



*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**

**Princess Road Pre-School  
6 Princess Road  
Old Conwy  
Conwy  
LL29 9PS**

**Date of inspection: February 2013**

**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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court, Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

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## Context

Princess Road Pre-School is an English-medium setting based in a large house in Old Colwyn, Conwy. All the children attending the setting come from the village and the surrounding area. The area is recognised as neither privileged nor socially or economically disadvantaged.

The setting has been located on Princess Road since 1986. The indoor facilities have been extended into four rooms downstairs, a kitchen, a cloakroom and toilet facilities. It has a very large outdoor area and an upstairs area for very young children. The setting runs a breakfast club, provides transport facilities to and from local schools and it offers an after school and holiday club. The setting is open between 8am and 6pm from Monday to Friday.

The setting reports that nearly all children come from homes where English is spoken. The children represent the full range of ability and the setting accepts children with additional learning needs.

Very few children in the current group are recognised as having additional learning needs. Very few children come from an ethnic minority background and a few children come from socially disadvantaged homes.

The setting is registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales for a maximum of 60 children and it accepts children from four months old. There are currently 134 children attending the setting at different times during the week; of these, 12 are funded three-year-olds.

The proprietor, who also leads the setting, has been in post since 1986. Fourteen members of staff assist her on a full time basis and fourteen are part-time. All staff are suitably qualified.

The proprietor and the senior management team oversee the work of the setting. The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in 2012. Estyn inspected the setting in 2007.

## Summary

<b>The setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- nearly all children show good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning;
- nearly all children have positive attitudes to learning and behave responsibly;
- learning experiences are co-ordinated and planned thoroughly;
- all children are supported well and benefit from a good range of interesting and motivating activities;
- the teaching is effective and concentrates well on Foundation Phase outcomes;
- good quality resources are used well to support children's learning;
- the relationship between adults and children is very good;
- there is a good working relationship with outside agencies to support the children's learning experiences; and
- staff work effectively together, which contributes purposefully to the success of the setting.

### Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the strategic direction provided by the proprietor, over many years, is excellent;
- the setting has an excellent record of implementing change that has impacted positively on children's standards and wellbeing;
- self-evaluation systems are effective and targets are prioritised appropriately in the setting's development plan;
- all staff have a very positive attitude towards improving their skills through participating actively in training;
- good support links with outside agencies are used consistently and sensibly;
- the proprietor and senior management team are very active and very supportive in the day-to-day work of the setting; and
- the learning environment is stimulating, very well organised and used well to support all children's learning.

## Recommendations

- R1 improve children's use of Welsh
- R2 Set clear learning objectives for the children at the start of every focus activity to ensure that individual children are challenged appropriately
- R3 Develop the outdoor environment to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of plant growth and caring for the environment

### **What happens next?**

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

#### Standards: Good

Nearly all children achieve good standards and make good progress from their starting points by the end of their time in the setting. Nearly all children make positive progress in developing their literacy skills. Very few children are reluctant to discuss ideas with other children and adults and nearly all children listen well to others. For example, children discuss shapes effectively, match pictures confidently and talk sensibly about mixing and matching colours during painting and computer activities.

Nearly all children sit quietly and listen attentively to stories. They join in enthusiastically when discussing these stories or when singing songs and nursery rhymes. Many children follow instructions and actions in songs correctly. Most children are keen to answer questions about what they are doing. The majority of children choose to look at books independently. They hold books correctly and study the pictures and words with interest. They recognise the main characters in a story and discuss the content of a story intelligently. Most children are developing their early writing skills appropriately and have a good understanding of the purpose of writing.

Nearly all children develop good numeracy skills. They count to 10 confidently and recognise and name numbers to 5. Almost all children use a good range of mathematical language naturally during their play. For example, they describe containers as 'small' and 'big' or 'long' and 'short' when filling them with water. Nearly all children group objects of different types by shape and colour correctly.

The majority of children understand what to do when directed in Welsh. However, very few children use Welsh without prompting. Many children use electronic equipment effectively. They use the computer well and with confidence.

#### Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all the children are happy, confident learners. Nearly all children, relative to their age, have a good understanding of how they can keep healthy. Nearly all children wash their hands appropriately before eating snacks and fruit and do so with little prompting. Nearly all children have a good understanding that a healthy diet incorporates fruit and vegetables and that exercise keeps you fit.

