



*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**

**Springfield @ Conwy  
Penmaen Road  
Morfa  
Conwy  
LL32 8HB**

**Date of inspection: January 2013**

**by**

**Mr Eifon R Morgan**

**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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## Context

Conwy Day Nursery was established in 1994 and was taken over by Springfield Day Nurseries in January 2010. It caters for children between the ages of 3 months and 5 years and has an after school provision for children up to age 11.

The Nursery is registered by Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accommodate up to 58 children of all ages and a maximum of 18 children in the pre-school children's room (portacabin).

Currently there are 18 of these 3 year olds on role but fewer than this attend any one of the sessions (morning or afternoon). Two of the children are funded by the Conwy Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCP).

Children come from homes that are not particularly socio-economically advantaged or disadvantaged and are mainly from English speaking homes. A few are bilingual. None of the current intake are from ethnic minority backgrounds or have been identified as having special educational needs. However, the Nursery is happy to accept children of all abilities and ethnicity.

Whilst English is the main medium of communication, all staff, to different degrees, converse with the children in Welsh and to encourage their bilingual skills.

Conwy Day Nursery is housed in purpose built accommodation. The main building is attractive and well maintained. It is enclosed by a security fence and protected by security cameras. There is ample parking space for staff and for parents. The accommodation for the 3 year olds however, is a portacabin towards one side of the main building. This provides children with the necessary toilet facilities and access to the well developed outside play area at the back of the nursery. Whilst the best use is made of this room, it is not up to the standard of the rest of the Nursery, in terms of the quality of accommodation. However, the room is well designed to meet the needs of the children with differentiated activity areas and display.

The outside play and activity area is attractive and provides hard surfaced areas for children to play with moveable toys. There is a grassed area as well as a fenced garden area. The outside area is maintained by the Springfield organisation and allows children a valuable resource.

The Nursery was previously inspected by Estyn in March 2007 under the previous management. The progress report arising from the inspection is not available. However, the recommendations identified in the report have been addressed. The latest report of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) highlighted what needed to be done to improve the service and these are in the process of being implemented.

## Summary

<b>The Setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The Setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

#### Good features

- Standards achieved and progress made by children.
- The provision for ensuring children's health and wellbeing.
- The provision for overseeing children's care, support and guidance.
- Partnership arrangements with parents.
- Impact of leadership on children's wellbeing.
- Quality of relationships between adults and children.
- The quality of self-evaluation.

#### Adequate

- The quality of assessment.
- Use of assessment in planning.
- The accommodation for Nursery children.

### Prospects for improvement

- The quality of the self-evaluation report.
- The setting's track record of improvement, especially developing the outside area.
- Quality of leadership and management and planning for improvement.
- Support provided by the Local Authority in terms of courses and the support of advisory teacher.
- The openness of the Nursery to new ideas.

## Recommendations

- R1. Develop the newly established assessment procedures, so as to identify children's skills.
- R2. Use the assessment results in planning so as to identify the next steps in children's learning so that tasks are challenging

### **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 progress.

## Main findings

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

All children achieve good standards and make realistic progress in all areas of learning from their starting point. Children are actively involved and constantly engaged in activities set out for them. Their conversation illustrates that they are thinking about their tasks and in making choices based on their interests.

Children's communication skills are developing well. They have the confidence to talk with a visitor making themselves clearly understood and answering questions using a good vocabulary. Children listen to adults and respond appropriately. They show an interest in stories and hold their story books turning pages appropriately. They recognise their name cards during registration. Children use a variety of mark making equipment including chalk, pencils and coloured pens. They are beginning to understand the purpose of writing.

Most children are beginning to count and many count accurately to 7. They recognise and match patterns. Most are beginning to understand basic mathematical language, such as "bigger" and "smaller". They enjoy singing mathematical rhymes such as "Five little speckled frogs". Children use programmable toys and this develops their concept of counting and directions.

