



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

**Clever Clogs Early Learning Day Nursery
109 Marsh Road
Rhyl
North Wales
LL18 2AB**

Date of inspection: May 2011

by

Eifion R Morgan

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

Clever Clogs Early Learning Day Nursery is located in a single storey renovated building situated in Rhyl. It is a community first area to the west of the town centre. About half of the children come from families that are socio-economically disadvantaged.

Entrance to the building is via a small hall that has a display area with useful information for parents and shows the staff certification. All parents, carers and visitors have to be let in as doors are permanently locked.

The location of the nursery class is in a large well lit room suitably arranged to incorporate activity areas to support the Foundation Phase teaching. Along side this room is a small refectory and a purpose built kitchen appropriately staffed and furnished.

The nursery group also use an adjacent room for circle time activities. The nursery also has toilet and cloakroom facilities. Outside and completely enclosed is a well resourced play area with immediate access from the main room. Nursery children also make use of a large paved area that leads up to the front door of the nursery for growing pot plants. This is a safe area as it is surrounded on 3 sides by the building and a locked gate to the roadside. The leader has her own private room in which to store confidential information and for private meetings.

The nursery operates from 7.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. only closing for a period between Christmas and the New Year and bank holidays. Children attend for differing days and times depending on parental circumstances and demands. Currently there are eight 3 year olds on the register, all of whom are funded.

The nursery accepts children whatever their background or ability. This has included children from minority ethnic groups with minimal English language and children identified with additional learning needs (ALN). No children come from homes where Welsh is spoken. Children with ALN have been well supported, being provided with 1:1 support and receiving additional professional help from specialist staff.

The setting accepts children from an early age but the nursery group comprise children leaving the Flying Start group aged 3 years they move onto the next stage of their education usually in the term following their 4th birthday.

The nursery is registered by Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to receive up to 16 children and was last inspected by them in 2010.

The nursery has not previously been inspected by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

Good

- Provision for children's health and wellbeing.
- Provision for caring, supporting and guiding children.
- Impact of leadership and planning to secure improvement.
- Children's achievement and progress.
- Children's learning experiences.
- Range of teaching approaches.
- The ethos and equality of provision for all.
- Partnership working.

Prospects for improvement

Good

- Track record of implementing change for the benefit of the children.
- Staff's commitment to produce the best possible provision for the children.
- Impact of leadership and her high expectations for the children.
- Leader's perceptive evaluation of the provision and staff.
- The well developed and effective strategic partnerships that are in place.

Recommendations

The nursery needs to:

- R1 continue to provide high quality provision for the children.
- R2 refine assessment procedures to focus on identifying children's skills and to plan for the next stage in their learning.
- R3 to provide an outside covered area. *

* included in the development plan.

What happens next?

The nursery will draw up an action plan which 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

All children make good, often very good progress in all areas of learning, irrespective of their background and achieve well. Children work diligently and keep on track for substantial periods of time. Most make an effort, concentrate on their tasks and persevere.

Most children show good listening skills and enjoy listening to stories. Few of the more able children remember stories they have heard and repeat the main points of the story to the inspector. All children are developing competence in language and most speak clearly, making themselves understood. All children show an interest in books to different degrees and a few hold books appropriately. All children enjoy using pencils, felt tip pens to make marks and experiment with writing. They know the purpose of writing as was apparent in their scribbles to old Mr Mac Donald.

All children know the rudiments of counting and most count accurately to 4 and several beyond this number. More able children recognise some numbers. All children recognise and match patterns and are beginning to use mathematical language, such as full and empty.

Many children use digital technology, such as digital cameras.

Most children understand simple basic Welsh words- more than they can speak. A few children know the Welsh words for colour and number and repeat these words.

Wellbeing: Good

All children, whatever their background, enjoy their time in the nursery. They are highly motivated to engage in their learning. All children have good and very good attitudes to new experiences. They show genuine care for each other. Many children are developing good levels of confidence and independence relative to their age, ability and background.

Children are keen to talk to the inspector about what they are doing and to involve him in their activities. They are courteous and relate well to each other. Overall, the children in the nursery radiate a feeling of wellbeing based on the high levels of self-esteem successfully developed by the attitude and input of the staff. Parents, in discussion, fully support this view of the nursery. Children are developing a good understanding of how to keep healthy including the importance of healthy foods. Many children are keen to help and take responsibility and are eager to help, such as clearing away toys and equipment.

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

Staff have very high aspirations for the children. The activities planned for them ensure that they are stimulated, challenged and provided with exciting activities. The activities successfully involve all children and secures their participation. Planning is done collaboratively and learning experiences encourage children to progress towards meeting Foundation Phase outcomes.

Staff, particularly through the “key worker” system, know their children very well. This enables staff to develop children’s knowledge, skills and understanding progressively across the curriculum. Children form very good relationships showing respect towards each other. They are self-confident and are developing into independent learners. Through a series of innovative activities they are developing a good understanding of the world and the need to care for all living things. Ample opportunities are planned to develop children’s creative and physical skills. Overall, children’s skills, including their thinking skills, are well developed across all areas of learning.

