



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Feithrin Conwy  
Ysgol Porth Y Felin  
Ffordd Llanrwst  
Conwy  
LL32 8FZ**

**Date of inspection: March 2017**

**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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## Context

Ysgol Feithrin Conwy meets in a cabin on the grounds of Ysgol Porth-y-Felin, in Conwy. The setting opens for five mornings a week between 8.40am and 11.10am.

It is registered to admit up to 18 children at any one time. At present, 10 three-year-old children receive education funded by the local authority at the setting.

Nearly all children are of white British origin and speak English as their home language. Currently, very few children attending the setting have additional learning needs.

The leader began her role at the setting in January 2014. Four full time practitioners oversee the setting and they are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in February 2015. Estyn inspected the setting previously in June 2010.

## 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 setting's current performance is good because:

- Most children make positive progress in their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- Nearly all children are enthusiastic and eager learners
- Nearly all children behave responsibly and care about other children's feelings
- Learning experiences are planned well
- Effective teaching challenges children to improve their work consistently
- Assessments move children forward to the next steps in their learning effectively
- Positive relationships exist between adults and children
- A stimulating learning environment engages children's interests successfully
- Staff work together diligently to improve children's outcomes

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader sets a clear direction for the setting's work
- There are regular and effective self-evaluation systems
- Practitioners are keen to develop professionally and attend training
- There is efficient use of the support services
- There is active support from the management committee
- There is an effective relationship with parents and the local school
- Purposeful resources are available to each child
- Sensible use of funding ensures improvements in provision, the indoor environment and the outdoor areas

## Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that group activities match the ages and abilities of the children appropriately
- R2 Provide purposeful opportunities for children to develop their independence at snack times
- R3 Ensure that the management committee's quality assurance practices are rigorous and robust

### 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?

Good

#### Standards: Good

Most children make consistent progress and demonstrate effective literacy and numeracy skills from expected and occasionally higher than average starting points. This is evident when they complete everyday and more complex tasks successfully.

Many children express their feelings and emotions well during role-play in the café. They sustain sensible discussions with adults and each other about books on cushions in the reading corner. Many children discuss coherently the differences in various animals from around the world, such as elephants, zebras and giraffes. They also co-operate well in active play when riding tricycles around the yard and when they fill containers from a water butt to pour into troughs in the outdoor area.

Most children speak clearly and make sure that adults and other children understand them when responding to each other's opinions during activities. They listen to instructions from others and implement them effectively. This is particularly evident when they use numbers printed on toy cars of different sizes to park them in the correct garage and when they print paint patterns on card to represent animal skins.

Most children show interest in books and enjoy their content when discussing characters and events confidently with adults and peers. They handle the books in the well-resourced reading area as natural and relaxed readers. Many children sit quietly and follow stories read to them well. They respond sensibly to the content of the story. Many discuss their feelings clearly, for example when considering how certain animals, such as monkeys and snakes, make them feel. However, a few younger children become disengaged occasionally during group activities, which affects the concentration of others adversely.

A minority of children use sophisticated language purposefully in spontaneous and structured play. This occurs when they mix foam and sand together with whisks to form animal enclosures and thread cotton reels in colour sequence to create a snake.

Many children make marks effectively. They enjoy writing experiences and use a variety of media such as paint, chalk, crayons, pencils and pens. A minority of children recognise their own and other's names accurately during registration tasks. A few children attempt to form letters of the alphabet and numbers independently and in a reasonably recognisable form. The majority of children explain the purpose of writing in the correct context when scribbling and drawing shapes and lines on chalkboards and when writing letters to the zoo.

Many children use mathematical language purposefully and in relevant contexts. Most children count, recognise and name numbers to five confidently and a few count to ten and beyond with ease, during head counts at circle time.

Most children choose relevant equipment and materials to solve mathematical problems effectively. They count coloured rice accurately as they collect them with tweezers and collect the correct number of dinosaurs from a water container in pairs and groups. A few children also identify ordinal numbers, with adult support, from 'first' up to 'eighth' when sequencing animals in the correct order in reading books.

Many children also understand differences in height as they discuss changing the angles of a track to increase or decrease the speed of a toy car. They also group different types of objects by size, shape and colour correctly. Many children compare two and three-dimensional shapes well. Examples of this include creating snakes using glue and patterned paper when building tower blocks in the construction area.

