



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

A report on

**Bobl Bach y Bannau
Ysgol y Bannau
Penlan
Brecon
Powys
LD3 9SR**

Date of inspection: October 2015

by

**Nicholas Jones
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

Bobl Bach y Bannau is a setting run by Ysgol y Bannau in Brecon, Powys. It meets in a purpose built building on the school grounds. The setting is open for five mornings of the week. The setting has three members of staff, who attend on different days during the week.

The setting's registration allows it to accept up to 24 children. It admits children in the term after their third birthday. They remain at the setting until the term before their fourth birthday, when they start school. At the time of the inspection, five children attended, all of them funded by the local authority.

All the children are of white British origin and nearly all speak English as their first language. Currently, very few children have additional learning needs.

The leader began her post in September 2011. The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in November 2014. Estyn last inspected the setting in January 2011.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- The learning experiences are planned well
- The teaching is effective
- The care of the children is diligent
- The learning environment is stimulating
- The good quality resources are used effectively, indoors and outdoors
- The relationship between adults and children is positive
- The staff work effectively together

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- The strategic direction provided by the leader and school's management group is effective
- The self-evaluation systems are regular practices that support the setting
- All staff have a positive attitude towards improving their teaching through good training
- The local authority's good support links are used consistently and sensibly
- The leader is very active in the day-to-day work of the setting
- The relationship with the school is very positive

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that all staff complete daily assessments regularly and consistently
- R2 Improve the outdoor gardening areas
- R3 Ensure that the targets in the improvement plan derive directly from the self-evaluation

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?

Not applicable

Standards: Not applicable

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: Not applicable

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 curriculum is planned well. It meets the philosophy of the Foundation Phase curriculum effectively. Daily planning is thorough and it targets individual children to ensure that they make good progress in their learning. The curriculum builds purposefully on children's previous knowledge and experiences. It includes interesting activities for the development of children's skills across the curriculum, particularly literacy, numeracy and social skills.

The leader prepares the weekly planning conscientiously. She co-ordinates this efficiently with other staff members and the views and ideas of all staff are considered and used sensibly. The curriculum is flexible enough to allow staff to follow children's interests, indoors and in the outdoor learning area.

Staff allow children to select their own tasks and activities effectively. Literacy and numeracy tasks are very evident indoors and in the outdoor area. This is very evident in the imaginative role-play areas, where children play creatively in tents and wash mud off cars with hosepipes and sponges. Good opportunities are also provided for children to develop their physical and thinking skills. For example, children have positive opportunities to experiment in musical activities with saucepans and other utensils and to drive bikes around the outdoor area.

All adults communicate well with the children in Welsh. They encourage the children to respond in Welsh and they are very positive about the use of the language in daily activities.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits and visitors to enhance children's learning experiences successfully. For example, visits to the town centre and links with local businesses, the fire service and the police develop and extend the children's experiences effectively. The provision for developing the children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills is good. Staff direct the children purposefully towards the use of technological resources like the computer, cameras and electronic toys.

The traditions and celebrations of the culture of Wales are emphasised well through the celebration of Saint David's Day and Saint Dwynwen's day and through the history and traditions of the Brecon Beacons. The staff sing and recite Welsh nursery rhymes often throughout every session, which helps the children's understanding of the language. Staff promote children's awareness of other cultures well. For example, the setting celebrates festivals, such as, Chinese New Year and Diwali.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good. Staff have a good, practical knowledge of children's development and a clear understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. There is a positive relationship between all the staff and the children. All staff have an active role in providing a stimulating curriculum and the best use is made of their expertise. There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-selected activities, both indoors and outdoors. Staff know when to intervene sensibly in children's play. Staff set clear learning objectives for the children at the start of every focus activity. This ensures good levels of challenge for individual children, which matches their abilities.

All staff model the Welsh language well. They challenge the children to evaluate their work regularly in all areas of learning. As a result, children are enthusiastic and engaged fully in all activities, for example, when they prepare ingredients to make a Welsh broth, when they collect leaves and paint autumn scenes and when they dress teddy to go on a camping trip.

