



*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**

**Tir na n-Og Day Care and Child Research Centre  
Bangor University  
Normal Site  
Holyhead Road  
Bangor  
Gwynedd  
LL57 2PZ**

**Date of inspection: February 2015**

**by**

**Nicholas Jones  
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:

<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

Tir na n-Og is a setting run by Bangor University. It is situated on the outskirts of Bangor, in the local authority of Gwynedd. It meets in a new building on the Normal site, Bangor University. The setting is open for five days of the week. The setting has five members of staff.

The setting is registered to take up to 24 children. It admits children between two and four years of age. At the time of the inspection, three children were three years old and funded by the local authority.

Nearly all the children are of white British origin. No children speak Welsh as their first language. There are no children with additional learning needs.

The leader has been in post since July 2002. The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) inspected the setting in October 2014. Estyn last inspected the setting in February 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 of the:

- conscientious planning of learning experiences;
- stimulating curriculum;
- effective teaching;
- caring and supportive ethos;
- well used resources; and
- the positive relationship between adults and children.

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because of the:

- clear direction to the setting's work by the manager, leader and staff;
- effective self-evaluation systems that correspond well to the clear targets in the development plan;
- positive attitudes of staff towards development and training; and
- the supportive and challenging management groups.

## Recommendations

- R1 Interfere less when teaching, in order for children to develop their independent skills
- R2 Ensure that the provision of Welsh is consistent across the setting
- R3 Use the outdoor area to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of plant growth and the environment

### **What happens next?**

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Not applicable

#### Standards: Not applicable

There is no report on children's progress, standards in the development of their skills, the Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection upon whom to report without identifying individual children.

#### Wellbeing: Not applicable

There is no report on children's progress, standards in the development of their skills, the Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection upon whom to report without identifying individual children.

### Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

#### Learning experiences: Good

The planning is completed conscientiously and concentrates effectively on the areas of learning of the Foundation Phase. It builds effectively on children's learning and experiences through termly themes. There are stimulating opportunities available for all children to develop their skills across the curriculum.

All staff discuss the curriculum and the themes' activities and they have an input into what is taught. The curriculum is flexible and linked to children's interests. Specific activities and tasks are planned thoroughly and the children have freedom to choose their own tasks and activities. The learning objectives are presented sensibly at the beginning of tasks to challenge individual children. Interesting activities are provided for children to develop their basic and key skills in literacy, numeracy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. The regular use of the outdoor apparatus supports the provision for the children's physical development. The outdoor area is new and the opportunities to plant and grow are not yet developed.

The majority of adults communicate effectively with children in Welsh; however, this is inconsistent amongst the staff. Provision for developing children's information and communication technology skills (ICT) is established and the computer is utilised well. Children have many opportunities to develop their thinking skills through engaging activities such as role-playing in the kitchen, experimenting with rice and shaving foam and making magnetic fishing rods from sticks that they find outdoors.

Good emphasis is placed on Welsh traditions and celebrations, such as celebrating St David's Day and Saint Dwynwen's Day. Interesting opportunities are provided for children to learn about other cultures and traditions, for example, through celebrating

the Chinese New Year, Diwali and special days like Australia day. Such activities help children to develop a clear understanding of the wider world and to develop a good awareness of global citizenship.

### **Teaching: Good**

Staff have a clear understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. There is a positive relationship between all staff and children. Staff have an active role in planning the curriculum and the best use is made of their expertise. Staff set clear learning objectives at the start of focus activities to ensure that individual children are challenged appropriately in line with their abilities. Staff co-operate effectively and separate children into groups well to target their learning needs purposefully.

Staff provide an interesting environment that ensures that all children take part and enjoy. All children are free to choose from activities that are led by adults or to work independently. However, on occasions, staff intervene too much and they do not allow the children to develop their independent skills successfully. Staff model language well, especially in English, to develop children's thinking and communication skills. Staff encourage children to evaluate sensibly as they listen to a story and discuss the contents of books.

Regular assessment procedures exist. The records of children's achievements are completed thoroughly. Staff assess children regularly and make effective use of this information to track their progress. They complete informative booklets that record efficiently what each child has learned at the setting. As a result, staff know the children well and can motivate them to persevere in learning new skills.

Parents and carers are informed well about their children's achievements and the information is available to them at any time.

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

The setting ensures that children's health and wellbeing is well supported. The visits around the locality and visitors to the setting, like fire officers, extend children's experiences effectively. The setting uses the local area well through regular visits to the Menai Strait, the library and a nearby restaurant. The use of the locality develops children's knowledge and understanding of their community effectively.

