



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

**Cilfan Playgroup
Old London Road
Cornist
Flint
CH6 5EY**

Date of inspection: May 2012

by

Mary Dyas

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 2012: 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.

Publication date: 01/06/2012

About the setting

Cilfan Playgroup is an English-medium setting based in a community hall in Flint. The setting has been in existence for over 40 years and the present supervisor has worked there for more than 30. The accommodation comprises a single room with access to toilets, storage space and a kitchen area. The hall is used by other groups and equipment needs to be packed away most days. The playgroup does not have access to an outdoor space.

The setting is registered for up to 20 children and, at the time of the inspection, there were 23 children on roll of whom 18 were in receipt of funded educational provision from the Local Authority. The playgroup is open for four mornings a week with children initially coming for two sessions and gradually building up to four when they are eligible for funding.

The setting serves the local area and the children are considered to come from a mix of socio-economic backgrounds. All speak English as their main home language. The setting welcomes all children and makes appropriate provision for those with additional learning needs.

The nursery was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in June 2011 and this is the first inspection by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the playgroup is judged to be good because:

- All children are happy in the setting and enjoy their activities;
- All children become involved in the range of activities provided for them and make good progress;
- Relationships between adults and children are warm and caring; and
- Relationships between practitioners and parents are very positive and this ensures parents are fully aware of their children's progress.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- The supervisor and her staff are committed to providing high quality care and education; and
- The self-evaluation process is in place and there is evidence that targets for improvement are being addressed.

Recommendations

In order to improve the setting needs to:

R1 Provide more opportunities for children to have free access to a range of creative materials;

R2 Improve standards in, and provision for, Welsh language development;

R3 Ensure provision for developing children's experience and understanding of information and control technology; and

R4 Continue to pursue the possibility of acquiring some land close to the setting to provide opportunities for outdoor learning.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most children achieve well and make good progress in relation to their starting points across almost all the Foundation Phase Areas of Learning. Children acquire new knowledge and understanding effectively and enjoy the challenge of new and varied activities. Most children are confident learners who are willing to learn from their mistakes, take risks and explore their surroundings. Many children in the setting speak confidently in complete sentences and are happy to talk to visitors. A few three-year-olds still speak in single words or short phrases rather than complete sentences. Many make good progress with mark making using a range of instruments. Many of these are able to retell the story as they look at the pictures. Most children sit quietly and listen attentively to stories both in the whole group and in ones and twos during free play.

All children are developing their understanding of mathematical concepts and many are beginning to apply this and to use mathematical language in the course of their play. Most children visit the toilet unaided and know to wash and dry their hands afterwards. All children enjoy listening to stories about Ticw the bear read to them in Welsh but do not know any simple words or phrases and do not respond to basic questions and commands in Welsh.

Wellbeing: Good

Standards of wellbeing are good. Children are relaxed and happy in the setting and are eager to try new experiences. All are purposefully engaged throughout the session and most children concentrate for appropriate lengths of time according to their age and stage of development. They are beginning to express opinions and to ask for particular resources. All children interact positively with one another and with adults and their behaviour is good. They know the routines of the session and anticipate what is going to happen next. When it is time to tidy up all children are given a specific task which almost all carry out successfully.

Children are polite to each other and to adults. Most children take turns and share toys and objects. Many are keen to talk about their experiences and are confident to ask for help from, and to interact with, adults. Many children show an appropriate understanding of the importance of eating healthily. They enjoy snack- time and most are happy to eat a range of fresh, healthy food prepared for them.

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

Learning experiences: Good

Practitioners work very closely together to plan a good range of activities which stimulate, engage and challenge most children to learn effectively. Plans are based on ensuring coverage of the areas of learning using the Foundation Phase Development Profile and Skills Framework and on specific needs identified from observations of children's learning. This ensures that all children have their specific learning needs met.

Practitioners know the children very well and respond appropriately to their varying needs, abilities and interests. Planning addresses the needs and interests of the children and children are occasionally involved in making decisions about their learning. Overall, learning experiences successfully enable children to develop communication and numeracy skills every day.

There is little provision for the Welsh language. Incidental Welsh is not used during the session and practitioners are not confident in the delivery of the language. The setting recycles paper and plastic and children are aware that this is put out to be taken away once a week.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good. Practitioners have a good understanding of the Foundation Phase and use a range of approaches to stimulate play and active learning. All intervene appropriately and make good use of questioning to challenge children and to extend their thinking. There is a good mix of planned activities and opportunities for children to choose their own activities. Practitioners are very enthusiastic and fully committed to supporting children and to providing good quality all round provision.

