



*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**

**Gresford Pre-School Playgroup  
Memorial Hall  
Off High Street  
Gresford  
LL12 8PT**

**Date of inspection: July 2015**

**by**

**Anne Manning  
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**

Gresford Playgroup is based in the village of Gresford in Wrexham and has been operating for over 30 years. Currently the group runs from Gresford Memorial Hall which serves a wide variety of groups in the community so the playgroup is a pack away setting. This English-medium playgroup is overseen by a registered person and qualified supervisors. Practitioners together with the supervisors carry out the day-to-day running of the group and parents also undertake regular duties in the setting.

The playgroup is open for four mornings each week during term time and is registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales to provide care for up to 35 children.

All the children who attend the playgroup are British and all use English as their first language. No children have an additional learning need. The majority of the children are from the village or the local surrounding area.

The playgroup receives support from Wrexham Early Education and is a member of Wales Pre-school Providers Association. There were 12 funded three-year-old children present during the inspection.

The last CSSIW inspection was in January 2014 and this is the second inspection by Estyn.

## 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 current performance of the setting is good because:

- children make good progress from their starting points;
- teaching is good;
- care, support and guidance are good; and
- learning experiences are varied and interesting.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is effective leadership and management of the group;
- there is a good range of quality resources to support learning;
- practitioners work well as a team; and
- the setting has made good progress since the last inspection.

## **Recommendations**

R1. To strengthen the assessment process by ensuring that there is sufficient evidence to support assessment decisions and make regular use of planned observation opportunities.

R2. For activity planning to include a clear literacy or numeracy focus.

### **What happens next?**

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

## Main findings

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

Nearly all children achieve good standards and make good progress from their starting points towards the Foundation Phase outcomes in all areas of learning. They work effectively at full capacity and most are constantly busy with tasks. They concentrate and persevere well with activities they enjoy such as planting sun flower seeds and role play cooking on their barbeque. Most children are confident to make choices about their play such as choosing colours and filling their own paint pots. They are developing effective skills in literacy, numeracy and Information Communication Technology in order to access the wider curriculum.

Nearly all children are confident when speaking to adults in the setting and express their feelings through singing and painting. They share their ideas and talk about what they are doing. Nearly all listen to and carry out instructions well and use appropriate language during play. They are starting to understand the functions of writing. All follow stories and show interest in books and nearly all can handle books as a reader. The majority of children select and use mathematical ideas. They count and can re-create patterns. Most children develop appropriate ICT skills through using an i pad and through play, for example operating a compact disc player and camera and in the role play area they use buttons and switches successfully.

They show a good interest in Welsh books and all join in enthusiastically with songs and counting that effectively develop their Welsh vocabulary. Most children understand basic instructions in Welsh and can repeat familiar words and phrases successfully. They understand more words than they can speak.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Most children sit and listen carefully during circle time and they settle well and quickly to the activities and routines when they arrive in playgroup. All are starting to develop positive attitudes to learning. Nearly all children are engaged and sustain concentration well, for example when moving ducks and a spider down a water chute.

Many children show a good interest in their work both indoors and out and they sustain concentration well. They show good levels of self-esteem and take part enthusiastically in different learning experiences particularly during outdoor play. All children are happy and feel safe in the setting. Children are confident learners and are involved in making simple choices in the playgroup about their play.

Most children demonstrate good behaviour, they are kind and considerate towards each other and most readily share and take turns with equipment and resources. They have successful relationships with each other and relate well to adults around them. They are starting to help their friends and work together well, for example when tidying away the equipment.

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

Planning includes a good range of interesting learning experiences such as visits to the duck pond that successfully engages all children and as a result they make good progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes and they are busy and purposefully occupied. Although the setting provides opportunities to develop skills in literacy and numeracy in activities, these have an insufficiently clear focus in the planning.

Good organisation ensures children settle quickly to activities and learn successfully. Experiences effectively encourage children work together and co-operate. They have good opportunities to choose, for example music for the compact disc player. They successfully form relationships with each other and with adults around them and show respect for all cultural backgrounds.

