



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Penglais Day Nursery
Penglais Road
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 3DU**

Date of inspection: June 2016

by

**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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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Context

Penglais Day Nursery is a purpose built private setting located at Aberystwyth University in Ceredigion local authority. It provides care for the children of the university's staff and students as well as children from the local community and surrounding areas. It meets five days a week from 8.00 to 18.00 for 39 weeks a year.

The setting is registered to take up to 73 children from birth to four years of age. At the time of the inspection there were seven children in receipt of funded education. There are 18 members of staff employed in the setting including the leader, of which 5 are full-time and 13 are part-time. The setting's leader has been in post since January 2016.

The setting is bilingual and both Welsh and English are spoken. Most children speak English as their first language and a few have English as an additional language. The setting has identified a very few children with additional learning needs.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) in November 2015 and by Estyn in March 2013.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Practitioners' planning provides regular and effective opportunities for children to develop many key personal and social skills across nearly all areas of learning
- Practitioners have developed a supportive atmosphere for learning based on consistent routines and high expectations
- The setting's procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress are robust and detailed, and identify next steps in learning successfully
- Practitioners make skilful use of the Welsh language, provide a good language model and consider Welsh as an integral part of their work
- Without exception, practitioners create a stimulating and happy environment for learning and are well informed about what they need to do to help the children to succeed
- Nearly all practitioners know the children well, treat them with respect, value their rights, views and opinions, and encourage them successfully to make decisions about their own learning
- Most practitioners make innovative use of ICT resources to develop children's digital literacy skills
- Nearly all practitioners have a thorough understanding of how they can contribute to raising standards through effective teaching
- The building, along with the grounds, is of exceptional quality. It is maintained to a very high standard and used imaginatively by practitioners to provide a very stimulating and attractive learning environment

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader has a robust vision for developing children to be confident and fluent bilingual communicators. This vision is shared effectively with all stakeholders.
- The team of committed staff is aware of the setting's strengths, as well as many of the areas that need to be developed which provides secure strategic direction.
- The leader has a very good understanding of the self-evaluation process and the quality of strategic planning ensures that all practitioners pay firm attention to identifying areas for improvement
- The setting makes very good use of individual strengths and allows classroom leaders and key workers to develop their own leadership skills
- The setting has a successful range of strategic partners who contribute effectively to extending the provision and raising children's standards

Recommendations

- R1 Plan to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills progressively across the curriculum
- R2 Ensure that planned activities provide appropriate challenge for more able children

What happens next?

Penglais Day Nursery will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations

Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	N/A
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Standards: N/A

There is no report on children's progress, standards and their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Wellbeing: N/A

There is no report on children's progress, standards and their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

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

The setting provides a broad and exciting range of stimulating experiences across nearly all areas of learning that engage most children. Practitioners' detailed daily planning provides regular and effective opportunities for children to develop many key personal and social skills. This enables most to make good progress.

Practitioners plan appropriate opportunities for children to develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across most areas of learning. For example, children have valuable opportunities to create two dimensional shapes when cooking biscuits, use digital recorders to listen to and give instructions and use standard measurements to weigh ingredients and measure distances. However, long term planning is not always systematic enough to ensure that all children develop their literacy and numeracy skills progressively across the curriculum. A majority of practitioners are beginning to plan appropriate activities that provide suitable challenge for more able and talented children.

The setting provides valuable opportunities to develop nearly all children's independent skills during activities. Practitioners encourages children to make decisions about their own learning. They involve children successfully during initial planning by providing worthwhile opportunities for them to create mind maps and choose which theme appeals to them most. Children are encouraged to solve problems and make choices regularly. They develop their thinking skills successfully in a wide range of activities such as cooking, role-play, growing plants and building large constructions.

Practitioners make skilful use of the Welsh language. Most are very good language models and consider Welsh as an integral part of their work. This has a very beneficial effect on developing children's Welsh language skills. The Welsh

dimension has a prominent place in the setting's curriculum. Activities such as supporting the Welsh rugby team, celebrating St David's Day and creating cards for Diwrnod Santes Dwynwen contribute effectively to the children's understanding of their culture and heritage.

The setting provides exceptional opportunities to enable children to develop their understanding of the traditions of other countries. Activities to develop respect towards the range of multicultural backgrounds of children that attend the setting are well planned by the practitioners. They use simple words and phrases effectively in several different languages in order to meet the needs of those children whose home language is neither Welsh nor English. Developing fairness and equal opportunities are strong elements of the setting's culture. These activities help children to develop a good understanding of the wider world and to develop their awareness of global citizenship within a Welsh context.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a sound knowledge of Foundation Phase practice. They understand the importance of providing good quality opportunities for children to learn through play and first hand experiences. They use a range of techniques to provide effective teaching. For example, practitioners use appropriate open-ended questions and sensitive support to encourage children to work independently and make decisions about their learning.