Staff have an established process of sharing information from assessment practices. However, all staff do not complete daily assessments regularly and consistently. Therefore, daily assessments do not record in enough detail what children learn on a daily basis. Reports to parents are informative and highlight clearly their child's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting's provision for ensuring children's health, wellbeing, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Staff foster values, such as honesty, fairness and respect consistently through daily activities. They work diligently to promote the children's self-esteem and confidence. Children have good opportunities to reflect, take turns and discuss their feelings. Snack time is a social occasion and children are encouraged enthusiastically to take responsibility for serving fruit, toast and drinks. The setting makes appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking. There are good opportunities available to all

children to recycle paper, food and plastic. This is beginning to develop their understanding of sustainability effectively.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. The setting provides a safe environment. The doors are locked and only opened by members of staff. Consequently, no one can enter or a child leave unaccompanied. The outdoor area is enclosed within the setting's boundary and the gates are bolted securely when the children are outdoors. Good care is taken when children are being collected to ensure that they are in the care of their parents or of a known carer.

There are sound processes in place to support children with additional learning needs. The leader is the additional learning needs co-ordinator. She works closely with the school's headteacher to ensure that the necessary procedures for supporting children with additional needs are in place. The setting uses outside support from the local authority well.

Learning environment: Good

The setting, through the daily activities and the approach adopted by the staff promotes a positive ethos. The staff know the children well and their individuality is recognised. Every child has equal access to an interesting curriculum. The setting is an important part of the school and is included in all aspects of school life, including weekly assemblies.

The setting uses its resources successfully in the building and outside to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and the needs of children. The resources are accessible to the children, which promotes the children's sense of responsibility well. The provision of resources in focus tasks, continuous activities and in the opportunities to enhance learning are shared effectively.

The outdoor area is used well. It is organised sensibly and the children have opportunities to use all the resources, including an outdoor kitchen, which is under the covered area. They learn through stimulating experiences. There is provision to grow plants in pots. However, there are too few opportunities for children to plant and to learn how things grow in the setting's outdoor area.

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

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities fully and co-operate well as a team. They use guidance from external agencies, such as the local authority, sensibly. This practice ensures the best use of expertise to support the setting. The leader and staff plan purposefully to provide interesting and practical experiences for the children. They have followed the local authority's guidance on developing planning and organising the areas of learning effectively.

The improvement plan identifies accurately what needs to be done in order for the setting to improve. The strategic plan's targets have a positive effect by creating improvements over time. However, the targets do not correspond consistently with the improvement areas noted in the self-evaluation report.

Staff receive effective and relevant training, which affects the quality of provision well. The leader and management group, co-ordinated by the school, lead efficiently and give good consideration to legislation. The management systems meet requirements. The setting gives good consideration to national priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum purposefully.

Improving quality: Good

When creating the self-evaluation, the sensible consideration of the views of everyone involved with the setting is evident. The needs of the setting are set out in detail in the improvement plan. The leader discusses the self-evaluation with confidence. She uses regular self-evaluation processes throughout the year to target the development needs of the setting. In the self-evaluation, the areas noted for development include improving parental links, developing continuous provision and improving ICT provision.

Staff focus diligently on creating improvements. They target development areas efficiently. Generally, the leader targets relevant development areas appropriately. However, there are inconsistent links between the self-evaluation and the improvement plan's targets. Although there are relevant and concise targets in the plan, they do not arise with enough accuracy from the setting's self-evaluation.

Staff make very good use of professional training opportunities and learning experiences, especially through the local authority's support officers. This has a positive effect on the children's learning and wellbeing.

Partnership working: Good

There are effective links with parents and carers. They are kept well informed of their children's achievements and progress. This helps them to support their children's learning. The parents, in the questionnaire replies and during discussions, express their satisfaction with the setting and they are very appreciative of the standards of care and the quality of education provided. The open door policy of the setting means that parents have regular opportunities to meet staff and discuss any concerns very early on. An informative booklet provides parents and carers with relevant details about the setting.

By the time the children leave the setting, parents feel that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education at school. The links between the setting and the school are very good and the setting is included in the school's daily life. The partnerships between the setting and the local authority are well established. The setting acts quickly and conscientiously on advice from the local authority. This supports the setting in moving forward and it contributes well to the effective provision.

Resource management: Good

Leadership is strategic and plans well for the future. The learning experiences interest and stimulate all children. The teaching motivates the children to perform at their best in all tasks. The care of the children is diligent and resources are managed well to support learning and improvements at the setting.

The leader and the school's management group ensure that the setting has sufficient staff with appropriate qualifications and training. The leader uses support agencies purposefully as effective partners, to support the children and the staff.

The staff work together effectively to improve children's achievements. Sensible use is made of all the available resources. They are accessible to the children and used well. The staff make good use of the building and the locality to provide a wide range of interesting learning experiences.

The purposeful provision and the secure leadership mean that the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received was fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Nicholas Jones	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.wales)

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 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 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.