



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

**Ysgol Y Faenol Playgroup
Ysgol y Faenol
Johns Drive
Bodelwyddan
LL18 5TG**

Date of inspection: January 2015

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

Ysgol y Faenol playgroup first opened in January 2008. The playgroup is registered by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) for a maximum of 24 children. The setting operates every morning, five days a week, during term time in the nursery classroom of Ysgol y Faenol in Bodelwyddan.

At the time of the inspection 14 children attended. The local authority funds a few of these children. Most speak English as their first language. There are a very few children who have additional learning needs. Nearly all pupils who attend the playgroup come from the local area.

The headteacher of the school is the registered person and a playgroup manager, who has been in post since the setting first opened, runs the playgroup.

The setting was last inspected by CSSIW in May 2013 and by Estyn in February 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

Current performance is good because:

- practitioners provide interesting and exciting learning experiences;
- teaching provides effective opportunities for children to work independently;
- the positive relationships develops children's confidence as learners;
- the setting provides a happy, caring and supportive environment for all the children;
- the setting's inclusive ethos ensures that every child has access to all curricular activities; and
- the good supply of resources is used effectively to promote learning and teaching.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the setting is well led;
- all practitioners fulfil their roles effectively and work well as a team;
- practitioners know the setting well and have high expectations;
- self-evaluation outcomes are used effectively to improve outcomes;
- very good partnership arrangements with the school ensure effective transition arrangements; and
- the setting provides good value for money.

Recommendations

R1. Improve provision for Welsh language development.

R2. Provide opportunities for children to fully understand what they have learnt during the session.

R3. Ensure leaders formalise monitoring arrangements for improvement planning.

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?

N/A

Standards: N/A

There is no report on children's progress, standards in the development of their skills, the Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection upon whom to report without identifying individual children.

Wellbeing: N/A

There is no report on children's progress, standards in the development of their skills, the Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection upon whom to report without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The setting provides a good range of learning experiences, which successfully stimulate the interest and imagination of nearly all children. These experiences have been carefully planned in order that appropriate attention is given to all areas of learning in the Foundation Phase. Practitioners ensure that children are actively involved in their learning and have regular opportunities to make choices about what they would like to do. This develops increasing confidence and independence successfully in most children.

Practitioners provide good opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, during family group time there are ample opportunities for children to listen to stories, learn songs and rhymes, and discuss learning experiences. There is effective use of the book area to enable children to enjoy looking at books. There are productive opportunities for children to count and discuss numbers. For example, when measuring the length of dinosaurs on the outside play area. Meaningful experiences assist children to develop an appropriate range of ICT skills.

The setting places suitable emphasis on Welsh traditions and celebrations, such as celebrating St David's day. However the use of day-to-day Welsh with the children is underdeveloped.

Good opportunities are also provided for the children to develop their understanding of other cultures and traditions such as the Chinese New Year and Diwali. These activities help children to develop a good understanding of the wider world and to develop their awareness of global citizenship effectively. Children are actively encouraged to recycle paper and plastic.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and have a secure understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. Relationships are very good; adults and children interact well and this has a positive impact on outcomes. Through detailed joint planning, practitioners successfully provide stimulating and challenging learning experiences, which ensure the involvement of every child.

All practitioners use a varied range of teaching strategies to allow children to make choices about their learning and to promote independent learning. Their understanding of when to intervene and when to let the children discover something for themselves is good. Group learning sessions are well organised and ensure all children are aware of learning intentions. However, opportunities to make sure all children have fully understood these learning intentions are underdeveloped.

The setting uses an appropriate system for assessing children's attainment and wellbeing. Practitioners monitor regularly how well children are doing based on useful observations. The setting has recently introduced a more comprehensive assessment system, which assesses a range of outcomes more effectively, but this practice is not fully implemented. There are good arrangements for ensuring parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and how they can help them improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. The practitioners are caring and supportive of all children. Snack time is a social occasion where children discuss the benefits of eating healthily. The setting has the appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. Good opportunities are available for the children to recycle paper, cardboard and plastic. In the past children have enjoyed learning about how things grow and how to care for the environment.

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

The setting's provision for promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Values such as honesty and respect are strongly promoted through all the setting's work. Children are encouraged to take responsibility, to show initiative and to behave well.

Good processes are in place to identify and support children with additional learning needs. There are well-established arrangements with professional support services to provide children with specialist support when needed.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive friendly community where every child is valued. They all have equal access to all areas of learning and activities provided. Children are happy in each other's company and are very willing to help their peers.

The setting has enough practitioners, who are suitably qualified, to teach every aspect of the Foundation Phase curriculum. There is an ample supply of good quality resources in every area of learning. These are used imaginatively to enrich learning experiences. The buildings and site are well maintained and used well.

The setting makes occasional use of the local area and visitors to the playgroup. This provides a good range of opportunities for children to expand their learning experiences.

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

The leader successfully creates an ethos where children and staff feel appreciated. She has a clear vision for the setting, sets high expectations and challenges everyone to do their best. All practitioners fully understand their roles and work well together as a team. Their relationships with the children, parents and the school are very positive. Policies and procedures are implemented appropriately.

Procedures to appraise practitioner's work and identify further professional development needs are at an early stage of development.

The registered person is a regular visitor and provides an effective link with the school. Together with the playgroup manager they have established a good working relationship, which benefits the setting.

The setting takes forward national and local priorities well. The provision embraces well the Foundation Phase philosophy and approach. There is strong emphasis on equality, safeguarding and providing good learning opportunities for children.

Improving quality: Good

Effective self-evaluation is a regular and thorough part of the life of the setting. All practitioners regularly evaluate how well children are achieving and the quality of the setting's provision. The self-evaluation document is of good quality. It is largely evaluative and contains many references to improving standards and provision taken from a wide range of different sources, many of which are based on first hand evidence. The areas for development are clear and take account of improvements needed to make the setting more effective. Leaders have a clear understanding of the setting's strengths and shortcomings.

Leaders use evidence from evaluations effectively to create a setting development plan, which prioritises 'next steps' successfully. This plan contains achievable targets set within realistic timescales together with identified success criteria. Although leaders review plans on a regular basis there are no formal procedures in place to ensure sustainability and continuity from one plan to the next.

Partnership working: Good

A wide range of partnership activities makes a strong contribution to children's good achievement and welfare.

The playgroup has very good relationships with the feeder school. The setting shares the room and the outdoor facilities with the school's nursery class and all practitioners have other roles within the main school. This provides good continuity between the setting and the school and ensures a smooth transition from one to the other.

The parents are very supportive of the setting and appreciative of the standards and care provided. Partnership arrangements are good this was evident following discussions with a few parents.

The close cooperation between the setting and the local authority support teacher makes a very positive contribution towards improving the quality of provision and standards.

The occasional links with the community have resulted in substantial benefits for the children.

Resource management: Good

Staff and resources are managed well by the playgroup manager and the registered person. Leaders have effectively deployed suitably qualified staff within the setting. All practitioners cooperate effectively as a team and share the managers caring viewpoints.

Practitioners benefit from training activities. However, the formal arrangements of appraisal and continuing professional development are not yet fully developed.

The playgroup manager and the registered person manage finances and resources well. Spending links directly to priorities identified in the setting improvement plan.

In view of the effective provision and good leadership, the setting provides good 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

Mr Peter Anthony Roach	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)

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
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 partnership's 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>

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.