



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

A report on

**Clarbeston Road Playgroup
Memorial Hall
Clarbeston Road
Haverfordwest
SA62 4UJ**

Date of inspection: October 2015

by

**Mary Dyas
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

Clarbeston Road Playgroup is an English-medium setting in Pembrokeshire. Three practitioners work closely together to provide activities on four mornings a week for children aged from two years until they move on to full time school education. The playgroup meets in a small room in the Memorial Hall with kitchen and toilet facilities and the use of another room for parents to wait. There is also a small, dedicated outdoor area that the children use every day.

The playgroup is open during school terms and can provide care for up to 18 children. There were six three-year-old children in receipt of funded educational provision from the local authority on roll during the inspection. All children have English as their main home language.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate last inspected the nursery in May 2015. Estyn last inspected the nursery in May 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting is good because:

- Most children make good progress in their learning from their starting points
- Nearly all children behave well
- Relationships between adults and children are warm and caring
- Practitioners plan a good range of activities to interest and engage the children in their learning
- Practitioners make effective use of the local community to extend children's learning experiences
- Teaching is good

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Practitioners are fully committed to children's educational and personal development
- Staff work closely together as a team with shared aims and values
- The process of self-evaluation is well-established
- The present setting improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities arising from self-evaluation

Recommendations

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

R1 Establish a clear and systematic format for planning learning activities that clearly link to the outcomes of the Foundation Phase and Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks.

R2 Provide opportunities for children to contribute their ideas for activities

R3 Provide parents and carers with more regular information about how their children are doing and how they can help them to improve

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Adequate

Practitioners plan together a range of varied and interesting activities that provide the children with good levels of challenge. However, short term planning lacks a coherent structure and does not ensure continuity and progression in the development of children's skills. Practitioners take good account of the needs of children of different abilities and levels of development but there are few opportunities for children to contribute their ideas for activities.

The daily use of the outdoor area and the regular forest school sessions are a strength of the setting. The range of planned and incidental activities gives children opportunities to work together and to co-operate with one another, sharing resources and ideas, for example when creating an outdoor collage of a whale using leaves that have fallen from the trees around the setting. These activities encourage and help to build children's self-confidence, independence and to form good personal relationships. In addition to daily group Welsh language sessions, practitioners use simple Welsh phrases and words informally throughout the sessions. They encourage children to use the Welsh language in their conversations. Good use is made of St David's Day to develop children's knowledge and understanding of Welsh culture and traditions.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners are well qualified and very experienced in working with young children. Relationships between adults and children in the setting are strong and practitioners show care and affection for each child. They understand that children develop in different ways and at different rates and make good provision for this in their daily interactions. Staff are good role models. They treat the children as individuals and manage their behaviour effectively. All practitioners show a good understanding of when to intervene and when to allow a child to explore and experiment for themselves.

Practitioners make daily notes of their observations of children's learning. During planning meetings, staff discuss their observations and use them to form the basis of the next steps when planning future activities to ensure that they meet children's individual needs. The leader records these observations in children's individual profiles but staff do not routinely share these observations with parents and carers. At the end of each school year, parents and carers receive a short written report of their children's progress across the areas of learning together with photographs of their child taking part in activities during the year. There are no opportunities for parents to know how they can help their child to improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The provision for ensuring children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The playgroup has a flexible policy for supporting children when they start at the setting and this enables all children to feel safe and comfortable with the adults and the other children. Nearly all children interact well with one another. They show an interest in what they are doing, take turns and share resources. Most children have a good understanding of healthy eating and know that it is good to take regular exercise. They participate well in the daily physical activity session and enjoy their healthy snacks.

The range of indoor and outdoor activities offered to the children gives them a rich and diverse curriculum. Staff supplement these by visits to the locality and further afield; for example when they catch a train or a bus or when they visit Scolton Manor for forest school activities. They learn about other people through a range of visitors and when celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year.

There are good systems in place to support any children with additional learning needs and the shared experience of the practitioners ensures that they identify any problems early. Good links with specialist services are in place and used when required. All staff have received recent training in child protection and safeguarding. The setting's provision for safeguarding meets requirements and gives no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The playgroup has a warm and friendly ethos. Each child is valued and respected as an individual and has equal access to the curriculum and the activities provided.

The setting has enough staff who are well qualified and experienced in working with young children. There are sufficient resources of good quality and practitioners supplement these well with natural and recycled materials when appropriate, for example when they use items brought from home to create a mermaid as part of their theme on 'Under the Sea'. Resources are organised into areas of learning and are accessible to the children.

The outdoor area provides the children with good opportunities to grow and taste vegetables and to take physical exercise. Staff enrich the indoor environment with colourful displays of children's work on the current theme. The building is clean and both the hall and the outdoor area are secure and safe.

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

Practitioners work well together as a team and are fully committed to ensuring the provision of a happy setting with purposeful activities and a strong sense of wellbeing. They have worked together in the setting for many years and, as a result, there is continuity and consistency of practice. There is a positive ethos in the setting with shared values, aims and objectives and a clear focus on the needs of the children. The new chairperson of the management committee is fully committed to supporting the setting

The staff team fully understand their roles and responsibilities within the setting. They do not have individual responsibilities but share tasks and together they ensure that daily routines operate smoothly and relevant policies are implemented appropriately. The setting leader successfully oversees the work of the playgroup and takes responsibility for completing necessary paperwork.

Practitioners are involved in working towards meeting national and local priorities. They are working towards initiatives such as the Welsh Assembly Government Health and sustainable Pre-school Award, which is having a good impact on the health and wellbeing of the children.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners know the setting very well and are constantly looking for ways in which they can improve the provision for the children. The setting has been working on formal self-evaluation for three years and the current self-evaluation document shows annual progress in the different aspects. The format follows that recommended by the local authority, as does the resulting setting improvement plan which identifies the current position, what needs to be done and how this can happen. Areas for improvement relate well to the current position of the setting but lack timescales and costs to make them fully effective. The setting does not yet consult with parents and carers or members of the management committee to seek their opinions as part of the self-evaluation process. The setting makes good use of the support of the local authority's advisory teacher during the self-evaluation process and implements her recommendations effectively.

Partnership working: Good

The playgroup has good links with a range of partners that benefit and support the learning and wellbeing of the children. Partnership with parents is good. The setting invites parents to an open morning once a term when they are able to come and work alongside their children and to see examples of the work the group has been doing. Practitioners do not currently make use of this time to share with parents information regarding the progress their children are making and how they can help them to improve.

Good links with the local community have enhanced children's learning experiences. These include visits from members of the local community, such as the doctor and the vet, who come to talk as part of a specific topic. The staff also take the children out into the village, on local busses and trains and for walks in the woods to extend their understanding of the world around them.

Good links with the primary school to which most children move on ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of their education. The effective partnership with the local authority advisory teacher has positive effects on the setting's provision. The recent successful development to make small group teaching sessions more structured and focussed is a good example of this.

Resource management: Good

Practitioners deploy themselves well during the sessions to make effective use of their expertise and to motivate and encourage the children to learn. Practitioners use a good range of resources appropriately both indoors and outdoors to support the planned activities. They consider carefully the benefits of any new resources before buying. The treasurer manages the budget effectively and the management committee are highly successful in raising funds to offer good provision. Overall, 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

Mrs Mary Elspeth Dyas

Reporting Inspector

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.