



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

A report on

**Little Stars Pre-School
Oxford Road
Hay-on-Wye
Hereford
Powys
HR3 5BT**

Date of inspection: April 2016

by

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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

Little Stars Pre-School is a non-maintained English medium setting situated in Hay on Wye, in Powys. It opened as a privately owned business, based at Hay on Wye Community Primary School, in September 2014.

The setting is registered to provide wrap around day care and education for a maximum of 18 children from the age of two until school age. It is open from 8.00am to 5.45pm on weekdays throughout the year, except for bank holidays and Christmas.

Children attend from Hay on Wye and nearby villages. During school terms morning education sessions are provided. At the time of the inspection there were 31 children on roll. The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership fund nine three and four year olds, up to 10 hours per week.

Nearly all the children are English speaking, British born and are from working families. They have little experience of the Welsh language, none are from ethnic minorities and a very few receive additional support with their learning.

There are three appropriately qualified and experienced practitioners, including the registered persons.

Little Stars Pre-School is supported by Llaw yn Llaw Childcare Business Support and received a start up grant.

The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales inspected the setting in April 2015. This is the first inspection of Little Stars Pre-School by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

Performance is good:

- The setting provides a happy, stimulating learning environment
- A wide range of learning experiences engage children's interest well
- Provision for healthy development and wellbeing is effective
- Teaching is lively and enthusiastic
- The high quality of interaction with children is a consistent feature
- Partnerships with parents, the school and supporting agencies are good

Prospects for improvement

Improvement is good:

- Leadership is enthusiastic and skilfully promotes a strong teamwork ethos
- There is a reflective culture among practitioners
- The key elements of self-evaluation are in place
- There is a good track record in developing provision since the setting opened
- Recent improvements impact well on learning and teaching
- Targets identified by the setting provide a sound basis for further improvement

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure planning provides clear details of the learning in guided and continuous activities
- R2 Embed self-evaluation and planning for improvement
- R3 Formalise planning for future resource needs

What happens next?

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.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	N/A
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Standards: N/A

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 at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Wellbeing: N/A

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 at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

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

A wide range of interesting learning experiences successfully engages children's interest. The Foundation Phase is implemented and all areas of learning are well represented. The provision matches children's needs and provides good opportunities for incidental learning.

Weekly planning includes appropriate details of indoor and outdoor activities linked to broad themes. This planning identifies appropriate learning objectives and is implemented flexibly. However, longer term planning to assure appropriate breadth, balance and progression in learning is insufficiently formalised.

Strong emphasis is placed on developing skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). For example, stories are used skilfully to promote early reading and counting skills. This planning builds well on the guidance for skills development. However, too few details of the learning to develop in adult led, enhanced and free choice activities are recorded.

Daily provision for Welsh language development is confidently implemented and awareness of Welsh history and culture is appropriately promoted.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is lively and enthusiastic. The high quality of interaction with children is a consistent feature. Practitioners have high expectations and sound knowledge of the Foundation Phase. They provide good models in language.

Practitioners understand the purpose of activities and successfully engage children's interest, such as when reading stories or supporting an activity. They give plenty of time to for children to complete tasks and use questioning and praise well to encourage learning. Teaching maintains a steady pace and skilfully promotes incidental learning.

Appropriate procedures for assessment are being developed. Practitioners compile detailed records for each child. These provide a good basis to help plan the next steps in learning, but the outcomes identified are not always closely enough linked to the learning objectives recorded in planning.

Parents' value informal communication with practitioners about their child's progress and the information discussed before their child transfers to school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides effective care, support and guidance. Arrangements to assure children's healthy development and wellbeing are strong features. The promotion of children's personal development successfully encourages curiosity about the world and fosters a sense of honesty and fairness. Practitioners strongly promote positive behaviour and enthusiastically engage children in a range of community and cultural activities. Moral and social development is very well promoted. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are offered, such as through celebrating festivals and activities during book week. Provision to promote awareness of sustainability is developing.

