



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

A report on

**Trefonnen Early Years
Llandrindod Wells C in W school
Trefonnen Lane
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5EP**

Date of inspection: October 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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Publication date: 05/12/2017

Context

Ysgol Trefonnen Early Years is an English-medium setting that meets in a room at Ysgol Trefonnen, Llandrindod Wells in Powys local authority. The setting provides education and care for children between three and five years old in two-and-a-half hour sessions, five mornings a week. The setting is registered to admit up to 16 children per session. There are currently 16 children on roll, all of whom receive early years education that is funded by the local authority. The setting has identified a very few pupils as having additional learning needs.

English is the main language spoken at home by most children at the setting. A few speak English as an additional language.

Two qualified members of staff work at the setting, and the leader has been in post since March 2017.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in July 2017 and by Estyn in June 2012.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Most children show consistent progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills
- Nearly all children enjoy participating in activities at the setting and show motivation and interest in their learning
- Most have a good understanding of previous learning and daily routines
- Practitioners work together to ensure that tasks engage children's interest effectively
- Practitioners use effective questioning to develop children's thinking skills
- The setting supports children's health and wellbeing successfully
- The setting provides a stimulating, attractive and welcoming learning environment for children

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvements are good because:

- The leader and staff have high expectations of themselves and work well as a team
- The school's governing body manages the setting well and supports the leader effectively
- The setting has appropriate arrangements to identify its strengths and areas for improvement
- Practitioners work well with a range of partners including parents to improve children's standards and wellbeing
- The setting's close link with the school enriches children's learning experiences well

Recommendations

- R1 Improve planning so that it develops children's skills systematically and builds effectively on their previous learning
- R2 Ensure that learning experiences provide an appropriate challenge in order to meet the needs of the more able children
- R3 Make better use of visits and visitors to enhance children's learning experiences and help them learn about their local community
- R4 Ensure that the development plan addresses the priorities for improvement identified through the setting's self-evaluation process effectively

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that 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

During their time at the setting, most children make good progress in developing their skills and understanding in line with their age and ability. Their personal and social skills are developing well and many use thinking skills effectively, for example when trying to work out who will be chosen as 'helpwr y dydd' from clues provided by the practitioners.

Most children listen well in a range of situations and show a good level of interest in stories and in each other's news during the morning's 'together time'. Most children speak clearly and willingly engage in conversations with adults and their peers. They respond well to practitioners' questions and engage the listener successfully when discussing their work or activities, for example when describing what food they are preparing in the outdoor kitchen. They listen well to instructions and act on them effectively. They use a suitable range of vocabulary in their discussions including specific words learned during their activities such as when describing how some animals hibernate over winter.

Most children show an interest in books and focus well on stories that are read to them by practitioners. They recall facts and characters from familiar books and describe the main events successfully. Most make signs and symbols with their hands to match parts of the story, for example to illustrate the stars in the sky. This enables them to participate fully in the retelling of familiar stories and to recall key events in the correct order. A minority of children use the reading corner independently during the session to look through their favourite books. They hold the book correctly and move from page to page effectively.

Many children make marks successfully. They participate enthusiastically in writing experiences with many showing suitable control of chalk, pens, crayons and pencils. They draw shapes on the yard as well as copying shapes onto paper, for example when drawing an outline of a hedgehog and copying the shapes of leaves. A few are beginning to form letters successfully when they try to write their names.

Many children use their knowledge of number successfully to count up to twenty and a minority match numbers and objects to ten. For example, when they count the number of children present during registration. A minority add or subtract one number from numbers up to ten successfully. Many are beginning to recognise familiar 2D shapes and use 3D shapes successfully to build structures in the construction area, showing good awareness of similar shapes and sizes.

Many children are beginning to use technology appropriately when using electronic tablets and pretend phones in the role play corner. They use apps on tablets to develop and reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills suitably. Many use the electronic tablet to discuss pictures of themselves taking part in various activities; they hold the equipment correctly and use the touch screen appropriately.

Nearly all children enjoy listening to music and singing along to familiar nursery rhymes and songs, including Welsh songs and rhymes. Many are able to sing confidently and enthusiastically using a suitable range of Welsh words and vocabulary. They respond well to instructions in Welsh and repeat basic words and phrases, for example when describing the weather as part of their daily routine. However, very few use Welsh in informal situations at the setting.

Many develop suitable physical and fine motor skills through a range of activities, for example when using scissors to cut out the shape of a hedgehog as part of a craft activity.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children enjoy taking part in activities at the setting, show interest in their learning and are well motivated. They are happy to be at the setting and settle in well. Most concentrate for appropriate periods and engage in group and whole class activities with enthusiasm. They show a good understanding of previous learning and routines. Most cooperate well with their peers and share resources and ideas appropriately, for example when preparing a meal in the outdoor kitchen. Nearly all listen carefully to instructions and many take on responsibilities effectively, for example when helping to prepare for snack time and or as 'helpwr y dydd'.