The Welsh language and the Welsh dimension are well planned for and the children are progressing well in their understanding of the Welsh language. Most children can count to 10 in Welsh and join in singing Welsh rhymes. The Welsh dimension is well developed through celebrations of St. David’s day, associated customs, Welsh foods and representative drawings and painting. Other celebrations include those associated with Indian and China.

A very good feature of children’s learning experiences is the opportunities provided for them to grow a range of plants, both flowers, such as sunflowers, and edible vegetables. This enables children to begin to appreciate sustainability and the recycling of materials.

Teaching: Good

Staff have a very good practical understanding of children’s behaviour and child development. They fully accept the philosophy of the Foundation Phase outcomes for children’s learning and are effective in putting it into practice. Staff have high expectations of all children whatever their background.

Staff fully understand the importance of providing opportunities for children to learn through their active involvement which was seen to good effect with children planting seeds and looking after sunflower seedlings.

There is an appropriate and good balance between child-selected and adult directed activities and children’s individual needs are met flexibly.

An outstanding feature of the provision is the attitude of staff towards the children. All children are highly respected as individuals, their needs and concerns appreciated

and all children receive affection, support, understanding and a feeling of being cared for. This is “loco in parentis” in the best possible sense.

Children are assessed regularly and comprehensibly. Observations are recorded and the results of assessment used in planning future activities. Records of achievement tend to be descriptive and at times insufficiently focused on the skills acquired by the children. Activities are however well directed at meeting children’s needs and interests. Parents are very satisfied with their children’s progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The nursery is very successful in helping children achieve emotional health and wellbeing. Staff provide children with affection and a listening adult. From children’s attitude it is obvious that they know that there is an adult who cares for them and an adult they can talk to. This is highly valuable for all children and particularly those who are disadvantaged.

The nursery provides a framework for keeping healthy, including dental health, healthy foods and exercise – factors that will establish a good pattern of life long skills and behaviour for these children.

Where and when necessary the nursery has sought and obtained specialist help, as for example children identified as having additional learning needs. This is reported as being highly beneficial. The nursery has effective links with such organisations.

Learning experiences promote children’s personal development very well. Children’s spiritual development is enhanced by opportunities to develop their sense of curiosity and wonder, such as was seen when they were examining snails in the garden. The nursery is successful in establishing a moral framework based on honesty, fairness, truth and respect for others. Socially children are learning simple rules of behaviour and how to relate to each other.

Culturally children learn about the culture and traditions of Wales and some other cultures, such as the celebration of Indian and Chinese festivals.

The nursery fully meets safeguarding regulations and responsibilities. Policies and procedures in place ensure the safety of children at all times. The All Wales Child Protection Procedures (2008) are fully implemented.

Staff have received regular training and are well aware of their responsibilities. Good arrangements are in place to ensure that children settle quickly into the nursery.

Learning environment: Good

The nursery is an inclusive community with equality of access for all children. There is a good emphasis on recognising and respecting diversity. The nursery is generously staffed with well qualified and experienced practitioners to teach the Foundation Phase curriculum. They all show enthusiasm and display a liking for the

work. Stimulating experiences are provided for the children who in turn respond positively.

There are good resources available and well matched to the needs of the curriculum and to support children's learning. The accommodation is reasonably maintained and all aspects used to best effect.

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

The leader provides the nursery with a sense of purpose to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children. Staff work together very well and have high expectations that are realised in practice. All policies are in place and procedures well established.

The leader has created a positive ethos where children and staff feel valued. She is well aware of the standards achieved and regularly observes and evaluates children's progress. Staff are annually appraised and have regular meetings with the leader to ascertain their views and expectations. Staff are encouraged to attend training courses.

Excellent links have been established with local authority support staff and this has proved extremely beneficial in establishing the Foundation Phase.

Improving quality: Good

The leader has very good knowledge of the strengths of the nursery and a clear understanding of areas for improvement. The work of the setting has been and is very well focused on improving the provision for the children and this has been highly successful in practice.

The leader has a very good understanding of the Foundation Phase philosophy and this is reflected in the work of the setting. She has appointed a highly professional and enthusiastic staff who themselves are committed to provide the very best experiences for the children. Planning is firmly directed at securing improvement and prioritising areas for improvement.

Staff have attended relevant professional courses and the impact of training is evident in the work of the setting and in children's progress and wellbeing. Staff have taken advantage of being part of professional learning committees beyond the setting.

Partnership working: Good

Links with parents are very good and links with professional specialist organisations are well established and effective. Where children require such support, parents are

always involved. Links with feeder primary schools are in place in that contact is made prior to transfer. This is an aspect for development.

Very effective links are in place with the local authority advisory teacher and the setting reports that these have been highly beneficial and contributed substantially to the current good and often very good provision for children.

Resource management: Good

Staff are well deployed and compliment each other in their roles. Resources are well used to motivate children and the impact is noticeable, such as was seen when children looked after seedlings they had planted. The leader is well aware of resources needs and is planning accordingly. The outdoor environment is well used and is instrumental in developing children's skills across all areas of learning.

The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

One questionnaire reply was received which showed strong agreement with all the statements made on the questionnaire. Discussion with a representative number of parents confirmed this view.

Responses to discussions with children

All children are happy at the setting. They show their enthusiasm when they arrive and are soon involved in the activities set out for them. In conversation they said they enjoyed their learning and particular the outside play.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion R Morgan	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)

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.