The curriculum builds appropriately on children's existing knowledge and understanding and provides opportunities to develop thinking skills across all areas of learning such as deciding how much soil to put into the plant pots to grow sunflowers. There are good opportunities for children to be independent such as spreading their own butter and pouring their own paint. The setting provides opportunities for children to mark make but children do not always make the most of these. There are good opportunities for the children to recognise their own names when they self register or find their place mats. A good range of technology such as an i pad, camera and battery operated ensure that the children develop effective skills.

Practitioners develop children's literacy skills by sharing books including those written in Welsh and by story telling. Most practitioners use a good level of Welsh and they encourage the children effectively both during registration when the children count their friends. They share traditions and festivals with their friends such as St David's Day and Chinese New Year.

Children have opportunities to learn effectively about caring for living things by finding and observing mini beasts in their outdoor area and the water birds and wild life when they visit the pond.

### **Teaching: Good**

All practitioners including volunteers are very well briefed before the session and deployed effectively to support the children's play and learning. They have up to date knowledge of child development and the requirements of the Foundation Phase and as a result move all the children's learning forward. All practitioners are good language models and use language effectively to develop learning. Practitioners all employ positive strategies such as encouragement and negotiation to encourage the children to learn, join in and to share equipment.

All practitioners are skilled at knowing when to intervene in children's play and manage behaviour effectively, reminding of simple rules for sharing. As a result children are settled and stay on task well. Practitioners successfully plan activities and use indoors and outdoors for a good range of activities that meet the needs of the children. They make good use of informal learning opportunities and use questioning well to extend learning.

All practitioners know the children well and as a result there are high expectations. Most practitioners extend children's play successfully using an effective range of teaching strategies that promote learning and provide opportunities for the children to develop skills, for example using a compact disc player. Adult support for the children is well focused but flexible to take into account children's needs and makes a good contribution to the quality of their learning.

Most practitioners use a good level of Welsh with the children and successfully encourage the children to listen and respond. Circle times are used effectively to tell the children and show them what they are going to be doing and share books and stories.

Although practitioners carry out some useful observations of the children that inform assessment records these are not sufficiently regular and do not make the most of planned observation opportunities. There is also insufficient evidence to support assessment decisions. Parents are involved extensively in the achievements of their children and they are actively aware of their progress by taking a turn on rota duty. This means that because they join the group regularly they are aware of the routines and learning outcomes and so are able to support children's learning very successfully.

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

The playgroup has a good range of policies and procedures to support the children and successfully promote their health and wellbeing including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

There are appropriate policies and procedures in respect of safeguarding and the practitioners have undertaken training. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meets requirements and gives no cause for concern.

Children learn effectively about simple rules such as sharing and successfully learn to distinguish right from wrong. The playgroup successfully fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect and effectively develops a good understanding of living and sharing with others and as a result children are confident learners who are happy to ask for help. Children are starting to take initiative as they serve themselves drinks.

The children are starting to develop a sense of awe and wonder about the world in which they live by visits to the pond and observing living things such as mini beasts and by growing plants in their own garden.



Practitioners provide consistency and individual support to assist children with additional learning needs, for example there is an Initial Concerns Review and then an action plan with targets. As a direct result children achieve effectively and their families are well supported. The playgroup draws upon external professional expertise effectively and practitioners employ positive and successful strategies to help the children to succeed.

### **Learning environment: Good**

There is an effective range of policies and procedures that actively support the children, and promote their health and wellbeing. The setting has effectively developed a well established ethos that is inclusive and values the diversity of the children's backgrounds. The setting actively develops tolerant attitudes through a range of different learning experiences and good day-to-day practice. Equal access to the curriculum is offered. All can share resources and take part in all activities.

There are sufficient, valued practitioners and volunteers who have knowledge of child development and the Foundation Phase requirements. They create a stimulating learning environment indoors and out making good use of space and know what they need to do to help the children to succeed. They have relevant qualifications and experience of working with children.

