



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

A report on

**Busy Bees, St David's Park Day Nursery
St David's Park
Ewloe
Flintshire
CH5 3XN**

Date of inspection: March 2017

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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Context

Busy Bees, St. David's Park Day Nursery is an English medium, day care provision, in Flintshire. The setting is registered for up to 129 children under the age of eight years. It is open Monday to Friday except for bank holidays. The setting provides care for young children in baby, toddler and pre-school rooms, according to their age and stage of development.

At the time of the inspection, the local authority funds 23 children for education. They attend one of two sessions, either morning or afternoon. A very few children come from homes where Welsh is the first language. A very few children speak English as an additional language. The setting currently has no children that it identifies as having additional learning needs.

The setting employs five part-time staff to provide education for funded children. A non-teaching manager oversees the setting.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in November 2015. Estyn last inspected the setting in May 2010.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Many children make effective progress in line with their stage of development, engage in their learning enthusiastically and acquire new skills and knowledge well
- Nearly all children are happy to talk about their likes and dislikes and use a suitably broad vocabulary when discussing their learning
- Many children are developing effective mathematical skills and apply these in their learning activities
- Many children are beginning to develop a useful Welsh vocabulary
- Nearly all children enter the setting happily and settle quickly, go to practitioners readily and chat to them confidently
- Many children take part in learning activities effectively, playing with their peers co-operatively
- Nearly all children demonstrate good behaviour in and around the setting
- The setting offers a worthwhile range of interesting learning experiences that engage and interest nearly all children well
- All practitioners have strong working relationships with the children and engage with them skilfully, asking questions and providing support when appropriate
- The setting is a friendly, caring community where practitioners ensure that children's health and wellbeing have a high priority

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The setting's manager has a clear and beneficial vision for the setting
- All practitioners undertake their duties conscientiously
- The room leader understands her roles and responsibilities clearly and works effectively with the setting's managers
- Leaders manage practitioners' performance suitably
- The setting has appropriate systems to help it to identify its strengths and areas for improvement
- Practitioners have a strong and beneficial partnership with parents and involve them well in their child's education
- Leaders develop relevant plans to improve the setting's provision
- The setting has a broad range of resources to support worthwhile learning following good Foundation Phase practice

Recommendations

- R1 Further develop children's ICT skills
- R2 Ensure that learning activities contribute effectively to the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills
- R3 Ensure that learning activities challenge all children at a suitable level, particularly the more able
- R4 Develop more robust and systematic procedures for evaluating the work of the setting and planning for improvement

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 the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Many children at the setting make effective progress in line with their stage of development. They engage in their learning enthusiastically and acquire new skills and knowledge well. Many children demonstrate increased physical awareness and control, for example when cutting with scissors and when pushing wheelbarrows in the garden.

Nearly all children listen attentively to adults and are happy to talk about their likes and dislikes. Many use a suitably broad vocabulary when discussing their learning activities, such as when explaining how to cool hot porridge for Goldilocks and the three bears. A few are less confident and need considerable encouragement to describe their ideas to others. Many children join in familiar songs confidently when singing with the group.

Nearly all children enjoy listening to stories read by adults from books and from the computer screen. They identify characters they know and can talk simply about their personality, for example identifying the 'evil pea' in a superhero book. A majority of children look at books independently and comment well on what they see in pictures. A few children are beginning to recognise individual letters and associate them with particular sounds, such as a few of the letters in their names. A majority of children are developing confidence with their early writing skills. They demonstrate suitable control of different mark making equipment, such as chalk sticks, and try out a variety of writing implements to make shapes on paper.

Many children are developing effective mathematical skills. They are able to count to 5 and beyond accurately, and recognise an appropriate range of numbers. They are able to apply these skills in their learning activities, for example when counting toy characters on the bus in their small world play. Many children are developing an effective understanding of mathematical language and use it well to make observations and comparisons. For example, they talk about smaller and larger bowls during their cooking exercise.

A majority of children are developing appropriate confidence when using information and communication technology (ICT) equipment. For example, they use handsets to control cars suitably. However, a minority of children do not use a broad enough range of ICT equipment with suitable understanding.

Many children's Welsh language skills are developing effectively. They join in with familiar songs readily and count in Welsh during their play. Many are beginning to develop a useful vocabulary that includes colours and simple weather words. Although few use these words spontaneously, many use these confidently when communicating with practitioners.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children enter the setting happily and settle quickly. They go to practitioners readily and chat to them confidently. Many children take part in learning activities enthusiastically playing with their peers cooperatively. Most children have a suitable awareness of the importance of hygiene and of washing their hands at appropriate times. A majority are developing an awareness of the importance of safety. For example, as 'health and safety detectives' they are able to identify issues, such as water spills on the floor.