Nearly all children's attitude to learning is good. They participate enthusiastically in all experiences provided for them, both indoors and outdoors. Nearly all children listen well to each other and to the staff. The behaviour of nearly all children is good.

Nearly all children are fully engaged in every activity and concentrate and persevere for significant periods of time. Most children make sensible decisions for themselves and work well independently.

Nearly all children relate very well to each other, to adults and visitors. They are courteous and considerate of others' needs and share resources willingly. Nearly all children take their turn good-naturedly in the cloakroom when they put on their coats sensibly to leave the building. Most children suggest ideas about what and how they want to learn. As a result, most children show high levels of motivation, engagement and concentration.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Learning experiences: Good**

The curriculum is planned well to meet the philosophy of the Foundation Phase curriculum. It ensures that children make good progress in their learning. The curriculum builds effectively on children's previous knowledge and experiences. It includes interesting activities for the development of children's skills across the curriculum, particularly literacy and numeracy skills.

All staff contribute well to the weekly planning of the curriculum. A member of the senior management team co-ordinates this efficiently and the views and ideas of all staff are considered and used effectively. The curriculum is flexible enough to allow staff to follow children's interests.

Staff plan day-to-day activities well and children have the freedom to select their own tasks and activities. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their physical, creative and thinking skills. For example, children have good opportunities to develop their thinking skills through experimenting creatively with water and making roadways with sand. Many adults communicate appropriately with the children in Welsh at an age appropriate level. All staff encourage the children to respond in Welsh and are very positive about the use of the language in daily activities.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits and visitors to enhance successfully children's learning experiences. For example, visits by the Police, fire brigade, mothers with babies and zoo animals add interest to the curriculum, which develops and extends the children's experiences effectively. The provision for developing the children's information technology skills is good. Staff direct the children purposefully towards the use of technological resources like the computer, cameras, microphones and robot toys.

The traditions and celebrations of the culture of Wales are emphasised well through the celebration of St. David's Day. Staff promote children's understanding of other cultures well. For example, the setting celebrates festivals, such as Chinese New Year, and has developed close links with a nursery school in Kenya.

The setting provides good opportunities for the children to recycle plastic, cardboard, paper, glass and metal. However, there are too few opportunities for children to learn about how things grow and how to care for the environment.

**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 very positive relationship between all the staff and the children. All staff have an active role in planning the 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 and staff know when to intervene appropriately in children's play. However, not all staff set clear learning objectives for the children at the start of every focus activity to ensure that individual children are challenged appropriately according to their abilities.

All staff model language very well in English and appropriately in Welsh. They encourage the children to evaluate their work well in all areas of learning, as individuals and with each other. As a result, children are enthusiastic and engaged fully in all activities.

Staff work together effectively as a team and share information about children regularly. Key worker roles and the efficient process of sharing information ensure effective assessment processes. Daily assessments are used effectively to identify the next steps in children's learning. Parents and carers are informed well about their children's progress.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The setting's provision for ensuring children's health, wellbeing, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff foster values such as honesty, fairness and respect consistently through day-to-day activities. They work very hard to promote children's self-esteem and confidence. Children have good opportunities to reflect, discuss their feelings, and learn to take turns. Snack time is a social occasion and children are encouraged effectively to take responsibility for preparing and serving fruits and drinks.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. The setting provides a safe environment. It is secure; the doors are locked and only opened by a member 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 locked securely. 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 proprietor is the additional learning needs co-ordinator. She is familiar with the necessary procedures for supporting children with additional needs and uses outside support well.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The setting, through its day-to-day activities and the approach adopted by the staff promotes a very positive ethos. Staff know the children well and their individuality is recognised. All children have equal access to an interesting curriculum. The setting employs positive behaviour strategies consistently, which eliminate any form of harassment or oppressive behaviour successfully.



The setting's staff have suitable qualifications and good experience in working with young children. There is a very favourable adult to child ratio. Staff expertise is used well both in planning with each other and when supervising activities inside and outside.

The accommodation and site are well maintained and secure. The accommodation is used imaginatively to ensure that all the areas of learning are targeted effectively in an organised and well-planned environment. The setting uses its resources skilfully to meet the needs of the children and the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The resources are accessible to the children, which promotes the children's sense of responsibility well.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Excellent**

The proprietor's strategic planning is outstanding. She has succeeded in developing a very strong sense of co-operation and teamwork amongst all staff in the setting. She communicates high expectations to the whole of the setting and appraises the quality of the staff's work very effectively. This ensures that staff work well together to provide consistency of approaches, for instance in intervening appropriately in children's play and assessment.