The setting has good provision for ensuring children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The staff foster values such as honesty, fairness and respect sensibly. Children have good opportunities to reflect, discuss their feelings with staff and to say thank you to each other. This is evident as they take turns well when sharing toys and having drinks together. The setting has effective arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The opportunities available for children to recycle different materials and to develop the children's understanding of sustainability are good. However, challenging opportunities are not available for children to grow plants. As a result, children do not learn effectively about how plants grow and how to care for the environment.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. The manager is the safeguarding officer. The setting is safe, the doors are locked electronically and only members of staff open them. No one can come in and no child can leave unaccompanied. Staff are careful as children are collected and ensure that they are in the care of their parents or a familiar carer.

Regular reviews of children's progress ensure that individuals that are suspected of needing additional support are identified. Staff discuss these with appropriate agencies. The leader is the additional learning needs co-ordinator and she is familiar with the necessary procedures in order to support children who have special needs.

**Learning environment: Good**

Through daily activities and the attitude that is adopted by staff, the setting promotes a positive ethos. Staff know the children well and their individuality is recognised. All children have equal access to a well-balanced curriculum.

The setting uses positive behaviour strategies, which removes any disruption or aggressive behaviour. The setting's staff have suitable qualifications and good experience and the adult to child ratio is favourable. Staff's expertise is used well in planning and in supervising activities.

The building is very new and is designed effectively to allow children to move freely from the indoors to the outdoors. The setting uses its resources successfully to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase and children's needs. The resources in the outdoor area are in the process of being developed and future plans include areas to grow plants. Resources are accessible to children, which promotes the children's sense of responsibility well. Resources are shared effectively between continuous and enrichment activities.

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

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in full and work together well as a team, sharing values, aims and objectives. The manager and leader involve the staff in planning the learning experiences, which ensures the best use of the expertise. The manager and leader are actively involved, giving clear directions on how to improve provision and outcomes for the children. There is a positive ethos and a commitment to provide the best possible experiences for all children. The staff focus effectively on the needs of all children.

The staff receive relevant and appropriate training and this impacts well on the quality of provision. The leaders, which include a quality assurance committee, take full account of relevant legislation and guidance and they meet the legal requirements. The management group, which operates under the guidance of Bangor University, meets regularly and the group monitors and challenges the leadership effectively.



The leaders have accurate development plans in place. The self-evaluation systems lead to effective long-term development plans, which have appropriate and suitable areas for improvement noted. The setting takes good account of national priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The manager, leader and staff know the setting well. They know what they are doing successfully and what they need to do to improve. The setting self-evaluates accurately and thoroughly. It ensures effective links between the self-evaluation and the development plan's targets.

There is detailed evidence of helpful evaluations from all who are connected to the setting, such as parents and external agencies. The quality assurance committee monitors and evaluates the practices of the setting diligently. The appropriate targets in the development plan include improving children's Welsh development, providing a shelter for the outside area, further Foundation Phase training for staff and to develop children's knowledge and understanding of recycling.

Staff are keen to accept new ideas and to experiment with different ways of working, suggested by the local authority's advisory teacher and the Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA). For example, the local authority's recommendations on how to improve the self-evaluation systems have affected the quality assurance procedures positively.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The parents and carers, in the questionnaire replies and during discussions, express their satisfaction with the setting. They appreciate the standards of care and the quality of education available. They value the open door policy and the opportunities to meet staff on a daily basis.

By the time the children leave the setting, all parents feel that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Links with the university are very well established and the setting is involved in research projects, for example healthy eating. The co-operation between the setting and the WPPA and the local authority are good; however, links with local schools are not established due to the large catchment area for children who attend the setting.

The support provided by the university, the local authority and the WPPA benefits the setting greatly. The advice, suggestions and co-operation have helped in moving the setting forward and have contributed to effective provision and purposeful leadership.

### **Resource management: Good**

Leadership is strategic and plans for the future well. Resources are managed effectively to support learning and improvements at the setting. The manager, leader and the management groups ensure that the setting has sufficient staff with appropriate qualifications and training. The setting's staff use support agencies

purposefully for the sake of the children.

The staff work together effectively to improve children's achievements. Sensible use is made of all the available resources. They are accessible to the children. The staff make good use of the building to provide a range of interesting learning experiences.

The provision and enthusiasm of the leadership means that the setting provides 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 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.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

## 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.