Practitioners manage children's behaviour well. They have developed a supportive learning atmosphere based on consistent routines and high expectations. Practitioners use rewards and encouragement successfully to develop the children's willingness to share and take turns.

Practitioners ensure that learning objectives are clear and appropriate to the age and ability of most children. They offer a vibrant and interesting environment indoors and make good use of their outdoor space and the local community. Practitioners follow children's interests constantly and encourage them to notice things around them that stimulate their natural curiosity and develop their understanding. For example when discussing the characteristics of crabs and fish.

All staff use effective elements of assessment for learning during activities. They offer constructive oral feedback and explain clearly what children need to do to improve their work. The setting's procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress are robust and detailed, and identify next learning steps successfully. Recently, the setting has strengthened these procedures to include daily assessments of all children's achievements. These assessments are used purposefully to inform future planning and parents are provided with useful daily written evaluations that inform them of their child's progress.

The annual reports that are provided for parents are of very good quality and give them beneficial information on their children's progress and wellbeing.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting is a happy and welcoming community in which pupils' health and wellbeing have a high priority. Practitioners know the children well; treat them with respect and value their views and opinions. Through well-planned daily routines, children are encouraged to eat and drink healthy snacks and are given plenty of opportunities to enjoy fresh air and physical exercise. As a result, nearly all children have a good understanding of the importance of a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

Provision for children's moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is planned purposefully. Children are encouraged to wait, share and take turns throughout the session and to say thank you for their snack. Practitioners encourage children to help each other by laying the table and to take responsibility for clearing, tidying up and re-cycling food. The setting makes appropriate use of the rules that have been proposed by the children. These place emphasis upon values such as honesty, fairness and respect and are promoted consistently. This helps the children to know the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and supports their awareness of being caring citizens very successfully.

The setting has robust processes in order to meet children's additional learning needs. Practitioners prepare detailed individual education plans for these children, which are reviewed regularly once a term with all stakeholders. Practitioners respond quickly to individuals' specific needs. For example, many trained practitioners provide effective support for children with additional speech, language and communication needs.

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

Learning environment: Excellent

The physical environment of the setting is an outstanding feature. Without exception practitioners create a stimulating environment for learning and are well informed about what they need to do to help the children to succeed. The setting is located in a purpose built building which provides spacious and well -resourced areas that enhance children's education across the curriculum successfully. The indoor activity areas are very well designed to maximise the use of space and provide valuable experiences for children in line with the Foundation Phase philosophy.

The setting places exceptional attention and emphasis on creating a safe environment that encourages children to acknowledge, respect and celebrate diversity. This is seen in the setting's inclusive, family ethos, ensuring that all children are treated equally. As a result, all children have full access to the curriculum and they have a close relationship with their peers and practitioners.

All practitioners have appropriate qualifications to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They make very effective use of an extensive supply of stimulating resources of exceptionally high quality. Most practitioners make innovative use of ICT resources to develop children's digital literacy skills. They make consistent and purposeful use of the outside area to enhance classroom

activities and develop children's literacy and numeracy skills. This area is an integral part of the provision and has been developed particularly well to ensure valuable experiences for children to develop their physical and investigative skills. For example, children make regular use of the climbing frames, examine and discuss the properties of shells and pebbles and serve imaginative meals cooked in the mud kitchen.

The building, along with the grounds, is of exceptional quality and maintained to a very high standard. It is used imaginatively by practitioners to provide a very stimulating and attractive environment with colourful and creative displays that show respect for the children's work. Practitioners make effective use of all rooms, to provide worthwhile activities that match children's age and development, to enrich children's learning and raise standards of achievement consistently.

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

The leader has a robust vision for developing children at the setting to be confident and fluent bilingual communicators, which is shared effectively with all stakeholders. She leads a team of committed staff effectively and provides a secure strategic direction. As a result, the setting has a clear focus on establishing a caring and welcoming ethos in which children are happy and keen to learn. In the short time since her appointment, the leader has established a culture of high expectations of her staff. She has recently implemented new procedures for managing practitioners' performance. These identify purposeful training to meet the development needs of individuals as well as those of the setting. In addition, the leader has introduced a rigorous system for assessing and recording children's achievements, which practitioners use effectively to inform future planning. As a result, nearly all practitioners have a solid understanding of how they can contribute to raising standards through effective teaching.

The two deputy leaders support the leader's work effectively, especially when monitoring teaching and other practitioners' planning. The setting has recently established a leadership structure that makes very good use of individual strengths and allows classroom leaders and key workers to develop their own leadership skills. Practitioners share agreed values and expectations successfully and undertake their daily duties conscientiously.

