



*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**

**Talbot Green Playgroup  
The Pavilion  
Lanelay Road  
Talbot Green  
Pontyclun  
CF72 8HY**

**Date of inspection: March 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:

<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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## About the setting

Talbot Green Playgroup is an English-medium setting which meets in the Pavilion in Talbot Green. The playgroup is privately owned by the setting leader who rents the building from the local council. The building is also used by several other community groups at other times so all equipment needs to be set out and packed away daily. The available accommodation comprises a large well lit room with a raised area at one end and a small 'messy play' room, store room, toilets and kitchen all leading off the main space. Outside, the setting makes good use of a securely fenced council playground for planned provision and also has the use of a garden which is shared by a group of adults with learning difficulties who meet in another building nearby.

The setting serves the local community and the children are considered to come from a cross-section of socio-economic backgrounds. All children speak English as their home language and one child has one parent who is also Welsh-speaking. The setting welcomes all children and makes good provision for those with additional learning needs. One three year old has been identified as having additional learning needs and is well supported in the group.

The setting is registered to take up to 28 children. It is open from Monday to Friday from 9.30 until 12.00 for children aged from two to five years and also offers additional lunchtime care for three-year-olds. At the time of the inspection there were 13 three-year-olds in receipt of funded educational provision from the local authority.

Talbot Green Playgroup was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in January 2012 and by Estyn in January 2006.

## 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 is good because:

- Children enjoy their time in the playgroup and make good progress;
- The playgroup provides a good range of stimulating activities which engage the children and support their learning;
- Children are polite and well behaved in the setting. They understand the rules and routines of the group and play co-operatively together; and
- Relationships between children and adults in the playgroup are warm and caring.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- Practitioners are very committed to the playgroup and are keen to provide good quality education for the children in their care;
- There is a strong sense of unity and co-operation between practitioners;
- The setting has an established history of development planning and there is good evidence that targets have been set and achieved; and
- The self evaluation process is in place and good progress is being made towards meeting the setting's current targets.

## Recommendations

The setting needs to:

R1 Ensure that observations of children's learning are clearly focussed and linked to Foundation Phase skills development and that they identify the needs of individual children in order to feed into future planning;

R2 Develop practitioners' use of open and extended questioning in order to enhance children's thinking skills; and

R3 Embed the recently established system of assessment and recording of children's progress.

### **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

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Standards: Good**

All children achieve well in relation to their starting point and make good progress in all areas of learning of the Foundation Stage. Most develop a good vocabulary and the majority of children speak in full sentences. Almost all understand and follow instructions accurately, answer questions appropriately and many speak to one another while at play. Most children join in enthusiastically with songs and rhymes and listen attentively to stories, showing their interest and understanding through relevant comments and questions.

All children make good progress with mark making and they experiment confidently with a range of instruments when doing this. Many children are trying to write their name unaided and a few can already do so successfully. Their mark making shows a good awareness of patterns and some letters. Nearly all children use mathematical language correctly when comparing length, height or the size of things and most count objects accurately to at least five. All show an awareness of the everyday use of ICT when engaging in role play. Many use the computer with confidence and control a mouse accurately to select objects on a screen. All children develop good physical skills and many concentrate for extended periods. All develop a good vocabulary and simple patterns in the Welsh language. They answer the register in Welsh and understand more than they speak. Nearly all achieve good standards for their stage of development.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

All children are very happy in the playgroup and enjoy their experiences. The warm relationships they have with their practitioners enable them to feel safe, happy and confident and they return the affection and respect they receive from them. All have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and know that good food and exercise are important to make them healthy. They know it is important to brush your teeth to keep them strong and healthy and are learning to do so through a dental scheme. All children go to the toilet unaided and wash their hands afterwards and also before snack. All children develop a positive attitude towards learning which they demonstrate by taking an active and enthusiastic part in their learning experiences. They are all growing in independence and self confidence and most are able to put on and take off their coats when going outside. Children take turns to be the 'helpwr heddiw' and confidently chop fruit for their friends and spread butter or cheese on crackers. Almost all children behave well during the sessions. They know the routines well and anticipate what is going to happen next. Nearly all are aware of the needs and feelings of other children and adults and show concern for them. They make friendships in the setting and they are clearly very fond of one another.

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

The setting leader has been mainly responsible for the planning and assessment of the children in her care. She works closely with the other practitioners. Planning is firmly based on the Foundation Phase learning outcomes and occasionally responds to the immediate interests of the children. A good range of learning experiences is planned and overall there is good provision for the development of children's literacy, mathematical knowledge and skills in ICT. Although there is no formal planning for differentiated activities to meet the needs of individual children, this is carried out informally as staff know the children very well and respond to their individual needs and abilities.

