



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

A report on

**3 @ Cradoc
Cradoc CP School
Cradoc
Brecon
Powys
LD3 9LR**

Date of inspection: October 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

3 @ Cradoc is an English-medium nursery in Cradoc, in Powys local authority. The setting is registered for 48 children between the ages of three to four years. It offers early education sessions from Monday to Friday from 9am until 11.30am during school term time, between September and July. There are currently seven children in receipt of funded early education.

The setting has identified a few children as having additional learning needs. There are very few children from ethnic minority backgrounds and no children have English as an additional language. No children have Welsh as their home language.

There are three members of staff who all work with the three and four-year-old children. The lead practitioner has been in post since April 2003.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspected the setting in February 2018 and Estyn last inspected it in February 2012.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Most children make very good progress in their personal and social development
- Most children's communication and numeracy skills are developing well from their starting points
- Most children co-operate successfully with each other and share toys and equipment readily
- Nearly all practitioners provide a good range of learning experiences indoors and outdoors that engage nearly all children successfully
- Provision for developing children's literacy skills is very good
- Practitioners have a caring approach that creates a positive learning environment

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The lead practitioner is highly committed to improving quality
- The setting's arrangements for identifying its strengths and areas for improvement are effective
- Practitioners identify what children do well and what they need more help with successfully
- Nearly all practitioners work together very effectively and understand their roles and responsibilities
- Nearly all practitioners reflect on their practice and are aware of personal strengths and areas to develop
- Nearly all practitioners use information from training well to improve the provision
- The setting makes good use of staffing to support children's learning successfully

Recommendations

- R1 Improve children's confidence in using and applying Welsh language skills independently
- R2 Develop practitioners' skills in supporting children to think creatively and develop their problem-solving skills in the outdoor area
- R3 Ensure that all leaders follow policies and procedures effectively and consistently
- R4 Put measures in place to secure the sustainability of the setting

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan to show 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
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Standards: Good

Many children enter the setting with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. During their time at the setting nearly all children make good progress, particularly in the development of their personal and social skills. A few children make very good progress.

Most children listen attentively. They pay good attention when others are talking and allow others to speak without interrupting them. Most children understand and follow instructions, such as getting their coat and wellingtons before they go outside. Most children speak clearly and are happy to share information about what they are doing with familiar adults. For example, they describe how they are 'cleaning up the porridge' with a toy digger.

During story time, most children show interest and join in enthusiastically with repeated phrases. Around half of children respond to questions about the story with confidence. Many join in with songs and rhymes throughout the session. A few children show an understanding of reading in their play. For example, they use a magazine to show their friends which house they are building or say 'I'm just reading' as part of their imaginative play. A majority of children choose to take part in mark making activities with a range of equipment. A few children are beginning to write for a purpose and use recognisable letters when attempting to write their name as they self-register.

Most children's numeracy skills are developing well from their starting points. Most children say numbers in order to ten with support and many count objects accurately up to five. Most children explore simple shapes in their play and around half make good use of mathematical vocabulary. For example, they explain that there are 'too many people one, two, three, four' when sitting inside the play house.

Almost all children's physical skills are developing well. Most children cope with fine motor tasks successfully. For example, they take part in construction activities and mould play dough into different shapes. Almost all children use a range of tools such as hammers, spades and brushes independently. Most children develop their physical skills well such as throwing and catching a large ball and taking part in balancing activities confidently. A very few children develop their problem-solving skills successfully. For example, they try different approaches to dig a large hole in the outdoor sandpit without the sides collapsing. However, children's problem-solving skills are generally underdeveloped.

Many children access and use ICT equipment well with support. For example, they explore programmable toys and listen to a voice recorder. A few children create personal books successfully using a tablet computer that they share with their friends.

Many children are developing their Welsh skills appropriately in relation to their starting points. Many join in with Welsh songs and rhymes when encouraged and a very few can say numbers in order to five in Welsh. Many children respond positively to simple commands given in Welsh during daily routines and a very few are beginning to name colours in Welsh. However, children's Welsh language skills are generally underdeveloped.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children settle well as soon as they arrive at the setting. Most co-operate well with one another and share toys and equipment willingly. Most take good notice of instructions given by an adult and respond to requests appropriately. For example, they form a line when singing a well-known song about a bus. A majority help to tidy up when encouraged.

Most children look after the setting's resources well and treat adults and children respectfully. Most are courteous and show good manners when encouraged. A very few children do this independently. For example, they ask their friends if they would like some fruit at snack time. Many children are developing their independence well, such as washing their hands after going to the toilet and washing their bowl when they have finished their food.

Nearly all children make independent choices about what they want to play with from activities offered, and all children can do this when supported by an adult. Nearly all children show interest in the activities available and particularly enjoy the opportunity to play with large bricks in the outdoor construction area.