Practitioners know the children very well and are continuously discussing and noting individual progress and success. These observations are collated by the supervisor to feed into the Local Authority's 'This is Me' records of progress which are given to the parents at the end of the school year when they are invited to discuss and sign the documents before a copy is passed on to the child's receiving school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has good arrangements to ensure children's health and wellbeing and arrangements for the support of children with additional learning needs are effective. Good procedures are in place to ensure that children settle quickly when they start at the playgroup. The setting provides a warm and welcoming environment for the children. A particularly strong feature of this setting is the time that is spent in the autumn term getting to know the children well in order to be able to provide learning experiences appropriate to their individual needs. Most children move on to the local school and staff have developed good relationships with the nursery teacher to ensure a smooth transition.

Children, and their parents or carers say they feel safe in the setting. A good range of policies to ensure the children are safe is in place and appropriate risk assessments have been carried out. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. All practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities. Other policies are appropriately detailed and relevant. Learning experiences promote children's personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Learning environment: Good

The playgroup is an inclusive community and respects and celebrates diversity. All children have equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. Displays of children's work reflect recent learning activities and help to create a bright and welcoming environment. The setting makes thoughtful use of the space available and the room is attractively decorated with examples of recent children's work. The setting does not have access to an outdoor area but practitioners work hard to try to bring the outdoors inside.

Practitioners are appropriately qualified to teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. They work well together to create a stimulating environment for learning. At least twice a year practitioners attend training courses to update their knowledge, understanding and skills. The group is well resourced with a range of high quality equipment which is used appropriately to support children's learning. Resources to develop children's ICT skills are limited.

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

Leadership: Good

The setting is efficiently managed. There are clear policies and aims which are understood and implemented well by all practitioners. There is a culture of self-improvement which helps to develop and maintain the good work of the setting. Leaders respond to advice and support, and ensure that changes impact positively upon children's standards and the quality of provision. Good procedures are in place for the induction of new staff and students.

The supervisor has created a close working team where all staff members are working together towards shared goals. Practitioners support one another well. The setting no longer has a management committee due to lack of interest. Practitioners respond well to local and national priorities and are fully involved in training and developments connected with the Foundation Phase.

Improving quality: Good

Self evaluation in the setting is developing and practitioners know their setting well. The recently produced self-evaluation document is a realistic one owned and shared by all practitioners and which identifies the setting's strengths and appropriate targets for improvement. Creative movement has been a major target this year and has included the need to plan specifically and progressively. Progress has been monitored and evaluated in terms of the impact on the children.

All practitioners attend relevant training opportunities which impacts positively on the quality of provision.

Partnership working: Good

Practitioners are part of the local community and relationships with the parents of the children in their care are very positive. Results from the parents' questionnaires show that parents are very satisfied with the care and the learning experiences provided for their children. The supervisor speaks to parents and carers daily and ensures that they have a good understanding of the progress their children are making.

Good links exist between the setting and the local primary school which most of the children move on to. The setting is a member of the Wales Pre-school Providers Association. It enjoys a very positive relationship with the Early Years link teacher from the local authority who provides support and advice. There is evidence that this advice has been acted on to improve provision for the children.

Resource management: Good

As the registered person for the setting, and in the absence of a management committee, the supervisor has overall responsibility for financial management. Most decisions are made jointly by the staff and spending is careful. The decision has been taken not to carry out fund raising activities to relieve the pressure on parents and carers. Practitioners make the most of opportunities to buy items when they are on sale and use their Early Entitlement allowance from the Local Authority to purchase large equipment. There is a good range of equipment which is used appropriately to support planned activities. The setting is appropriately staffed. Practitioners are well deployed and implement daily routines successfully. The setting gives value for money.

Appendix 1

Responses to parent questionnaires

Eleven questionnaires were received from parents who expressed very positive comments overall about the provision. They feel that their children make good progress and that they enjoy attending the setting. They believe that their children are prepared well for moving on to primary school. They say that the staff are very approachable and that their children have settled in well. They believe that the setting is well managed.

Responses to discussions with the children

The children are happy in the setting and join in the activities enthusiastically. Many speak readily about the activities they enjoy.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mary Dyas	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.

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>

National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National (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.