Most children demonstrate good social skills and relate well to adults and visitors at the setting. They are polite to one and other and are developing a worthwhile understanding of helping each other during activities and when tidying up. Most children show good independent learning skills and are eager to succeed, for example when matching counters with numbers to 10. Many children develop their self-help skills appropriately, for example when they put their coats and boots on for the 'muddy walk'.

Nearly all understand the importance of personal hygiene and make sure that they wash their hands before snack time and brush their teeth afterwards. They all have a suitable understanding of what is healthy to eat and drink and are happy to drink water and milk as well as eating fruit during snack time.

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

Practitioners work well together to plan a suitable range of activities that meet the needs of most children and the foundation phase curriculum purposefully. They ensure that tasks engage children's interest well and capture their imagination. However, they do not always plan well enough to meet the needs of all children effectively, including more able children. Practitioners plan weekly to provide a range of suitable activities in all areas of learning, both indoors and outside. For example, children enjoy sorting different coloured autumn leaves outside and drawing the shapes of the leaves on the playground. In general, practitioners ensure a good balance between adult led tasks and opportunities for children to choose what and where they want to play and learn. Practitioners plan appropriately to develop children's thinking and physical skills using both the outdoor area and the school hall and yard suitably. Practitioners review their plans regularly to record what children

have enjoyed doing. However, they do not evaluate their weekly plans carefully enough to make sure that all children build on their knowledge and skills systematically over time, including more able children.

In general, planning enables most children to make sound progress in their numeracy and literacy skills. There is a strong emphasis on developing their oral and listening skills from a range of activities including listening to stories and singing familiar songs and nursery rhymes. This includes valuable opportunities for children to learn to understand Welsh instructions and to sing Welsh songs and rhymes. However, practitioners do not always plan sufficiently well to develop children's Welsh oracy systematically and to encourage them to use simple phrases during activities.

Practitioners plan appropriate opportunities for children to practise ICT skills, such as when they use programmable toys, electronic tablets and a compact disk player. Children use applications on the electronic tablets suitably to develop their literacy and numeracy skills and to discuss photographs of activities with their peers and adults.

Children are given appropriate opportunities to learn about Welsh culture, traditions and celebrations. For example, they celebrate St David's Day by helping to cook Welsh cakes and by learning about the traditional costume and flag. They are also beginning to learn about the importance of recycling through suitable activities like taking plastic bottles to the recycling point and recycling food waste. Practitioners provide appropriate learning experiences for children to learn about people from different cultural backgrounds, for example by learning about the Chinese New Year and Diwali. However, the setting does not make sufficient use of visits or visitors to enrich children's learning experiences and to teach them about people's roles within their local community.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a sound understanding of the principles of the foundation phase and child development. They work together effectively to provide a welcoming and stimulating learning environment for the children. The strong working relationship between children and practitioners contributes well to creating an ethos of co-operation and mutual respect. Practitioners are sensitive to children's needs and encourage them to persevere and to try their best. They praise children for their efforts regularly and manage behaviour sensibly and sensitively. They question the children effectively during activities in order to develop their thinking skills as well as their literacy and numeracy skills purposefully. In general, practitioners have high expectations for most children and challenge them appropriately. However, they do not always take advantage of opportunities to challenge more able children sufficiently so that they build effectively on previous learning and make regular progress.

All practitioners are good language models and speak clearly, using appropriate language. They model the Welsh language appropriately and encourage children to practice their language skills by singing nursery rhymes and using familiar sentences, for example when describing the weather.

The setting has suitable arrangements for assessing children's progress. Practitioners use the foundation phase profile well to assess children's starting points. They record observations of children's progress methodically and comprehensively in order to track their progress and provide beneficial feedback to parents. Practitioners use this information appropriately in order to provide suitable support for groups and individuals and to plan general next steps in their learning. However, they do not always use all the information they have well enough in their planning to make sure that all children make systematic progress.

The setting has established sound procedures for informing parents and carers about their child's progress and how to support them in their learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting supports children's health and wellbeing effectively. Practitioners promote the importance of eating healthily well through activities such as snack time. Children also develop their self-confidence and social skills successfully by taking responsibility for preparing the fruit and co-operating with others to serve the snack and drink. This also contributes beneficially towards developing children's speaking and listening skills through conversing with each other and adults informally. The well-established dental hygiene and hand washing routines help children to learn good habits for healthy living and to practise their self-help skills regularly. The setting provides appropriate opportunities to promote children's spiritual and moral development, for example by encouraging children to discuss feelings during registration and by sharing stories that help them learn about values such as honesty and respect for others. .

The setting provides regular opportunities for children to exercise by making good use of its outdoor area as well as the school's extensive indoor and outdoor facilities. Practitioners use a range of strategies to promote good behaviour. They praise positive behaviour and attitudes to learning, whilst discouraging unacceptable behaviour sensitively and firmly.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Practitioners ensure that children are transferred safely to the care of their parents or carers.