Most children understand basic Welsh instructions and respond appropriately. It is obvious that they understand more words than they can speak. They listen and respond to Welsh phrases and questions posed by adults and children show their competence in Welsh when responding to greetings such as using "bore da".

### **Wellbeing: Good**

All children show a positive attitude to learning. They participate enthusiastically in activities set out for them, sustain their concentration for a significant amount of time and behave well. They are very sensitive to suggestions and instructions given by adults and show good interpersonal skills relating well to each other.

Children are beginning to appreciate the importance of healthy eating and enjoy fruit and vegetables. The Nursery provides them with a safe environment and children, by their behaviour, illustrate that they are free from physical or verbal abuse in the setting.

Overall, children benefit from the calm, supportive environment provided for them, enabling them to grow in confidence and to make decisions about their life in the setting.

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

Planning is successful in engaging and motivating all the children and to maintain a good pace to the lesson. Planning is based on a template that incorporates activities that successfully directs children to progress towards meeting Foundation Phase outcomes. However, planning does not consistently show the systematic development of key skills.

Learning activities successfully encourage children to form good relationships and to show tolerance towards each other. A strong feature is the confidence children display and their ability to make choices.

Children's work shows that their creative skills are developing well using a good range of materials, colours and imagination. There are ample opportunities for children to develop their physical skills both through using large play equipment and fine manipulative skills. Practitioners use appropriate opportunities to develop the Welsh language particularly during registration and circle time.

The outside garden area enables children to appreciate growing plants and the care they require. Plans are in place to develop habitats for minibeasts. Children are beginning to acquire personal skills that will enable them to access all areas of learning.

All children are suitably encouraged to use the Welsh language and emphasis is placed on developing children's knowledge and understanding of the traditions and celebrations of the culture of Wales. Children celebrate St. David's day, including sampling Welsh cakes and through representative art work. Children also learn about other countries, such as celebrating the Chinese New Year.

Opportunities are in place for children to learn about recycling, including the recycling of waste paper.

**Teaching: Good**

Teaching approaches and planning indicates that practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and a well developed understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. Staff have a high expectation of children which are realised particularly in their personal and social development.

Planning ensures a good balance between child-selected and adult-directed activities both indoors and outdoors. Staff know when to intervene and when to leave children to work independently. Activities fully engage children and this ensures that children are actively involved. Adults are good language models and good effort is made to develop children's competence in the Welsh language.

Practitioners know their children well and use questioning appropriately to develop their thinking skills. Children are assessed regularly and observations recorded. These are dated enabling children's progress to be monitored. Records of children's achievement are collated in each child's "My Treasure Book".

Assessment, however, is not always sufficiently focused on children's skill development and the outcomes insufficiently used to plan future activities. Skills and tasks are not consistently well matched to children's needs and do not clearly highlight the next steps in their learning. However, the recently introduced programme for assessment "The Learning Journey" is being introduced to remedy this deficiency.

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

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

The outside environment and visits to the locality develop children's sense of awe and wonder about the world around them. The garden provides children with experiences of growing and tending seeds and the realisation of where some of our food comes from.

The very good ambience in the Nursery fosters values, such as honesty, fairness and respect for each other. Day-to-day activities help children distinguish between right and wrong, to take responsibility and to understand the need to share with others.

Children have a good understanding of the rules of behaviour and what is expected of them.

Practitioners know their children well and provide them with caring support. The good relationship established with the parents facilitates the care and affection staff provide for the children. Where necessary, professional support is available and effective links are in place.

All staff have attended recent and relevant courses on children protection and are aware of their responsibilities and the arrangements made by the Nursery for child protection. The Nursery is a safe, secure environment and no one can enter unannounced. Fencing is secure and video cameras in place.



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

The leader has attended local authority courses to enable the Nursery to accept and provide quality support for children with additional learning needs including those with emotional and behavioural problems. The Nursery would accept children with additional learning needs but currently no such children attend but arrangements are in place should they be required.