Through their daily play together, all children develop strong relationships with one another and with the adults who care for them and demonstrate respect and tolerance towards each other. Children celebrate the Welsh culture in a range of ways when they celebrate St David's Day and are increasing their understanding of other peoples when they enjoy celebrating other festivals such as Divali and Chinese New Year.

Provision for Welsh is good. It is well used by adults throughout the session and children are consistently encouraged to use the words and phrases they have learned. Children are learning about recycling and sustainability when they recycle paper to take to the recycling point in the school next door and take the peelings and left over fruit from snack time to a compost bin.

**Teaching: Adequate**

Practitioners have a sound understanding of the Foundation Phase and are experienced in working with young children. They have a good understanding of children's development and provide appropriate activities for the level of development of individual children. The use of open and extended questioning to challenge children to think about their learning is underdeveloped. There is a good mix of planned activities and opportunities for children to choose their own activities.

Observation and assessment of children's learning is still in the early stages of development. Practitioners know the children well and are beginning to support this with information from observations to inform the completion of the children's profiles. Informal links with parents and carers are strong and there are good opportunities for the exchange of information when they bring and collect their children. Meetings with parents and carers are held at Christmas and Easter when parents can discuss their child's progress. At the end of the year parents receive their child's profile to pass on to their receiving school and a brief report which indicates the next steps in their child's learning.

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

The care, support and guidance of the children in the playgroup is a strength. The setting provides a warm and welcoming environment for all children and staff provide good role models which encourage children to treat one another with kindness and respect. Transition into the group is sensitively managed according to the needs of each child.

The provision made for children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good

Practitioners have good experience of working with outside agencies and following individual play plans to support children with additional learning needs.

The setting has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding. All understand their roles and responsibilities. The setting has a good range of policies to ensure children's safety during sessions.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The playgroup presents an attractive and welcoming environment. The two rooms have a good variety of displays of children's work which are relevant to the current topic and all children have access to all areas of provision. Use of the securely fenced outdoor area is good and children are able to access a full range of provision both indoors and outdoors.

There are sufficient trained practitioners with an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase to ensure all children's needs are met. All practitioners are keen to improve their own knowledge and attend regular training. Good resources are available and these are used appropriately to develop the children's skills and understanding.

Children are enabled to widen their understanding of the local community through visits to the local shops, taking recycling up to the primary school and meeting visitors to the setting such as a nurse, the local postman and a police officer. Children's understanding of the wider world is enhanced by the link with a group of adults with learning difficulties who help to tend the playgroup garden and support the children when they use it.



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

The setting is owned and managed entirely by the leader. She understands her role as a leader and shares the planning and evaluating of children's progress with other staff members. Practitioners focus well on the children and their individual needs and interests and succeed in creating a positive ethos in which they work well together to provide interesting and stimulating learning experiences. The philosophy of the Foundation Phase is successfully incorporated into the work of the group and outcomes for children are good.

Systems of appraisal and staff review in place and a good range of policies regarding keeping children safe. Regular staff meetings ensure that all practitioners are kept up to date with recent developments. The playgroup is successfully meeting national and local priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum.

**Improving quality: Good**

Self evaluation in the setting is developing and practitioners know their setting well. The setting has been setting and working toward annual targets for a number of years. The recently produced self-evaluation document is a realistic one which identifies many of the setting's strengths and a start has been made on meeting the targets in the action plan.

The setting leader has good links with other registered providers in the area and has met and visited them to share good practice.

**Partnership working: Good**

Results from the parents' questionnaires show that parents are very satisfied with the care and the learning experiences provided for their children. Practitioners speak to parents every day about what their child has been doing and celebrate success. Parents are kept informed through newsletters and planning is displayed on a board in the collecting area. Links with local primary schools are good. In addition to taking their recycled paper to the school's collection point, the children are invited to concert rehearsals and teachers come to visit before the children move on.

The setting enjoys a very positive relationship with the Early Entitlement link teacher from the Local Authority who provides support and advice. There is clear evidence that this advice has been acted on to improve provision for the children.

**Resource management: Good**

The setting has a good range of resources which are managed and deployed effectively to support different areas of learning and individual learning needs. There are appropriate numbers of suitably trained staff to deliver the Foundation Phase. Use of the outdoors is well developed and planned for.

The leader makes all spending decisions. The budget is managed carefully and the nursery is in good repair and well resourced. The pre-school room has a range of good resources to support the planned activities and the setting gives good value for

## Appendix 1

### Responses to parent questionnaires

Thirteen questionnaires were received and were mostly very positive. There were no negative comments. Many parents took the opportunity to praise the work of the staff in the setting.

### Responses to discussions with children

Most children were happy and confident when talking to a visitor. They spoke clearly and used age appropriate vocabulary. All said they liked coming to the playgroup and enjoyed their activities

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

Mary Dyas	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))

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.

## 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>	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	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.
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	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.
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	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.

<b>National Childminding Association (NCMA)</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 (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.