There are good opportunities for safe outdoor play and resources are used effectively. They are appropriate and sufficient to address the requirements of the Foundation Phase and successfully support the needs of the children in all areas of learning. All children are kept safe and the accommodation is used effectively, secure and well maintained to support the learning of the children. Indoors and outdoors are used well to develop play and learning and the local community including visits to the pond are used successfully to enhance the facilities at the setting and enrich the learning experiences of the children.

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

Practitioners and volunteers are well deployed and their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. There are effective links with parents to encourage them to support their children's learning and as a result all are working effectively for the benefit of the children. There are high expectations and the focus is clearly on the children making progress in their learning.

An effective training programme and appraisals ensure that practitioners are aware of what they need to do and can improve their knowledge and practice.

Good leadership contributes to the wellbeing and levels of progress and achievements of the children. Learning and teaching are to a good standard and there are good parental links to support the children. The setting is managed well and values, aims and objectives are effectively shared through day-to-day working practice. There is a positive ethos, clear direction and sense of purpose that

effectively promotes and sustains improvement and implementation of policies and initiatives is successful.

The leaders fully understand their roles and fulfil their responsibilities and are effectively informed about the performance of the setting by regular meetings, quality review and self evaluation. Relevant legislation and guidance are taken into account and leaders are involved in national and local priorities such as literacy, numeracy and healthy eating that impact positively on the standards achieved by the children.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The setting has made good progress since their previous Estyn inspection and has addressed all the recommendations effectively. Self-evaluation successfully identifies areas for improvement. Practitioners know the setting well and as a result strengths and areas for development are recognised and action is taken to make changes that ensure positive gains and successful improvements for the children. For example, the development of the outdoor area has enabled opportunities to improve learning outcomes and the wellbeing of the children. The children have more independence, choice and further skill development opportunities as well as extending the range of outdoor learning experiences.

Practitioners are engaged in professional development and attend courses that effectively raise standards and support the wellbeing of the children. All developments in the group have the children at the centre of the provision such as the introduction of more ICT equipment. All practitioners support each other highly effectively. They make successful changes to the activities, for example shortening the circle time and as a result this flexibility enables children to reach their full potential.

### **Partnership working: Good**

There is clear communication between parents and the setting and feedback is encouraged to ensure consistently good links between home and playgroup are maintained. Parents have a good level of information about the setting which enables them to be effectively involved in supporting the learning of their children and the work of the setting, for example via news letters. Parents are also kept well informed of their child's progress by speaking to the practitioners, an on going assessment record and by taking a turn on rota duty where they can see first hand the achievements of their children. As a result parents know what they can do to help their children to learn.

There is a good relationship with the school and a planned programme of visits ensures a good transition to support the children. There is an effective partnership with the local authority advisory teacher which impacts positively on the achievements of the children and enhances the work of the setting.

The setting has an effective partnership with other professionals to ensure a good level of support for any children with additional learning needs. Practitioners work well together as a team, and all are well briefed before the start of the session and effectively share information for the benefit of all the children. The playgroup is a

member of the Wales Pre-school Providers Association and partnership working ensures continued support for the children.

**Resource management: Good**

All practitioners including volunteers are very well deployed and manage a good range of resources successfully to motivate and encourage the children to learn. There are good opportunities for a range of learning experiences both indoors and in the outdoor environment to develop skills across all areas of learning. A good supply of quality resources is well matched to the stages of development of the children.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of budget matters and future resource needs are well planned for and prioritised to develop the provision and improve outcomes and the wellbeing of the children.

Practitioners undertake professional development, they attend courses and have good opportunities to learn from each other and share good practice.

The setting deploys its own resources well and funding is used effectively. Standards of achievement and wellbeing are good and as a result the setting provides good value for money.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

#### **Responses to parent questionnaires**

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

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

Mrs Anne Elizabeth Manning	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.