



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

**Langstone Playgroup
Langstone Village Hall
Old Chepstow Road
Langstone
NP18 2ND**

Date of inspection: November 2011

By

Maureen Eveline Jones

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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2011: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.

Context

Langstone play group is an English-medium setting which meets in the village hall in Langstone. The group has been meeting there since 1968. The setting has sole use of one of the rooms in the hall where they are able to store equipment and keep all confidential records. The children who attend the setting live in the village of Langstone and surrounding areas.

The setting is registered by Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and can accept 24 children plus 2 children with additional learning needs (ALN). It opens from 9.30 am to 12.00 pm and meets 39 weeks in a year. Currently, eight children of three years and one child of four years are funded by Newport Children and Young Peoples Partnership (NCYPP). At the time of the inspection 7 funded children attended on Wednesday and 8 children on Thursday.

The children who attend are considered to come from advantaged backgrounds. Most children come from homes where English is the main language. No children come from homes where Welsh is the first language. The session is inclusive and welcomes children with additional learning needs (ALN). At present eleven per cent are recognised as having ALN.

The setting employs two regular members of staff which includes the lead practitioner. The current leader has been in post for two years and the trainee deputy manager for six months. The leader is the registered person for the setting and has overall responsibility along with the Management Committee.

The setting was last inspected by the CSSIW in November 2010. The setting was last inspected by Estyn in October 2005.

Summary

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

Current performance

Current performance is good because:

- all children are cared for, guided and support
- practitioners understand their roles and have participated in a range of training courses
- the setting is well led and managed
- children achieve well and make good progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding across most areas of learning
- all children are enthusiastic, courteous, well-behaved learners with good listening skills

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is appropriate emphasis on planning, assessment and recording of children's progressive skill development in language, numeracy and across most areas of learning
- honest self-evaluation in which the leader identifies the strengths of the setting and the areas that need improvement
- a positive atmosphere creates a happy environment where the contribution of adults, children and staff are valued

Recommendations

In order to build on the existing strengths the setting needs to:

R1 improve planning and provision for the progressive development of children's information and communications technology skills (ICT)

R2 complete the development of the out-door learning area to maximise provision for play and active learning throughout all the areas of the Foundation Phase

R3 continue to improve the children's use of incidental Welsh across all areas of the curriculum

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

All children achieve well and make good progress in relation to their stage of development and ability. Children gain in confidence and independence and cope well with new challenges. Most children persevere and concentrate for a reasonable amount of time and take responsibility for tidying away resources at the end of the session.

All children apply their skills well to a wide range of play activities. Their speaking skills are good. They listen attentively and contribute well during discussions. Most join in enthusiastically when singing in English and Welsh and enjoy listening to stories. The majority of children recognize their own name when they self register each morning. Pre-writing skills are well developed and children take opportunity to mark-make in the creative area and in the outdoor learning area. Many children have good fine motor skills and are able to use small tools such as scissors or make models when manipulating dough.

The development of children's pre-number skills is good. Many children confidently count to 12 in English and Welsh. Many use mathematical language correctly in their play. For instance, they know how many candles make four to celebrate a fourth birthday and some can make estimates with regard to more or less.

A few children control a computer mouse with a deal of accuracy. Overall, children's skills in using information and communication technology to reinforce and enrich their learning across the seven areas of learning, are less well developed.

Children's creative skills and skills of enquiry, investigation and independent learning are developing appropriately through a good range of stimulating and interesting play and learning activities. They have free choice to access these activities during the session.

Children are making good progress in developing their Welsh language skills. They understand and respond to simple greetings and can name numbers and colours in Welsh. Although they respond appropriately to the use of Welsh that is instigated by the staff, they are not confident enough to use the language incidentally in their play

Wellbeing: Good

Children's standards of well-being are good. All children pre-register and settle happily in the setting.

Behaviour is good and children are polite to adults and children.

Most children understand the importance of healthy eating and choose their own fruit at snack time. They independently pour their drinks and choose their own cup and plate. All children make decisions about their likes and dislikes.

Many children enjoy the activities provided in the outdoor area but further improvement and resources are required to promote the development of gross motor skills.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
---	-------------

Learning experiences: Good

Practitioners provide a wide range of stimulating experiences and appropriate emphasis is placed upon play and learning through first hand experiences. Staff work well together and know the children well. Key workers have responsibility for a group of children. Planning is extensive in most areas of the curriculum. They plan carefully and appropriately to meet the needs of the individual child, including the more able and talented and those who present with challenging behaviour. However, planning for ICT requires more detail across the seven areas of learning.

Practitioners promote children's personal and social skills well. The children recognise the importance of washing their hands after outdoor play and before snack time. Many children can put on coats and wellingtons. Most children play appropriately in the outdoor area but resources require further improvement in order to develop gross motor skills.

Practitioners promote the development of Welsh at story time and circle time where it is used effectively. The setting provides good opportunities to develop children's understanding of Welsh traditions and culture. However, the use of incidental Welsh requires further development. Awareness of other cultures is appropriately raised by the provision of activities such as Diwali.

Children's understanding of global citizenship is developing as they recognise the need to collect rain water to water their daffodil bulbs and sweep up the leaves to be placed in the compost bin.

Teaching: Good

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Practitioners have a sound understanding of the Foundation Phase and children achieve the outcomes in relation to their stage of development and ability. Planning is appropriate in most areas of learning. The provision for the children's development in the Welsh language and ICT needs further development.