The proprietor has a very strong vision and sense of purpose that has promoted and sustained improvements over many years. It has included the purchasing of additional land and buildings, the development of a vibrant indoor area and a well-resourced outdoor area. These actions have significantly improved the setting's ability to provide comprehensive community childcare and good early years education provision. This has a very strong impact on provision and the maintenance of high standards.

All the staff understand their roles and responsibilities in full and work together very well as a team, sharing values, aims and objectives. The proprietor, who also leads the setting, involves the staff in planning for improvement through her very effective senior management team. The senior management team accept and use the advice from outside agencies like the Wales Pre-school Providers Association and the local authority very well. The very effective use of this advice ensures the best use of expertise within the setting. The proprietor has successfully developed a positive ethos where everyone is challenged to achieve outcomes that are above expectations. All staff have a common mission and an extremely effective culture that has learning at its heart.

The development plan is a useful document. It has clear priorities for improvement identified through sound self-evaluation procedures. There are excellent processes in place to ensure that resources are available to meet the improvement objectives.

The proprietor and staff focus very well on children's needs and the setting very successfully achieves this aim in practice. Through challenging staff positively, the proprietor improves their practice and fully supports their professional development. This has impacted very well on the quality of provision. The excellent leadership takes very good account of legislation and local and national priorities.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Leaders and staff know the setting well. They know what they do well and what they need to do to improve.

The setting improvement plan is closely linked to its self-evaluation priorities. The plan is properly costed with relevant time scales. Staff responsibilities for implementing the plan are clear. All staff contribute to identifying areas for development. As a result, staff have a sense of ownership and commitment to bringing about the planned improvements. Staff are able to demonstrate the impact that improvements have had on outcomes for children. For example, children's understanding that what they eat will affect their health and their recognition of numbers in a wide variety of activities and tasks.

Staff are keen to take on new ideas from training and try different ways of working suggested by the local authority advisory teacher and the Wales Pre-school Providers Association. For example, recent training on linking planning and assessment has impacted positively on children's individual targets and outcomes.

### **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 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 and website provide parents and carers with relevant details of 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 local schools are good and if parents choose to do so, their children are transported to and from the schools by the setting's mini-bus. The partnership between the setting and the Wales Pre-school Providers Association and the local authority is strong. The setting acts quickly and conscientiously on advice from these partners, which have supported the setting in moving forward and contributed to its good provision.

### **Resource management: Good**

The proprietor's leadership is excellent. She manages the setting's resources very well to support learning and improvements in the setting. The proprietor ensures that the setting has enough appropriately qualified and trained staff. Staff are deployed effectively to deliver the curriculum and support children's learning.

Resources are plentiful, of good quality and easily accessible to the children. Staff make good use of the accommodation and the outdoor space to provide a range of high quality learning experiences.

In view of the good outcomes achieved by children, the setting provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

Twelve parents and carers responded to the questionnaires. All the parents and carers are very positive about the setting's work.

All the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are satisfied with the setting and agree that their children felt that they:

- were helped to settle in well and liked the setting;
- are making good progress and staff treat all children fairly and with respect;
- are encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- are safe;
- receive appropriate additional support if needed; and
- behave well.

They also agreed that:

- there is a good range of activities including trips and visits;
- the setting is well run;
- the teaching is good;
- they understand the setting's procedures for dealing with complaints;
- they are comfortable approaching the cylich with questions, suggestions or problems; and
- they are kept well informed of their children's progress.

These responses compare very favourably with national benchmark comparisons.

#### Responses to discussions with children

Nearly all children are happy in the setting. The enthusiasm of nearly all the children is evident when they arrive and meet with their friends. Nearly all of them are self-confident from knowing that they are supported well and that they are provided with interesting tasks.

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

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.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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"> <li>• personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li> <li>• language, literacy and communications skills</li> <li>• mathematical development</li> <li>• Welsh language development</li> <li>• knowledge and understanding of the world</li> <li>• physical development</li> <li>• creative development</li> </ul>
<b>CSSIW</b>	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	<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>
<b>National Childminding Association (NCMA)</b>	<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>

<b>National (NDNA)</b>	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
<b>Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)</b>	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.