



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

**Report following monitoring  
Level of follow-up: Estyn monitoring**

**St Asaph Community Playgroup  
The Canteen  
St Asaph Infant School  
Upper Denbigh Rd  
St Asaph  
LL17 0RL**

**Date of visit: June 2018**

**by**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and  
Training in Wales**

**© Crown Copyright 2018: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.**

## **Outcome of monitoring**

St Asaph Community Playgroup is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in March 2017.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is increasing the level of follow-up activity.

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the setting in about three months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

## **Progress since the last inspection**

### **Recommendation 1: Plan to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills progressively across all areas of learning**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

In their interactions with the children, practitioners develop children's communication and listening skills well. For example, they encourage children to give extended answers when they talk about where they have been on holiday. There are suitable opportunities for children to look at books in the book corner, and to practise making marks such as in the graphic area. There is a useful focus on developing children's numeracy skills in the learning environment. This includes number lines and pictures of shapes on the walls. Practitioners help children to understand and use mathematical language naturally during their play when they encourage them to compare sizes and heights. However, planning to develop their skills progressively and across all areas of learning is less well developed.

Practitioners use the local authority format appropriately to prepare weekly plans. These provide suitable opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills across different areas of learning regularly, such as making short and long worms in the playdough. However, practitioners do not link these activities to skills introduced in focus tasks, and this limits children's opportunities to practise and extend their skills systematically. In general, there are fewer planned opportunities for children to develop and extend their literacy skills independently across the areas of learning.

Practitioners plan three adult-directed tasks each week. These always include a literacy and numeracy focus. They select learning objectives from the foundation phase framework, and this ensures that they cover a range of literacy and numeracy skills appropriately over time. However, they do not take children's individual learning needs into account well enough when they plan to make sure that they build on their learning progressively. Overall, practitioners have not considered different elements of children's skills development well enough and so planning to develop children's reading and writing skills is inconsistent.

### **Recommendation 2: Plan regular opportunities to develop children's information and communication technology skills systematically**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The setting provides a suitable range of ICT resources in the continuous provision. These include a tablet computer, remote control cars and a CD player. Practitioners identify regular opportunities for children to use the ICT equipment for different purposes in the enhanced provision as part of their weekly planning. For example, they encourage children to direct a remote control car towards different numbers laid out on the floor, or to take photographs with the tablet computer. As a result, children become more familiar with the resources and develop their confidence in using them. However, practitioners do not plan specific opportunities to develop children's ICT skills systematically, such as during adult-led focus tasks. As a result, children do not develop their skills progressively in the setting.

**Recommendation 3: Improve the setting's use of assessment to evaluate children's attainment and measure their progress accurately to inform their next steps in learning**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

When children start their early education at the setting, practitioners observe and record useful information to establish their starting point. They transfer relevant information to children's individual assessment booklets, to begin to show the progress they make over time in the different areas of learning. However, they do not use this information effectively enough as a starting point in their planning.

Practitioners' assessments are becoming less descriptive and focus more effectively on children's skills development and attainment across the areas of learning. They keep a suitable record of children's achievements on sticky notes in the assessment booklets. This is beginning to develop a picture of how well children progress during their time in the setting. Practitioners talk knowledgeably with each other about what children can do. They are beginning to think about identifying next steps for the children and how they can use these to inform their planning. However, this is still at a very early stage of development.

**Recommendation 4: Strengthen the role of the management committee to fulfil their responsibilities as an effective critical friend**

Limited progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the setting has not had a fully functioning management committee. The treasurer continues to support the setting well with financial matters and there have been useful fundraising activities. However, the committee has not been in a position to develop its role as critical friend to the setting. Very recently, staff from the school where the setting is based have joined the committee and this is beginning to strengthen its ability to provide meaningful support. However, these are very recent developments and it is too soon to see any impact, or to judge how well embedded they are.

**Recommendation 5: Develop rigorous self-evaluation procedures that focus clearly on teaching and learning to identify the setting's strengths and areas for development clearly**

### Limited progress in addressing the recommendation

The setting leader has collaborated appropriately with the local authority link teacher to produce a new self-evaluation document. She uses outcomes from the core inspection and from local authority monitoring to feed into this suitably. However, the setting has not made sufficient progress with developing its self-evaluation procedures to enable all setting staff to contribute confidently and knowledgeably to the process. It does not focus on evaluating the quality of teaching and learning to identify the setting's strengths and areas for development clearly enough. For example, the setting does not involve all practitioners in evaluating children's standards and the quality of the provision. Although it has consulted parents about their views in the past, this is not done consistently. Both strengths and areas for development identified in the self-evaluation document tend to be too general and rely too much on input from other agencies to support the setting in moving forward effectively. The setting follows the local authority's timeframe for self-evaluation appropriately, and has begun to monitor progress against its action plan regularly. However, it does not have an effective plan to ensure that it evaluates all areas of its work systematically.

### **Recommendation 6: Establish clear links between the self-evaluation document and the setting's development plan and ensure that all actions for improvement are monitored and evaluated effectively**

#### Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

There are clear links between the setting's development plan and the self-evaluation document. The plan includes suitable priorities for improvement that link appropriately with recommendations from the core inspection. However, a few of these are wideranging and have not been broken down well enough to allow the setting to address all aspects effectively. The setting leader has evaluated progress against all the priorities each term, enabling her to begin to assess how well the setting is moving forward, for example with using the foundation phase framework when they plan to ensure full coverage of the curriculum. However, this is at an early stage of development and is not yet having a strong impact on the setting's work. There are no clear success criteria in the plan to support the leader's evaluations. This limits her ability to assess progress effectively and to identify what the setting needs to do next to move forward. The setting tends to rely too heavily on external support to identify next steps, rather than assessing their progress confidently themselves.

### **Recommendations**

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the setting should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.