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

The setting provides a good range of learning experiences indoors and outdoors that engage most children successfully across all areas of learning. They focus well on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills. There is an effective emphasis on learning through play and first-hand experiences.

Practitioners plan purposeful weekly learning experiences for the outdoor area and have made recent improvements to provision such as the 'DIY shop'. Practitioners support children to explore the natural environment well through activities such as collecting apples from the orchard. However, provision to support children to think creatively and develop their problem-solving skills in the outdoor area are underdeveloped.

Practitioners provide worthwhile opportunities for children to go on local visits to enrich their learning. For example, they enjoy regular outings to a local theatre. The setting uses visitors effectively to enhance the curriculum, including the local police service, music workshops and 'Millie' the dog.

There is good provision to develop children's numeracy skills. Almost all practitioners provide children with regular opportunities to match, count and recognise shapes and patterns. For example, children enjoy developing their

mathematical skills when they create symmetrical butterfly patterns with paint. Resources available such as numbered pebbles, magnetic shape puzzles and sorting equipment provide children with a wide range of experiences that develop mathematical concepts well.

Practitioners provide a good range of opportunities for children to develop their communication and literacy skills. The lead practitioner uses stories as a starting point for children's learning well. For example, children receive a letter from a well-known story character, asking them to help him grow his beans. There are useful opportunities for children to mark make and develop their understanding of writing for different purposes. For example, practitioners provide envelopes, notepads and clip boards in the role-play area.

Provision for developing children's ICT skills is evident throughout the setting and supports children's learning in other areas appropriately. There is a range of useful equipment available, including programmable toys, battery operated toys and tablet computers.

There are effective opportunities for children to learn to care for living things, such as when they plant and look after a range of herbs. Practitioners encourage children to show kindness to minibeasts they find in the outdoor area such as worms and ladybirds, by handling them with care. There are useful opportunities for children to develop their physical skills both indoors and outside. These include taking part in musical movement sessions and large-scale digging activities.

Practitioners support children's Welsh language development effectively during large group time. They model Welsh through singing songs, counting and using a few Welsh words and phrases. However, practitioners' use of Welsh language throughout the session is limited. Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about their Welsh heritage. For example, they make Welsh cakes as part of their St David's Day celebrations.

Teaching: Good

Nearly all practitioners have a good understanding of foundation phase practice. They use a worthwhile range of strategies to encourage and to motivate children to learn. They combine focused activities with children's free play effectively. As a result, children sustain interest in tasks and enjoy periods of uninterrupted learning. Practitioners' interactions with children are very sensitive, respectful and caring,

Nearly all practitioners observe how well children engage with activities and adapt the provision in response to their observations. This builds on children's interests successfully. The setting involves children in planning, effectively. For example, practitioners support children to make a hedgehog house after recognising their interest in hedgehogs.

Nearly all practitioners use questions well to support children's thinking. They are aware of the need to provide children with ample time to think about a question or solve a problem. However, practitioners provide few practical opportunities for children to experiment and solve problems independently.

Practitioners have developed an effective range of strategies to promote positive behaviour and many children respond to these well. Nearly all practitioners have clear expectations and explain rules to children appropriately. For example, they explain why the children should not throw sand. This ensures a team approach and consistency for children.

The setting has an effective range of assessment procedures. Practitioners observe children and identify what they can already do during their first few weeks in the setting. At regular intervals, they update these records to show children's progress over time effectively. Practitioners make careful observations of children and assess their skills, to identify the next steps in their learning. The lead practitioner shares detailed information gathered with the school, when children enter the reception class.

The setting keeps parents and carers informed about the topics covered and what their child is learning effectively. For example, practitioners provide regular open mornings for parents to see the activities available and the skills their child is developing.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has successful arrangements to support children's healthy eating and drinking. During snack time, practitioners encourage children to eat a range of foods and provide water or milk to drink. Most food options are healthy. Children make choices about what they would like to eat, and practitioners encourage them to prepare and try new foods such as fruit porridge. The setting provides valuable opportunities for children to take regular physical exercise. For example, children readily take part in healthy community events such as Sports Day. This develops children's co-ordination successfully and encourages them to adopt a healthy life-style.

Practitioners are good role-models and support children to develop respect for others and a sense of right and wrong successfully. They encourage children to share equipment and to take care of resources effectively. As a result, children learn to cooperate with each other well. For example, they dig a 'new road' together in the outdoor sand pit.

A beneficial range of learning experiences foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. Practitioners foster a sense of awe and wonder in children effectively. For example, they encourage them to look for and observe minibeasts in the outdoor area. This results in children developing a fascination of living creatures they find such as ants.

Practitioners provide meaningful opportunities for children to learn about sustainability. They encourage children to put waste into designated bins and use recycled materials in their play. The setting provides worthwhile opportunities to develop children's cultural awareness such as through regular singing sessions and visits to the theatre.