The leader is knowledgeable about the setting's performance and is aware of the strengths, as well as many of the areas that need to be developed. She understands her role and responsibilities clearly and, working closely with the management committee, ensures that there are appropriate policies and procedures for maintaining the setting effectively. The management committee, which is composed of members of the university's staff, is very supportive of the setting's work. They meet regularly and provide worthwhile challenge which leads successfully to raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. Staff responsibilities are defined clearly and leadership roles are shared effectively when planning, implementing and monitoring improvements.

The setting embraces local and national educational initiatives and responds enthusiastically to opportunities to develop and improve its provision accordingly. For example, assessment for learning strategies are implemented well. The setting also pays close attention to developing numeracy and literacy skills and provides regular high quality opportunities to develop children's ICT skills.

Improving quality: Excellent

The leader has thorough knowledge of the setting's performance. She has a very good understanding of the self-evaluation process and the quality of strategic planning ensures that all practitioners pay firm attention to identifying areas for improvement. The newly appointed senior leadership team work effectively to monitor activities that lead to improvements in provision and raising standards. The setting has responded very well to the recommendations from the previous inspection, especially in relation to improving children's Welsh language skills.

The leader has established a rigorous and coherent approach to self-evaluation that makes exceptional use of direct evidence of teaching and learning. She constantly challenges practitioners to evaluate the setting's performance and has established a culture of robust and honest self-evaluation to which all practitioners contribute. This is a particular strength of the setting. The self-evaluation process is used effectively to produce a comprehensive report that is shared with the local authority, parents and practitioners. This report highlights what the setting is doing well and it is a strong basis for prioritising important aspects for improvement. The leadership team makes effective use of a range of sources to evaluate the setting's performance, including observing sessions, questionnaires, moderating assessments, scrutinising children's work and undertaking evaluations of various aspects of learning areas.

The setting has established a rigorous weekly timetable for monitoring. The leader provides written evaluative reports that are shared with every practitioner regularly at staff meetings in order to discuss specific aspects of the setting's performance. As a result, all practitioners have a thorough understanding of the setting's strengths and have developed an extensive awareness of their role in planning for improvement. The link between the self-evaluation and targets in the development plan is clear. This has a positive effect on provision, especially in terms of planning and assessment.

The setting co-operates very closely with Aberystwyth University and the local authority to improve good practice and to access training for all practitioners. Worthwhile use is made of training opportunities and the setting responds well to targets set by the advisory teacher. As a result, nearly all children at the setting benefit from the training that staff receive. For example, the course attended on promoting children's social and emotional competence has led to raising children's independence and confidence.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a successful range of strategic partners who contribute effectively to extending the provision and raising children's standards. The setting works very closely with parents and carers in order to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills and to promote healthy eating and drinking. Parents visit the setting regularly to read stories to the children, often in a language other than Welsh or English.

Parents are given helpful encouragement to support learning at home by reading and singing with the children. They are provided with daily oral and written feedback about their children's development and appropriate use is made of noticeboards in the entrance. Practitioners make significant use of the setting's website and social media to ensure that parents are aware of the setting's activities.

A very beneficial relationship exists between the setting and the local authority's advisory teacher. This partnership offers guidance on developing practitioners' skills in order to raise children's standards further and providing practical support about how to do this. In addition, it ensures useful advice, which has a positive effect on the setting's arrangements for leadership and management.

The setting plays a prominent part in the local community and visits from members of the fire brigade and the police support the learning appropriately. Children also visit various places around the town regularly. For example visits to the local park, the seaside and shops enhance the setting's approach to thematic work successfully. The setting makes very good use of the University's nearby sports facilities for activities such as team building and problem solving games as well activities to develop children's ball skills. These activities make a positive contribution to enriching children's' learning experiences and their awareness of their local area.

The setting has good transition arrangements for children to move from one age group to the next within the setting. This ensures that they continue to take part in activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

The management committee works well in partnership with others to secure funding to buy purposeful resources and to maintain staffing levels.

Resource management: Good

The leader manages staff and resources efficiently, by ensuring that the setting has a high level of staff who have suitable qualifications to teach the curriculum effectively. She makes very good use of practitioners' individual skills and ensures that they use the resources at their disposal effectively to meet the needs of most children.

Performance management arrangements are robust and ensure that leaders know the practitioners' needs well and that there is a close link between their targets and the setting's priorities. The setting regularly arranges access to a worthwhile range of suitable training in order to secure improvement. As a result, all practitioners have up-to-date information about recent developments in the Foundation Phase. The effect of training on children's achievement is evaluated appropriately.

The leader allocates funds appropriately according to the setting's priorities. The setting has sound arrangements to manage and monitor its budget and the management committee evaluates expenditure carefully in order to consider the effect on children's standards and wellbeing. The setting plans purposefully for future improvements with the support of additional funding from Aberystwyth University. As a result, and considering the quality of teaching, care and guidance, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses was fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Dyfrig Ellis	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.wales)

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.