Nearly all children demonstrate good behaviour in and around the setting. They play in small groups happily, sharing equipment well, for example when sharing dough cutters to make shapes. Nearly all children speak politely to their peers and to all practitioners. They respond positively to instructions, such as when asked to help tidy up after activities.

Most children are happy and confident to join in with the learning activities on offer. They are able to choose activities for themselves and maintain suitable concentration. Although most children engage enthusiastically in learning through play, few offer suggestions for new learning activities.

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

The setting offers a worthwhile range of interesting learning experiences that engage and interest nearly all children well. Practitioners plan a broad curriculum that focuses beneficially on learning through active engagement and play. For example, children develop a recognition of numbers and an understanding of counting towards zero when playing in the home corner. However, practitioners do not always ensure that children have a broad enough range of opportunities to develop skills in areas such as creative or physical development. In a minority of cases, planning does not take enough account of children's prior learning. As a result, a minority of activities do not build systematically enough on children's skills, particularly for the more able.

Practitioners provide children with appropriate opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills throughout the session. They develop children's communication skills well through singing and story times. A good range of books, signs and labels ensure that children play in an environment that encourages them to develop early reading skills well. There are useful opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills in many learning activities, for example when counting images of bananas on material. However, while practitioners introduce these ideas to children when opportunities arise, they do not consider children's skills development well enough when planning learning, particularly in activities not led by adults. As a result, learning activities do not always focus well enough on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills.

Practitioners provide beneficial opportunities for children to learn about Welsh language and culture. Useful displays, posters and labels throughout the setting celebrate the Welsh language. Photographs of children in Welsh costume, a good

supply of Welsh books and celebrations, such as St David's day, help children to develop their cultural identity well. Practitioners use a good amount of Welsh throughout the sessions and this helps to develop children's confidence and ability to use the language well.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners have a good understanding of the Foundation Phase and of children's development. They work effectively as a team and understand the needs of the children in the setting well. All practitioners have strong working relationships with the children. They engage with them skilfully, asking questions and providing support when appropriate. They listen to children and respond to their comments helpfully. As a result, many children make good progress in many learning activities.

Practitioners make useful and regular observations of children during learning activities. This allows them to make an accurate appraisal of children's progress and achievements. They share this understanding as a team and, as a result, ensure that they know the children well. However, they do not always use this assessment information well enough when planning future learning or when planning for improvement.

Through carefully written development summaries and termly parent consultations, the setting keep parents well informed about their children's achievements and ongoing development.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting is a friendly, caring community where practitioners ensure that children's health and wellbeing have a high priority. For example, through daily routines, children are encouraged to wash their hands at suitable points, eat healthy snacks and have free access to the well-resourced outdoor area. As a result, a majority of children are developing a suitable understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Practitioners consider well how to provide for the children's moral, social, spiritual and cultural development. For example, in daily routines and using the 'helpwr heddiw', practitioners encourage children to be kind to each other, share resources, tidy up and say 'thank-you'. This helps the children to understand the importance of acceptable behaviour, and develops their social skills well. The 'helpwr heddiw' also acts as a health and safety detective, helping adults to identify issues such as water spills and checking the outdoor area for problems.

Currently, the setting has no children with additional learning needs. Leaders and practitioners understand well the need to liaise with parents and outside agencies when necessary. They are able to prepare individual education or play plans for children, and understand the need to respond promptly to specialist advice when required.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a caring community where practitioners treat all children equally. Staff know the children well and, as a result, children are happy and relaxed in the setting. Practitioners ensure that all children have equal access to all learning activities. Activities, such as celebrating festivals from other cultures and tasting food from different countries, help children begin to develop a useful understanding of cultural diversity.

Practitioners create a purposeful learning environment for children. A suitable range of resources are organised carefully to support the curriculum. The resources are accessible to the children and this helps to develop their independent skills well. Practitioners ensure that the room is a word rich environment and there is a range of children's work on display. As a result, the indoors is a stimulating area for learning.

Practitioners make good use of the outdoor learning space. It contains a broad range of interesting resources and separate areas in which children can play and learn effectively, such as the mud kitchen, fairy garden and mini-beast hotel. However, the area is too small for children to undertake more strenuous activities, such as riding bikes or scooters. The building is secure and well maintained.

