudiad Meithrin	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
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 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