Nearly all children are developing their Welsh appropriately, considering their linguistic background. Many children understand what to do when directed in Welsh and a few use Welsh occasionally without adult prompting when counting and identifying colours. Most children sing nursery rhymes and songs in Welsh enthusiastically.

Most children are beginning to use technology effectively when using electronic tablets and through tasks involving electronic toys and cameras. They also use educational software on the tablets to develop their ICT and fine motor skills successfully.

Most children develop good thinking skills, which has a positive effect on their learning and the standards they achieve. They work intelligently with others as they explore different capacities of containers, deciding whether or not buckets of sand are 'full', 'half full' or 'empty' when building sand castles in the outdoor area.

Nearly all children listen to music with enjoyment and respond enthusiastically to nursery rhymes and familiar songs in both English and Welsh. They play percussion instruments collectively in orchestra activities when seated together and move rhythmically to the music created. Most children use their physical skills successfully as they ride around open spaces energetically on tricycles and climb, hang and crawl adventurously on the school's outdoor equipment.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all children show motivation and interest in their learning and most children demonstrate good levels of engagement during tasks. A few younger children lose interest in large group activities, but generally they enjoy the activities provided. Most children share resources and work sensibly with other children. As a result, most children demonstrate positive attitudes to new experiences, such as when they roll hoops and kick footballs to each other on the schoolyard.

Nearly all children are polite and behave well. They show respect towards adults and each other. Nearly all children listen carefully to practitioners, such as when preparing takeaway coffees in the role-play café and matching shapes to numbers on a pegboard.

Nearly all children wash their hands thoroughly without much adult prompting, after using the toilet, messy play and outdoor activities. This develops a suitable awareness of good hygiene.

Most children are beginning to understand that they can make sensible choices during free play. They express personal opinions and preferences, such as when deciding to move from one area of learning to another independently, both inside the building and out of doors.

Nearly all children relate well to adults and visitors when they arrive at the setting and when they leave. Many children are confident and independent learners. This is especially evident when many of them explain sensibly to each other, with very little adult involvement, why they are writing letters to the zoo and why seeds need watering to grow into vegetables.

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

Learning experiences target children's needs and interests purposefully and provide worthwhile opportunities for them to become independent learners. The leader and practitioners provide a broad curriculum that reflects the ethos of the Foundation Phase successfully. Practitioners work together cohesively to provide interesting and stimulating activities that motivate children to learn practically and creatively. They focus on developing children's physical, thinking and creative skills intelligently, for example by allowing them to climb on the school's adventure equipment, using kitchen utensils as musical instruments in the garden and creating their own dough in groups.

Practitioners plan learning experiences thoroughly. They discuss individual children's assessments regularly, and arrange activities and focus tasks based on this. Older children offer their personal ideas to enrich activities further. This contributes positively towards their daily enthusiasm when learning through play, both indoors and in the open air.

The setting plans in detail to develop children's literacy, numeracy, ICT and thinking skills. Literacy and numeracy tasks are prominent in all areas of learning and challenge the children to perform at their best consistently. Practitioners provide children with challenging opportunities to begin learning the skills of sophisticated writing tasks, such as composing letters and addressing envelopes. Activities such as these build effectively on children's current knowledge and understanding. Such stimulating experiences offer continuity and progression in children's learning. They also include challenges to solve problems with seeds and soil in the outdoor area and using tills and money in the café.

The setting recognises that most children's Welsh language skills are at a low level on entry. Practitioners address this effectively by modelling words, numbers, colours and simple phrases regularly. As a result, most children's understanding of the language is developing appropriately. The setting promotes children's awareness of Welsh traditions, celebrations and culture successfully. These activities include celebrating Saint David's Day and Saint Dwynwen's Day, visiting Conwy castle and baking traditional breads and cakes.



The setting provides effective opportunities for children to use ICT equipment such as tills, electronic toys and tablets, a compact disk player and cameras. There are regular opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills fully, by using educational software purposefully on the tablets.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits and visitors to enrich children's learning experiences. Examples include visits to the local community to visit a bakery, the local park, trips to the nearby castle grounds and regular walks to the town. Visitors, which include the emergency services, a librarian and school staff, teach the children purposefully about the roles of people in their community.