The setting has established procedures to provide personal and specialist support when required. Arrangements to support children who need extra help with their learning are carefully considered.

Appropriate procedures are implemented to ensure the setting is safe. Risk assessments are undertaken and these show an appropriate focus on specific activities.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting has an inclusive ethos. Practitioners treat children with respect. They take good account of their backgrounds and skilfully foster positive relationships. This helps ensure children feel safe and free from undue anxiety.

Practitioners use positive strategies to manage behaviour and sensitively encourage understanding towards others. Equal opportunities and awareness of diversity are appropriately promoted. The setting's policies are well implemented. However, policies do not include details of steps to ensure that future children with disabilities do not experience less favourable treatment.

There are sufficient appropriately qualified practitioners for the number of children. A good range of learning resources provides well for the Foundation Phase. The accommodation is well maintained and provides a safe and secure environment. The provision creates a stimulating environment and the reorganisation of resources; such as to encourage pre-reading skills, has a positive impact. The outdoor space is used well to enhance learning.

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

Leadership is enthusiastic and skilfully promotes a strong teamwork ethos. Practitioners demonstrate a shared sense of purpose in developing the setting. Managers provide clear direction, have high expectations and communicate well with parents. Systematic managerial procedures are established, but longer term strategic planning is not sufficiently formalised.

Practitioners have a good understanding of their responsibilities, such as their role as key workers. An appropriate range of policies is in place and these are implemented consistently.

Administrative procedures are effective and the work of the setting is monitored informally. Good emphasis is placed on updating practitioners' professional expertise and suitable arrangements are implemented for appraisal. However, targets linked to the needs of the setting and practitioners are not clearly established. The setting takes forward national and local priorities well. It enthusiastically embraces the Foundation Phase philosophy and approach. There is strong emphasis on equality and improving outcomes for children.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has made good progress in developing procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement. Managers have a good understanding of the setting's achievements since it opened. There is a reflective culture among practitioners. They are suitably involved in self-evaluation and questionnaires are used to seek the views of parents.

There is a good track record in addressing issues raised in a previous inspection and in response to targets set by the local authority. Actions taken to improve provision have a positive impact on the quality of learning and teaching.

The setting's self-evaluation report and improvement plan provide a sound basis to further develop provision. The targets identified are relevant and the key elements of self-evaluation are in place. However, the evaluation of initiatives is not closely enough linked to specific criteria and the setting has not yet had time to monitor initiatives over a sufficient period.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has well-established partnerships with parents, support services and the school that contribute effectively to children's learning and wellbeing. Parents are provided with a good range of information and their involvement in their child's education is positively encouraged. Day-to-day contacts promote well the exchange of information and opportunities to discuss children's progress are arranged before they transfer to school. The setting has very good links with the adjoining primary school, including the regular use of particular facilities and the sharing of professional expertise. The setting builds well on resources and people in the community to enhance children's learning.

Managers have visited another pre-school setting to share good practice and regularly attend training events with colleagues from other settings. The partnership with the local authority and other agencies is beneficial in the provision of training and guidance. The advice and quality assurance provided by the local authority has a positive impact.

Resource management: Good

Practitioners are efficiently deployed and pre-school sessions are well organised. The provision successfully motivates children and established routines help ensure effective use of indoor and outdoor facilities. However, on occasions the pace of activities varies.

Practitioners attend training events and participate in courses to enhance their qualifications. They reflect on the practice discussed and thoughtfully implement strategies to improve practice in the setting.

The impact of resources is reviewed informally. Managers systematically monitor income and expenditure and accounts are independently audited. There is clear evidence of recent expenditure to improve provision, such as for ICT, but planning for future resource needs is insufficiently formalised.

Taking into account improvements since September 2014, the setting ensures resources and the funding received for early entitlement education, are used to good effect. This impacts well on children's outcomes and represents 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 Michael T Ridout	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.