The setting has robust processes to support children with additional learning needs. Practitioners identify additional needs appropriately and work well with specialist services to provide effective individual education and behaviour plans. They communicate appropriately with parents, follow plans carefully and monitor children's progress well.

Learning environment: Good

Ysgol Trefonnen Early Years provides a stimulating, attractive and welcoming learning environment for children. Children settle in well at the setting each day and enjoy the company of their peers and the practitioners. The purpose built community building enables the setting to make full use of all the school's facilities as well as providing easy access to a range of on-site agencies, including health workers. It also provides opportunities for children to attend a range of activities with reception

class pupils from the school as well as allowing teachers to visit the setting on a regular basis. This helps children settle into the school quickly when they transfer from the setting. Practitioners work well together to ensure an inclusive ethos in which all children are respected and are treated fairly.

The setting is safe and clean. Colourful and attractive displays celebrate children's work and successes effectively. There is a stimulating environment both indoors and outdoors, which enhances learning experiences well. A good supply of resources and purposeful learning areas provide rich opportunities for children to investigate and learn for themselves.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for ensuring children's happiness and the best possible care and education for them in a welcoming and homely environment. The leader and practitioners work well with the school's headteacher and the local authority's link teacher to ensure that the setting provides a purposeful environment to develop children's learning. Practitioners have high expectations of themselves and work well as a team to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively.

The setting has appropriate performance management procedures that support practitioners well. Leaders monitor standards of teaching as part of the annual appraisal process and provide useful feedback as well as identifying individual training needs. Practitioners take advantage of suitable training opportunities in addition to attending useful meetings with other settings as part of their professional development. These include training and guidance to support practitioners in beginning to deliver a curriculum for older children following the recent changes to the admissions policy.

The setting is managed by the school's governing body, which supports the leader well. The headteacher and governors work closely with the setting leader to ensure that policies are up-to-date and to help make important decisions about funding and provision. The setting considers local and national priorities well, including developing children's literacy and numeracy skills and promoting healthy living.

Improving quality: Adequate

The setting has appropriate arrangements to identify its strengths and areas for improvement. These include a suitable range of activities to monitor children's standards and the quality of provision and leadership. Practitioners gather the views of parents appropriately through questionnaires and use information from partners' monitoring reports suitably. They consult the children appropriately by asking questions sensitively.

The headteacher, who acts as the responsible person for the setting, works well with the leader and the local authority link teacher to evaluate the provision and standards. As a result, the self-evaluation report provides a generally accurate, evaluative and honest analysis of the setting's work. It identifies appropriate areas for improvement, which include improving children's literacy and numeracy skills.

However, these are not included in the setting's current development plan. As a result, the current targets for improvement do not match the setting's needs well enough to help them move forward effectively. The setting has not addressed all of the recommendations from the previous inspection in full.

Partnership working: Good

The setting works well with a range of partners to improve children's standards and wellbeing. The close link with Ysgol Trefonnen enriches children's learning experiences well. For example, practitioners make good use of the outdoor areas, the school hall and the reception classroom to promote children's wellbeing and fitness effectively. The partnership also helps prepare children well for the next step in their education.

Practitioners work effectively with the local authority's link teacher and the headteacher. They act suitably on their advice and guidance to improve provision and children's outcomes. They also work well with a range of other external agencies and partners, which contributes successfully to ensuring the health and wellbeing of the children.

Practitioners ensure that parents and carers have effective opportunities to raise any concerns at an early stage. They inform parents about the setting's work and events regularly in order for them to support their children at home. Parents have meaningful opportunities to give their honest opinion of the quality of the provision through questionnaires. They value the practitioners' commitment and the strong working relationships they build with the children.

In general, the setting does not use the resources available within the local community effectively enough to enrich children's experiences. As a result, children do not learn about the roles of the people within the local area, for example the role of the emergency services in keeping them safe.

Resource management: Good

The setting has a sufficient number of practitioners with appropriate qualifications and relevant experience of working with young children. Practitioners undertake training whenever it is appropriate but opportunities to visit good practice in other settings is limited. The setting has formal procedures for managing staff's performance and supporting their development.

The setting manages resources effectively, which supports learning well. It has a good range of learning equipment, which practitioners use effectively to meet children's needs and enhance their learning experiences. For example, the setting has recently bought a tablet computer with proceeds from a fundraising event to help children develop their ICT skills successfully. The strong partnership with Ysgol Trefonnen ensures that the setting takes full advantage of its resources to benefit the children. Members of the governing body who manage the setting have a sound understanding of the financial situation and manage expenditure carefully. The setting ensures that the funding available is used effectively to improve children's standards and wellbeing. Considering pupils' outcomes, and the quality of the provision, the setting provides good value for money

Appendix 1

The reporting inspector

Kevin Davies	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 three to seven 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 that 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)	<p>This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.</p>

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation 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