### **Teaching: Good**

All practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and are an experienced team of dedicated workers. They are well informed about the requirements of the Foundation Phase and work together effectively. Practitioners have high expectations for each child and challenge children regularly in all focus tasks. They intervene purposefully in children's experiences and play in order to stimulate and motivate them fully. The setting's key worker system is effective and targets the needs of individual children well.

Practitioners greet the children warmly and enthusiastically as they arrive, and they maintain this enthusiasm throughout the session. The leader and other practitioners ensure a sensible balance between activities chosen by children and those led by adults. They understand the importance of providing a wide range of opportunities to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors.

Practitioners encourage children purposefully to take part in various activities. This encourages children's participation and enjoyment successfully. As a result, practitioners manage children's behaviour positively and safely. However, at times, group activities do not maintain younger children's interests, which can affect the learning and the attention of the older children unfavourably.

Practitioners use questioning purposefully to develop children's thinking and communication skills. This is evident when discussing the importance of water for growing seeds in pots and how to use tongs effectively to share noodles.

All practitioners discuss and complete daily assessments regularly and consistently and encourage children to assess their own learning. They challenge children sensibly on how to improve their work. Practitioners record evaluations thoroughly during focus tasks and note informal observations conscientiously in individual notebooks. This leads directly to planning tasks and children's future targets efficiently.

Practitioners address the next steps in children's learning successfully. As a result, procedures for assessing and recording children's achievements are purposeful. All evidence corresponds well with individual children's outcomes as they mature at the setting.

The setting informs parents and carers regularly about their children's achievements during the transfer time at the end of the session. An open door policy reinforces this

and practitioners are available to speak to parents and carers when required. At the end of their time at the setting, a comprehensive booklet of pictures, work and interesting annotations is available to parents.

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

The setting provides purposeful opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners use group sessions well to focus on children's feelings and how they treat others. By doing so, practitioners foster values such as honesty, fairness and respect sensibly. These daily practices reinforce their importance and how they benefit the setting's activities.

The setting has efficient arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. These arrangements contribute well to their development and support their learning effectively. The setting promotes eating and drinking healthily. As a result, children understand that fruit and vegetables are an important part of a sensible diet.

Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to reflect, discuss feelings, say thank you and pray each day. This creates calmness as children sit to listen to adults, practise washing their hands and say thank you for their food. As a result, children take their turn politely when eating snacks around the dining table. The helper of the day has an opportunity to help purposefully when preparing snacks and drinks. However, nearly all children are passive during snacks and practitioners do not give them enough opportunities to serve and support each other to develop their independence.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to recycle paper, card, plastic goods and food. This develops their understanding of sustainability effectively.

The setting uses positive behaviour strategies, which eliminate any form of harassment or oppressive behaviour. Children are happy and safe in the company of adults and often ask for help and support without concern. The setting is a safe environment and practitioners take good care of children when they arrive and when they are collected. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The setting records children's learning needs thoroughly when they join and during their time at the setting. Practitioners review children's progress regularly and they identify their starting points rigorously by following the guidelines of the Foundation Phase profile. This matches well with the assessment and planning processes and practitioners target specific children with additional support successfully. Practitioners discuss these with appropriate agencies to provide support as soon as possible, particularly speech and language expertise.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The setting promotes a positive ethos through the daily activities and the attitudes adopted by practitioners. The setting is an inclusive community in which all children have equal access to all areas of learning and equipment. Practitioners have a thorough understanding of each child and their individuality is recognised well.

All practitioners place a clear emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity. The setting achieves this successfully by celebrating different festivals from all around the world each year, such as the Chinese New Year and Diwali.

The setting uses resources purposefully to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase and children's needs. Practitioners provide a wide range of resources, which are available to all children. This promotes their sense of responsibility successfully by delegating activities, such as clearing up tasks and planting and watering activities in the outdoor area. Continuous activities, focus and rich tasks share learning resources effectively. Their use by the children has a positive effect on their learning, particularly when making marks using a variety of media and arranging shapes to numbers on pegboards.

The building is of a suitable quality; it is well maintained and safe. The stimulating outdoor area includes opportunities for children to growing plants as well as the school's climbing equipment and large yards for lively play. The setting also uses the local area and parks sensibly for environmental investigations, such as finding leaves in the autumn.

