



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

**Penyffordd & Penymynydd Pre-school Playgroup
Youth Centre Building
Hawarden Road
Penyffordd
Nr Chester
Flintshire
CH4 OJD
United Kingdom**

Date of inspection: March 2014

by

**Mary Dyas
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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About the setting

Penyffordd and Penymynydd Pre-school Playgroup meets in an old school building, now a Youth and Community Building, in Penyffordd, a small rural village in Flintshire, North Wales. The Playgroup has been in operation for approximately 36 years and opens for 4 mornings a week during school term time. It is registered with CSSIW to provide sessional care for up to 25 children aged from two-and-a-half to four years of age. The building is used by a number of other community groups and equipment has to be set out and packed away daily.

Children attending the playgroup come mainly from the local area and all speak English as their home language. The setting welcomes all children and, although there are currently no children with additional learning needs, there are policies and procedures to ensure appropriate support.

At the time of the inspection there were 20 children on roll in the setting of whom 15 were three year olds. Twelve of these were in receipt of funded educational provision from the local authority.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales last inspected the setting in December 2012. The last time Estyn inspected the setting was February 2008.

Summary

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

Current performance

The overall judgement on the current performance of the setting is good because:

- nearly all children make good progress in their learning from their starting points;
- practitioners are very experienced in working with young children;
- practitioners provide a good range of interesting and appealing activities to stimulate and motivate the children to learn;
- children enjoy their learning experiences and become involved for appropriate lengths of time;
- children play well with one another and behave well; and
- relationships between adults and children are warm and caring.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement of the setting are good because:

- the process of self-evaluation is well established;
- the setting has set realistic and manageable targets for improvement;
- there is good evidence that progress is being made towards meeting the current targets for improvement ;
- staff work together well as a team with shared values for improvement; and
- leadership is effective and efficient.

Recommendations

- R1. Ensure regular planning to develop children's numeracy skills.
- R2. Improve provision for, and standards in, Welsh language development.
- R3. Fully establish continuous provision of equipment to enable children to make choices about their learning. This is identified as an area for improvement in the setting's development plan.

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 are making good progress during their time in the playgroup in relation to their age and stage of development. They enjoy their activities and become absorbed in what they are doing. Most children are gaining in confidence in their ability to express themselves and many are enthusiastic mark makers. They are beginning to understand the purpose of writing; for example, when they write shopping lists for the role-play greengrocers shop. A particular feature of the setting is the real love the children show for books. They often choose to look at books or ask an adult to read with them during their free play and show their enjoyment through the close attention they pay to the story and the relevant comments they make.

Many children use mathematical language appropriately during the course of their play. They talk about containers being full or empty when playing with dry sand and discuss where the treasure is hidden on their pirate island. Most children are able to count objects accurately to at least three and a majority count by rote to ten. All children are developing their understanding and use of electronic equipment as they use the computer to play age appropriate games and programme a toy to move around on the floor.

All children show a growing understanding of the Welsh words and phrases to which they have been introduced. They understand the Welsh that practitioners use and are beginning to make use of some themselves at snack time.

Wellbeing: Good

All children are relaxed and happy in the setting and are eager to try new experiences. They interact positively with one another and with adults and their behaviour is generally good. Most children understand the need to take turns and share toys and objects and generally manage to do so. They show care and affection for one another and play together in pairs or in small groups.

Most make clear choices about what activities they would like to explore and frequently make suggestions or requests for activities. Almost all become fully engaged in the activities they choose and often spend appreciable lengths of time concentrating on what they are doing.

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

The setting plans a range of interesting activities based on the principles of the Foundation Phase and addressing all areas of learning. The sessions are busy times with children moving freely between activities choosing what they want to do and becoming enthusiastic and involved. Children become engrossed in what they are doing and spend good amount of time experimenting and investigating. Staff discuss together the impact of planned activities on children's learning. Provision for communication and ICT is effective and clearly identified in planning. Provision for numeracy is less well organised.

Regular access to an outdoor area is not possible despite extensive efforts on the part of the setting. However, practitioners work hard to bring outdoor activities in side for the children; for example, by providing a tray full of seaweed and creatures to create an indoor rock pool.

Provision for Welsh is adequate. Practitioners promote the Welsh language during group times and snack time. However, there is little use of Welsh throughout the sessions to extend and reinforce the range of words and phrases. Good use is made of St David's Day to introduce the children to Welsh traditions and customs and children understand that they live in Wales.