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

The setting's manager has a clear and beneficial vision for the setting. She leads a team of committed practitioners, providing effective strategic direction. As a result, the setting has a clear focus on developing high quality provision in which children are happy and cared for well. The manager ensures that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place that provide guidance for managing the setting efficiently. As a result, all practitioners undertake their daily duties conscientiously.

The deputy manager and room leader work well to oversee the quality of provision for funded children. The room leader understands her roles and responsibilities clearly and works closely with the setting's managers. For example, their development of effective systems for recording children's progress allows for an accurate assessment of their achievement. The setting's key worker system allows practitioners to share information about children beneficially. As a result, all adults know the children particularly well.

Leaders hold useful meetings between themselves and with practitioners. These focus well on useful priorities, such as ensuring staff understand safeguarding procedures and monitoring the setting's action plans. They allow leaders to monitor agreed processes and to inform practitioners of important information efficiently.

Leaders manage practitioners' performance suitably. They meet with staff regularly and identify training needs, individuals' strengths and areas for development appropriately. However, leaders do not undertake focused observations of the quality of practitioners work. As a result, they do not always identify their most immediate priorities for improvement robustly enough.

The setting understands and responds efficiently to local and national priorities. For example, it implements the national baseline assessment effectively and is able to track children's progress well as a result.

Improving quality: Adequate

The setting has suitable systems to help it identify its strengths and areas for improvement. The room leader evaluates curriculum planning and uses this to identify strengths in the setting's provision and to help decide future activities suitably. The deputy manager undertakes termly observations of the room's provision and this evaluates suitably the quality of practitioners' interactions with children. Through these processes, leaders are beginning to evaluate a few important elements of the setting's work suitably.

Leaders take good account of the views of parents, for example through useful questionnaires. They act on these well. For example, requests for more information about children's progress led to a more useful sharing of the setting's assessments. However, the scrutiny and evaluation of children's standards and the quality of practitioners' work are not robust enough. As a result, self-evaluation practices do not give leaders a clear picture of what the setting does well and what it needs to do to improve.

Leaders develops relevant plans to improve the setting's provision. The room leader identifies needs appropriately and plans for their development systematically. For example, recent initiatives have led to improvements in provision for ICT. However, the plans do not link well with self-evaluation and focus mainly on short-term actions to improve provision. Leaders do not consider improvement well enough in terms of children's skills or measure the impact of actions in relation to children's standards.

The setting has made sound progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection.

Partnership working: Good

The setting works effectively with a suitable range of partners to help develop its provision and the standard of children's wellbeing.

Practitioners have a strong and beneficial partnership with parents and involve them well in their child's education. Through informative newsletters, leaders keep parents well informed about events at the setting. Practitioners allow parents to take home their children's observation notes and evidence file at will, and this provides them with a comprehensive understanding of their child's progress. As a result, parents are able to monitor their child's development effectively. A newly formed parents' liaison committee has begun to consider well how they may develop this important partnership further in the future.

The setting has well-established partnerships with members of the local community, including local businesses, for example with the local shop and a local home for the elderly. The setting uses these links effectively to enhance children's learning experiences.

The setting maintains beneficial partnerships with professional bodies, such as the local authority. These partnerships provide beneficial advice that allows the setting to run smoothly and develop its provision effectively. For example, practitioners act efficiently on advice from the local authority's advisory teacher and this has a positive impact, such as on improving the ICT area and resources.

Resource management: Good

Leaders at the setting manage and use resources efficiently. There are a good number of well-qualified staff to support the children's development and their wellbeing effectively. Leaders deploy practitioners carefully to make the most effective use of their skills and experience. The setting is organised effectively and has well-managed routines that ensure that children use the outdoor and indoor accommodation beneficially. The setting has a broad range of resources to support worthwhile learning following Foundation Phase principles.

Leaders pay close attention to practitioners' training and ensure that members of the team have useful opportunities to keep up-to-date with new approaches to children's learning. As a result, the quality of practitioners' interactions with children is good.

The setting's manager oversees the budget carefully. She focuses finances well on improving provision and on meeting children's needs. When considering the effective progress made by most children, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The inspection team has considered all parent feedback when reaching judgements. However, the sample of parent questionnaires was invalidated due to a large number of entries submitted from parents of children not eligible for Foundation Phase funding and therefore is not summarised here.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Andrew Thorne	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.