**Learning environment: Good**

The setting is fully inclusive in that all children have equal access to all activities. A tolerant attitude pervades the Nursery and ensures that all children are free from all forms of harassment or oppressive behaviour. No instances of discrimination have taken place.

The Nursery is generously staffed with an additional student on placement present during the inspection. Staff have relevant and appropriate qualifications and experience of working with children.

Conwy Day Nursery is accommodated in a building which is well maintained, warm and well lit. It is secure and no one can enter unannounced. Good arrangements are in place to meet and accommodate visitors. The 3 year old children meet in a portacabin and whilst used effectively, it does not present the same standard of accommodation as the rest of the building. However, best use is made of this accommodation which has its own toilet and washing facilities. Activity areas are set out for the children and resources are suitably stored. Storage areas are in the main within reach of the children. There is no indication in the activity areas of suitable skills that could be developed.

The outside area is secure and well maintained and enhances the provision for the children. Suitable clothing is available for children to wear during inclement weather. During the inspection children used the outdoors on both days and were seen to be enjoying themselves. They were well supported in their activities by adults. However, the arrangement does not provide for free access to the outside for children.

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

The Day Nursery is administratively well organised and all staff understand their roles. Leaders provide clear direction and staff fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

A sense of purpose is evident and over the years this has promoted and sustained improvements. There is a positive ethos and all staff share a common value of providing the best quality provision for the children. Children's needs are at the forefront of all decisions taken and the good relationship with parents is an encouragement for them to support their children's learning.

The management group meet regularly and fully understand their roles. The manager is well informed about the standard of provision and provides good support. New staff are inducted and all staff regularly appraised. Appraisal meetings provide the basis for staff development through courses of a personal and professional nature. There are weekly staff meetings. Overall, this has ensured the quality of education provided for the children.

The manager has ensured that effective decisions are made and is forward thinking in terms of developing the Nursery further. She has ensured that all legal duties are fulfilled.

The Nursery has and continues to meet national and local priorities. The Foundation Phase curriculum is in place, healthy eating initiatives and the "Design to Smile" priorities are in place.

### **Improving quality: Good**

A detailed self-evaluation exercise has been undertaken prior to the inspection. This has identified strengths and areas for improvement. Recent initiatives, such as developing the outdoor environment, have resulted in positive gains for the children.

A realistic plan for development is in place based on the self-evaluation process. Further refinements need to be made to enable priorities to be established with a suitable time scale and evaluation of progress.

All staff have attended a variety of professional courses arranged by the Local Authority and this has impacted well on the quality of provision.

### **Partnership working: Good**

Children attending the Nursery come from the catchment areas of several local primary schools. Prior to their transfer, children attend the relevant receiving school as a "taster" session. This is appropriate and enables them to transfer easily.

Parents are fully supportive of the Nursery. The Nursery operates an open door policy enabling parents to have access to the Nursery staff at any time. Parents are also encouraged to stay with their children for extended periods of time if necessary. However, during the inspection, children were happy to leave their parents and

enthusiastic to get involved in activities set out for them. Nursery staff however met all children and it was noticeable that they greeted the children with affection. They are also available to meet with parents and discuss issues that affect their children.

The Nursery benefits from the support provided by the Early Years Development (EYDCP) and the Local Authority advisory teacher. This is an effective partnership.

**Resource management: Good**

Staff are well deployed and know their responsibilities. Job descriptions are clear and all staff fully accept their roles. The Nursery is adequately resourced to motivate children. The Nursery plans for future resource needs. The outdoors is well used to develop children's learning.

Overall, the Nursery provides good value for money using its resources efficiently.

## Appendix 1

There is no commentary on the parents questionnaire due to the small number of responses received (fewer than 10).

Children clearly enjoyed their time at the Nursery. They were eager to participate in all activities and a noticeable feature was their self-confidence. In discussion, they spoke of their particular likes including looking at books, listening to stories and playing outside with their friends.

## 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](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>	<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 partnership's 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>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.