



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

**Meithrinfa Twtlol
Yr Hen Ysgol
Pentrefoelas
Betws Y Coed
Conwy
LL24 0HY**

Date of inspection: July 2014

by

**Mr Eifion R Morgan
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

Meithrinfa Twtlol is a Welsh medium setting based in Pentrefoelas. Pentrefoelas is a small rural village on the A5 some 4 miles to the east of Betws y Coed in North Wales. The nursery is privately owned and dates back to 1996. It is located in the old school building which has been renovated to provide an attractive, purposeful, internal environment and a much improved extended outside play and activity area.

The nursery provides wrap-around care for children from age two years and is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) to take up to 19 children in any one session. Children move on to the next stage in their education on a full time basis in the September following their fourth birthday.

At present there are 48 children on roll including 15 three year olds of whom five are funded to receive early years education. Most children come from homes that are predominantly Welsh speaking with a few from English speaking homes. There are no children present with additional learning needs.

There are nine staff employed – all are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children. The owner is the nursery leader and she is assisted by a deputy who assumes responsibility when required. There is also a part-time cook and cleaner employed.

The setting was last inspected by CSSIW in May 2014 and by Estyn in June 2008.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- all children make good progress and achieve well, particularly in the acquisition of language and their personal and social development;
- all children behave very well and show an outstanding attitude to their tasks;
- all children's standards of wellbeing are high;
- practitioners provide innovative and highly imaginative learning experiences and activities for the children;
- standards of care and support for children are highly effective;
- the provision for outside learning is outstanding;
- relationships between children and between children and adults are outstandingly good.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leader provides a clear, well established focus on providing the best possible provision for the children;
- the setting has, over the years, established clear priorities for improvement that have been undertaken;
- procedures for self-evaluation are well established and there is a good track record of implementing change;
- staff work together very well as a team and work together happily with little turn-over of staff.

Recommendations

- R1. continue to refine assessment procedures to focus on children's skill development and to use the results in planning future activities.
- R2. ensure that parents are aware of their children's progress and what they can do to help them improve.

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
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Standards: Good

All children make good progress and achieve well. Children's skill development is above that expected of children of this age, particularly their language and personal and social development.

Most children have good listening skills; they listen attentively to stories and many are able to recall stories they know well. These children have a well developed vocabulary and express themselves clearly. They talk confidently to their friends and to adults. Their self-confidence enables them to converse with a visitor.

Many children recognise their names during registration and several recognise their friend's names. All children are beginning to make marks and know some of the purposes of writing. Most children handle writing instruments correctly.

Most children enjoy looking at books and many do so independently. They handle books correctly and recognise some of the pictures in the books. All children converse freely in Welsh during play activities and when talking with adults.

Children's number skills are developing well. Most children count to 10 and a few beyond that number. Many children recognise numbers to 10. Many children are beginning to measure, such as the amount of rainfall and transfer their measurement to paper as a bar graph. This enables them to compare rainfall over several days. Children are beginning to use mathematical language, such as "small, medium and large Teddys". Children are familiar with mobile phones and cash registers and know the use of money.

Many children can direct a programmable toy to move forward, backwards, sideways over a specified number of squares.

Their knowledge and understanding of the world is well developed through their activities such as, following the life cycle of butterflies. They know to care for living things and appreciate that seeds planted in the spring will provide foods to be eaten later. All children show good development of gross and fine motor skills, such as painting.

All children are fluent Welsh speakers, including those from English speaking homes. They enjoy singing Welsh songs and nursery rhymes and converse freely with their friends in Welsh. They enjoy Welsh stories and looking at Welsh books.

Wellbeing: Good

All children are happy to attend the setting and quickly settle into well-established routines. They behave very well, they are polite and courteous and have sufficient self-esteem enabling them to talk with a visitor.

All children have a very good attitude to learning. Activities provided fully engage the children who concentrate for a sustained period of time. Children show that they are capable of making choices and are confident independent learners. All children co-operate well, are tolerant and share resources and toys when necessary.

Children are keen to talk about their experiences and have a wide vocabulary such as when describing birds and other animals they have studied.

Snack time is a good social occasion. All children realise the importance of keeping clean and wash their hands with only a little prompting. Children are aware of healthy food such as fruits.

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

The setting provides a very good range of learning experiences across all areas of learning. Practitioners plan together using their experience of what will interest the children and activities are well matched to the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. Planning is organised around themes but is sufficiently flexible to be able to adapt to incidents that arise, such as a snowfall.

There is an appropriate emphasis on children learning through play and firsthand experiences. This ensures children's interest and motivation to learn.

A good and notable feature of the planning is that it is holistic, taking in all aspects of the curriculum including language, numeracy, understanding of the world, creative skills and gross and fine motor skills. There are many and varied opportunities for children to develop their thinking skills, to make choices and to work independently.

Planning ensures a good balance between child-initiated activities and adult-directed tasks and opportunities for children to choose their activities and to work independently.

There are good opportunities for children to recycle paper and plastic bottles and to use compost in their garden. There is effective provision to develop children's knowledge and understanding of Welsh culture and traditions. Children celebrate St.

David's day with pictures, food and dressing appropriately. Children also take part in their own Cylch eisteddfod.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a good understanding of the Foundation Phase philosophy and use a wide range of highly innovative and imaginative strategies to encourage and motivate the children. Resources are used creatively to support the learning and overall children achieve very good standards.

Practitioners use a good range of teaching strategies with an appropriate balance between child-selected and adult-led activities. Staff know the importance of providing opportunities for children to learn through play and active involvement and this is reflected in the teaching.