Teaching: Good

Both practitioners are very experienced in working with young children. They are well qualified and demonstrate a good understanding of the Foundation Phase. They use a range of approaches to stimulate play and active learning. All staff are fully involved with the children during the sessions and intervene appropriately to challenge and support children and encourage them to explore and investigate for themselves. Practitioners are very enthusiastic and fully committed to supporting the children and to providing good quality all round provision.

Practitioners note daily observations of children's achievements on sticky notes and then enter the details into children's personal profiles. They share information daily about children's progress and ensure that children's needs are addressed in future planning. There are opportunities for daily verbal exchange of information with parents and carers at the beginning and end of sessions and the setting offers parents the opportunity to come to see their child's assessment records during the spring term and summer terms. Parents receive this document when their child moves on to the next stage in their education and a copy is sent to the school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Provision for ensuring children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Practitioners are good role models and foster a sense of right and wrong and of treating one other with respect. Practitioners are supportive and provide children with positive praise. Although there are currently no children with additional learning needs, the setting has provided good support in the past and has good relationships with outside agencies.

Arrangements to ensure children's health and wellbeing contribute positively to children's development. Induction arrangements ensure children settle quickly into the setting and good arrangements are in place to ensure a smooth transition when children move on to the nearby school's nursery class.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no reason for concern. The setting has a good range of policies to ensure children's safety. Robust procedures support parents who come to help at the setting.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a relaxed and happy environment. Children settle quickly when they arrive in the morning and immediately access activities that interest them. All children are valued and are encouraged to treat one another fairly. All children have access to the full range of activities regardless of age or ability. Practitioners encourage children to respect and celebrate diversity through a range of activities and resources.

The setting employs sufficient well-trained practitioners to meet the needs of all children. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase. All practitioners are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills through relevant training. The indoor environment is bright and airy and the children are able to take physical exercise daily in the adjoining hall. Ample good quality resources support the planned activities.

The setting makes occasional use of the local area and provides a good range of opportunities for children to expand their experiences through learning from visitors to the playgroup.

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

Staff in the setting have worked together for many years and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. They share a vision to support and develop the children in their care. The setting has not been successful in maintaining a full Management Committee but practitioners are well supported by a treasurer and secretary. Meetings are informal but frequent. Annual staff appraisals are managed by the treasurer and staff training needs are addressed.

Practitioners respond appropriately to national and local priorities. They have implemented healthy eating principles following advice from the Wales Pre-school Providers Association and have recently undergone an infection control assessment as part of a new initiative in Flintshire. All recommendations from this inspection have been met.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners know their setting well and share a desire to ensure good practice in their provision. The self evaluation process is well established and takes into account the views of parents and children. Practitioners are open to new ideas and suggestions for improvement. The current targets arising from the last self-evaluation are realistic and the setting is making good progress towards meeting them.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has good links with parents and carers. A good range of information is available in the hall when the parents bring and collect their children and practitioners share information informally when the children are collected. The termly newsletter is available on the parents' notice board.

Links with the local school, to which nearly all children move, are strong. They enable good transfer of information and support the children well in their transition to the nursery class. Good use is made of visitors to the setting and visits by the children to enhance their learning.

The local authority Early Entitlement teacher works closely with the setting and there is good evidence that practitioners have responded positively to advice and guidance.

Resource management: Good

Practitioners deploy themselves and the parent helpers appropriately during the sessions to ensure children are supported in all areas of the setting. Good quality resources enhance the planned activities. Practitioners are well qualified and experienced in working with young children and the setting makes use of the Foundation Phase training provided by the local authority to support the continuous professional development of staff to improve the provision for the children.

Good procedures are in place to ensure careful management of finances. Careful consideration is given to ensure spending is necessary and cost effective. Overall, the setting gives value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	11	9 82%	2 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	19%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		70%	26%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		79%	17%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		82%	15%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	11	9 82%	2 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		73%	22%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	14%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	11	9 82%	2 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		65%	24%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed	11	9	2	0	0	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
about my child's progress.		82%	18%	0%	0%		gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	11	10 91%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	11	10 91%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		62%	29%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	11	10 91%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		71%	23%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	11	9 82%	2 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		62%	30%	4%	0%		
The setting is well run.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	16%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mrs Mary Elspeth 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)

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 partnership's 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.