Practitioners monitor children's learning effectively and observe on a daily basis. Each child is tracked and appropriate targets identified to ensure the next steps for learning are recorded. Individual profiles are kept for each child and the information is shared with parents. Parents are provided with appropriate information regarding their child and are able to speak with practitioners as and when necessary.

Practitioners use open-ended questioning effectively to extend and challenge children's thinking. Practitioners intervene sensitively with individuals and groups when appropriate to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding. They are good role models for the use of language and teach the children simple phonics.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting promotes children's health and well-being effectively. Children are happy, feel safe and settle quickly into the routines and activities of the setting. Behaviour is very good

Daily circle time sessions are opportunities for practitioners and children to discuss personal and social issues. This time is also used to recall previous activities. Snack time allows children to socialise with their peer group and provides opportunities to discuss healthy food options and make choices. The children independently select their dishes and pour out their own drinks.

The setting has good arrangements for supporting children with additional learning needs (ALN). The leader seeks the advice of the inclusion officer from the local authority and is then able to access specialist agencies to support children with special needs. Children with ALN and more able and talented children, are recognised in the planning and their needs highlighted in their personal files. Practitioners are aware of the requirement of having individual education programmes to support learning where necessary.

The setting has appropriate policy and procedure for safeguarding. All practitioners are trained and understand their roles and responsibilities within the statutory framework. All staff attend child protection training.

The setting has a wide range of relevant and useful policies and risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis.

Learning environment: Good

The setting provides a welcoming and interesting learning environment for all children. Children are expected to respect the resources available to them and help to tidy away after the session.

Practitioners provide a careful selection and use of resources which promotes equality and diversity through a range of cultural celebrations such as Diwali. These

are supported with photographs that the children enjoy discussing. Displays in the setting are attractive and informative and include words in both English and Welsh.

The internal accommodation is well organised and used effectively to support children's progress in all areas of learning. However, the resources available to develop children's skills in ICT, are limited.

The outdoor area is used regularly to support and enhance children's learning but requires further development. The setting makes good use of the grounds belonging to the local primary school where the children will be planting trees to extend their learning about the environment.

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

Leadership: Good

The lead practitioner is an enthusiastic leader who inspires the staff to work together to promote a positive ethos, where children, parents and staff feel valued and respected. All practitioners have appropriate job descriptions and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Practitioners training needs are identified and delivered according to areas that require improvement. Currently training has been identified to improve skills in Welsh and also child protection. The leader operates an appraisal system whereby all staff are appraised both on a termly and annual basis. The leader is appraised by the chair of the management committee.

Practitioners are fully involved in training and developments within the Foundation Phase. The setting has been awarded the bronze eco medal and is now aiming for the silver award with regard to sustainability throughout the provision.

Improving quality: Good

The self evaluation report is a useful document which identifies and plans for future improvement. An action plan is established and areas are identified for improvement. Practitioners have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development.

Practitioners are well trained and experienced in working in the Foundation Phase. They make every effort to attend training events and report back to the other staff members in the setting.

The views of children are taken into account as they are allowed to have free choice about where they play and the activities which they like or dislike.

The leader has developed useful network arrangements with other settings and shares good practice. Discussions have included the use and future development of the Welsh language.

Links with the Newport Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) are strong and an advisory teacher from the local authority provides good support to the staff and the setting.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a good range of partners who help to support, strengthen and enhance provision. They have good relationships with parents which is reflected in the responses provided through the questionnaire. Regular information is provided for the parents and an "open door" policy allows parents to speak with the staff at all times.

The effective links with the Newport EYDCP through the work of the advisory teacher supports the work of the setting well. Staff use the advice and guidance they receive to improve and develop the setting.

The leader develops useful network arrangements with other providers to share good practice

Practitioners have good links with the inclusion officer from the local authority. The leader attends clinics with the officer and any problems are discussed and the relevant agencies contacted if necessary.

The setting is a member of Wales PPA which provides good support especially for children with learning difficulties.

Good partnership exists between the setting and the local primary school e.g. the children from the setting are planting trees in the school's grounds and are extending their knowledge with regard to sustainability and conservation.

Resource management: Good

Good use is made of the available staffing and resources to support children's learning. Staff are deployed effectively to make best use of their experience and expertise and to promote their professional development. An action plan is in place which highlights the future training needs for each member of staff.

The leader and the management committee manage the budget and financial matters efficiently and effectively. They also manage the resources to meet most areas of the Foundation Phase. However, the development of ICT and the outdoor area require further resourcing and improvement.

Overall, the setting achieves good outcomes for all children and provides good value for money.

A report on Langstone Playgroup
November 2011

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Analysis of all five questionnaires returned by parents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision offered by the setting. Parents regard the teaching as good and are happy with the progress that their child is making. They are kept well informed and receive helpful feedback from the staff.

All parents are pleased with the way in which the setting is run and are confident to approach the setting to discuss any concerns.

Responses to discussions with children

All children enjoy the variety of interesting activities offered by the setting. They have made friends and enjoy learning together, both in the indoor and outdoor play areas. The children are confident when speaking to adults and particularly enjoy discussing photographs of past events. They take responsibility for making choices at snack time and independently put on coats and wellingtons. All children co-operate with each other and tidy away at the end of the session. They behave well and understand the importance of being kind to others.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Maureen Eveline Jones	Reporting Inspector

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.