Relationships are outstandingly good with children relating very well to each other and to adults. Children are very well supported, have the self-confidence to make choices and to work independently. Staff have a clear understanding of when to intervene and when to let children pursue their own interests. Practitioners use the rich outside environment very well to promote children's learning.

Practitioners are very good language models and use questioning purposefully to develop children's thinking.

The setting keeps a good range of photographic evidence of children's activities matched to the six areas of learning in the Foundation Phase curriculum. These photographs are annotated identifying the skills achieved by children. There are individual booklets showing children's work which are provided for parents at the end of the year. Parents can also view what children have done during the day. These are useful records, valued by parents.

The setting has begun a more detailed assessment of children's achievement and the identification of the next steps in children's learning. This is at an early stage of development and, as yet, is insufficiently focused on individual children's skill development and not used to plan activities to consolidate and extend children's learning.

Parents are kept well informed about the activities undertaken by their children, both when they collect their children and from records of the work they have undertaken. Regular open days also enable parents to see the work of the nursery.

Overall, however, parents are not sufficiently aware of their children's progress and what they can do to help them improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides children with a warm, friendly atmosphere where all children are treated affectionately. All children are happy to attend and are made to feel welcomed. They are soon engaged with their friends in the many and varied worthwhile activities provided for them.

Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with outstanding features and supports children's wellbeing very well. Through good use of the outside facilities and visits, such as to the adjacent woodland, children's sense of curiosity about the world in which they live is enhanced. Day-to-day activities are effective in developing children's moral codes of fairness, honesty and caring for each other.

Practitioners lead by example showing respect and co-operating and helping each other. Children are encouraged to take responsibility, to show initiative and behave well.

The setting provides good opportunities to be healthy through, for example serving fresh fruit at snack time, washing their hands before food, cleaning their teeth and opportunities for robust exercise.

There are no children with additional learning needs but the setting has appropriate policies in place and suitable procedures to deal with children.

Children are beginning to become aware of the importance of sustainability and recycling. For example waste food is composted for use on the vegetable beds.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting provides children with an inclusive and friendly ethos where all children are valued and respected. All have equal access to resources and activities. There is an appropriate emphasis on celebrating diversity, such as celebrating the Chinese new year, the Chinese customs and foods.

Children know that their views and ideas are respected, such as their ideas about what they would like to learn. Their ideas are incorporated into planned learning activities.

The setting is generously staffed with well established and experienced practitioners. The accommodation has been adapted to meet the needs of the Foundation Phase curriculum. It is well maintained, safe and secure and an attractive learning environment for the children.

The outside environment in particular provides the children with an imaginative and innovative learning environment well matched to children's needs. The displays of children's work enrich the learning environment.

Visits to the locality, such as the local woodland, make a valuable contribution to children's learning.

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

The setting is well led and managed. Practitioners are well focused on providing the best possible provision for all children and this is achieved in practice. This is recognised by the parents, many of whom travel considerable distances to allow their children to attend the nursery. Parents value the approachability of the staff and that their children are happy and eager to attend. Consequently relationships with both parents and children are positive and contribute to a sense of community.

All practitioners know their roles and responsibilities. They know each other well, are happy working in the setting and function well as a team. Day-to-day activities show a sense of purpose, support for one another and pride in their work. They are proud of what has been achieved.

The setting displays high expectations for staff and children and these are achieved in practice. The annual appraisal of staff establishes targets and is linked to appropriate training for the professional development of staff.

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place and they are implemented consistently. Practitioners meet weekly to plan and to discuss children's progress and achievement.

The setting meets national and local priorities appropriately including, for example, implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum and the "Design to Smile" initiative for teeth hygiene.

The setting received the "Investors in People" award in 2012.

Improving quality: Good

Effective self-evaluation is a regular and thorough part of the life of the setting. Practitioners are self-critical and the evaluation of how children are progressing is an integral component of their work. This enables them to fully support children's development. The self-evaluation procedures are based on first-hand evidence, together with feedback from parents, such as from a parent's questionnaire.

Overall, the proprietor has a clear understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for development. There is a very good track record of identifying, planning for improvement and undertaking the work over recent years. The proprietor however, is not complacent, she is open to ideas and areas for improvement have been identified. These are realistic, achievable and represent the "next steps" in the development of the setting.

Overall, improvements are well focused on improving the provision for the children, and the impact on their progress and achievement.

Partnership working: Good

The partnership arrangements are successful in improving the quality of provision and outcomes for the children.

Partnership arrangements with parents are very good and they appreciate the care given to their children. They are also appreciative of the setting's flexible arrangements to accommodate them. Overall, this impacts very well on children's wellbeing and development.

Children settle quickly at the setting and parents are provided with key information when children start at the setting.

Links with the local primary school are very good and the transition arrangements are very effective resulting in minimal stress for the children and familiarising them with the next stage in their education.

The setting benefits from effective advice and support from the local authority support teacher and training provided by the authority.

The setting makes good use of local community resources, such as visits to the local shop, to provide children with an understanding of the different roles people play in the community.

Resource management: Good

The setting is generously staff with appropriately trained and experienced staff. They work well together and are deployed appropriately.

Practitioners receive appropriate training based on their perceived needs and this has been effective. Staff share ideas and support each other well. The impact of training is evaluated and overall has improved the provision for the children.

The proprietor has an effective system for keeping spending under review and the reputation of the setting ensures that the number of children attending remains high.

In view of the outcomes achieved by the children, the setting's effective and innovative provision, the strong leadership and parental satisfaction, the setting provides very good 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 Eifion R Morgan	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)

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.