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

Purposeful leadership practices motivate practitioners to create changes in positive ways. As a result, the leader promotes and sustains developments successfully. She uses relevant and regular information about the setting to bring about improvements to its provision and children's outcomes. She ensures that planning and teaching are effective. Consequently, practitioners have high expectations of what children can achieve. This provides a positive direction to the daily and long-term practices of the setting.

Current areas for development include useful targets that are set against suitable timescales. They focus directly on ensuring effective provision and on improving children's outcomes.

The leader ensures that the provision for the children is interesting and purposeful. The setting's key worker system ensures the best use of practitioners' expertise. It defines different roles of responsibility clearly to promote successes within the setting. Practitioners receive relevant and informative training and this has a positive impact on the quality of provision. The leader conducts efficient practitioner supervisions and appraisals. However, the management committee does not appraise the leader's work robustly.

The management committee receives useful information about the setting's day-to-day practices from the leader and in regular meetings. The committee is supportive and ensures secure financial management. It has put in place an appropriate level of quality assurance practices. However, the rigour and robustness of its monitoring process do not challenge the setting well enough.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Positive processes of self-evaluation permeate the work of the setting. The leader and her colleagues have established consistent arrangements to monitor children's standards and their own provision. Effective daily co-operation, along with formal and informal staff meetings, contributes to this successfully.

Self-evaluation systems consider the views of practitioners, children, parents and carers and the local authority well. This benefits the setting in terms of gaining a fuller picture of provision so that the self-evaluation report that derives from these processes identifies the setting's strengths well. The leader notes the areas to improve clearly in the self-evaluation report and uses them directly to establish sensible targets in the setting's development plan. As a result, the leader takes effective steps to implement changes through purposeful action plans.

The leader and management committee have a clear understanding of the budget. They prioritise expenditure according to the targets identified for improvement. The leader improves provision by adopting different strategies and accepts valuable advice from others, such as the local authority. This includes designating key workers to specific groups of children, improving assessment practices and refining the planning systems. She is open to new ideas and willing to experiment with different ways of working. This has a positive effect on children's learning and wellbeing.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting works well with partners to improve children's standards and wellbeing, along with the provision. These partnerships have a positive effect on the daily practices of the setting, such as the use of the school's grounds and outdoor equipment. The setting has positive links with staff at the school. This supports children's transition arrangements efficiently. Arrangements to transfer assessments and personal information are effective and beneficial to the children as they settle at school.

Practitioners take active steps to include parents and carers in the setting's life. The setting informs parents and carers regularly about all aspects of the setting's work. They also encourage them to express their views on issues to improve the setting through questionnaires and regular discussions.

The setting works sensibly with external agencies, such as the local authority and the Wales Pre-school Providers Association. These positive relationships reinforce the setting's work and support it actively with useful training and management documentation.

The setting uses community links effectively to support children's learning, especially the castle's grounds and local amenities, such as the parks. In addition, the setting works enthusiastically to support local and national charities and this fosters tenderness and care among the children.

Practitioners work and liaise with a wide range of other partners, who make an important contribution to improving provision. These include agencies that support the setting with first aid training, food hygiene courses, risk assessments, Foundation Phase training and child protection training.

**Resource management: Good**

The leader aims consistently to improve all aspects of the setting's work by managing staff and resources effectively. She succeeds in ensuring that the setting has enough qualified practitioners with purposeful training. Performance management systems are effective for practitioners. They enable them to develop and share their professional knowledge successfully. As a result, a strong learning community is in place, which has a culture of effective co-operation between practitioners and other partners.

The setting manages resources well, both indoors and outdoors, to support learning. Its practices are efficient and they ensure that children benefit from interesting learning experiences and positive teaching practices. Practitioners ensure that children have easy access to enough interesting resources to support their learning effectively.

The leader and management committee have a clear understanding of the budget, and they prioritise expenditure by identifying responsibilities and sensible timescales. They create regular improvements by discussing and funding plans for improvement purposefully, which includes updating ICT resources, developing the outdoor area and maintaining the cabin. The setting ensures that use of funding has a direct effect on children's standards and wellbeing, along with provision.

The setting provides good value for money because of the positive impact on children's outcomes, the effective provision and purposeful leadership.

## 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

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

## 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>Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)</b>	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
<b>National Day Nurseries Association (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