There are effective processes to support children with additional learning needs. These include beneficial links with a range of support agencies that help meet children's individual needs effectively.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting is welcoming to all, and practitioners are friendly and approachable. It is an inclusive community where all children are encouraged to take part and have equal access to all areas of the setting's provision. Practitioners lead by example in encouraging children to show tolerance towards one another and respect for the setting's equipment. For example, they explain why children need to be careful when pushing toy diggers. As a result, all children play and learn happily.

The setting has suitably qualified practitioners to meet the requirements of the foundation phase. It is situated within the school and benefits from access to an orchard and a large outdoor area. The setting's accommodation is secure and appropriately maintained.

Practitioners use the space indoors effectively. It is attractive and organised into well set out designated learning areas, where children can access resources easily. Resources and furniture are of good quality and appropriate. The setting has recently improved the outdoor area, and this has improved provision for developing children's skills across the curriculum.

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

Leaders work effectively with setting staff to provide a caring and nurturing environment for all children. They manage practitioners and children well to ensure that the setting runs smoothly, following established routines. There is a strong commitment to teamwork and the lead practitioner has a clear vision for a setting where children are happy, enjoy learning and progress to the best of their ability.

There is a range of beneficial policies and procedures to support the organisation of the setting. The lead practitioner shares these during the induction of new staff effectively. However, on a few occasions, leaders do not follow all policies and procedures consistently. This leads to breaches in a very few important health and safety procedures. For example, practitioners do not ensure that all fire exits remain clear.

Practitioners understand and carry out their roles successfully. They have clear job descriptions which are adapted well for their different roles. The registered individual communicates regularly with the lead practitioner and has recently introduced a formal monitoring system to support improvements. However, this is at an early stage of development.

Leaders use appraisal systems effectively to communicate high standards and review the performance of all practitioners. Almost all staff have good opportunities to discuss and reflect on the quality of their work. However, senior leaders do not implement appraisal procedures systematically, resulting in an inconsistent approach.

The lead practitioner is aware of local and national priorities and there is an effective focus on developing children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

Improving quality: Good

The setting's systems for identifying its strengths and areas for improvement are effective and all practitioners are committed to improving the quality of their work. The lead practitioner uses information from a range of sources well to inform the self-evaluation process. For example, she identifies outdoor learning as an area for development in response to external feedback and observations of children.

Almost all practitioners understand clearly what the setting does well and areas that they need to improve. They explain what they have identified as priorities to raise standards. All staff are eager to take advantage of opportunities for continuous professional development and strive to improve their performance. This has a positive impact on the quality of the setting's work, for example, through improving provision for developing children's speech and language skills.

Through self-evaluation processes, practitioners identify the setting's strengths and achievements effectively. They identify what the children do well and what they need more help with successfully. Leaders use this information effectively to identify useful priorities for improvement.

The setting has made good progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has an effective range of partnerships that improve the quality of provision and outcomes for children.

Parents receive a good range of information through notices, newsletters, social media and day-to-day contact with staff. Practitioners use 'peg bags' to share photos of children taking part in activities, with their parents. This informs parents about daily activities successfully and helps them feel comfortable to approach the setting about any concerns.

There is a strong partnership with the school that supports children's learning well, and helps prepare them to move on to the next stage of their education. For example, practitioners invite children to wear school uniform and join in the school's Harvest Festival celebration. The setting shares their indoor area with the school's reception class, enabling children to get to know their teacher and learning environment before starting school. Practitioners and teachers share valuable information about children's individual interests, learning and development that helps develop the school's understanding of their needs as they enter the reception class.

The setting has useful links with the local authority and receives regular advice and support from the advisory teacher. This has led to worthwhile improvements in standards and provision.

The setting develops links with the wider community successfully. For example, the lead practitioner invites parents and children to regular music sessions and runs a weekly toddler group in the setting.

Resource management: Adequate

Leaders ensure that the setting has enough well qualified and well-trained practitioners to deliver the foundation phase curriculum. Resources are sufficient and of good quality. For example, there is a wide range of equipment to support mathematical development.

Almost all practitioners access training based on needs identified through the appraisal process appropriately. Practitioners make effective use of training to improve provision. This has supported them to improve aspects, such as the use of resources for developing children's numeracy skills. Nearly all practitioners reflect on their practice effectively and are aware of personal strengths and areas to develop. They share ideas and support each other's professional development well.

The setting uses funds appropriately to address priorities. For example, the lead practitioner recently purchased a range of ICT equipment to enhance provision in this area. Leaders monitor the setting's budget appropriately and have suitable systems for keeping spending under review. However, the setting is carrying a substantial historical deficit. In view of the good standards and quality of provision the setting provides adequate 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	<p>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 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 three to seven 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 that 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)	<p>This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.</p>

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