



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
Llansantffraid Ladybirds Nursery
Llansantffraid CiW Primary School
Church Lane
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Powys
SY22 6AE

Date of inspection: May 2011

by

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for

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



**INVESTORS | BUDDSODDWYR
IN PEOPLE | MEWN POBL**

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

Llansantffraid Ladybirds Nursery serves the rural village of Llansanffraid-ym-Mechain which is situated close to the Powys/Shropshire border. It is an English-medium setting that meets in Llansantffraid Church in Wales Primary School. The nursery opened in September 2009 and is a co-opted body of the school.

The children who attend come mainly from relatively advantaged backgrounds. Almost all children have English as their home language. None of the children speak Welsh at home. One child has English as an additional language. None of the children have additional learning needs.

The setting is open five mornings each week during school terms. It is registered for 16 children between two years old and the age of admission to school. At the time of the inspection there were 25 children on roll with nearly all the places filled. The local authority (LA) funds eleven children.

The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in February 2011. It is the setting's first inspection by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting is good because:

- nearly all children progress well and achieve good standards;
- they show high levels of confidence and self-esteem;
- learning experiences successfully engage children's interest;
- the promotion of wellbeing is very effective; and
- a welcoming, inclusive ethos ensures children are happy to learn.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the setting is skilfully led and managed and has a clear sense of purpose;
- a strong teamwork ethos supports well a developing culture of evaluation;
- since the setting opened there is evidence of sustained improvement;
- audits of provision identify appropriate areas for further development; and
- strategic planning is becoming formalised.

Recommendations

In order to improve further the setting needs to:

- develop planning to identify specific learning outcomes and match focused activities more closely to children's differing needs and abilities;
- establish strategies for staff development to promote good practice in teaching and using assessments within the setting;
- sharpen strategic planning and formalise plans of action to help secure the setting's goals.

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Nearly all children begin nursery with well developed skills for their age. They make good progress across the areas of learning as they acquire new knowledge and successfully enhance their skills. Nearly all are confident, enthusiastic learners who readily explore their surroundings, try out new experiences and enjoy the stimulus and challenge of varied activities.

All children apply their skills well to a wide range of structured play activities. Most have excellent communication skills. They listen attentively to instructions and use a wide vocabulary and simple sentences to express themselves. Most are inquisitive and eagerly initiate simple conversations and ask questions. Many children join in with songs enthusiastically and nearly all enjoy participating in imaginative role play. Most children handle books appropriately, enjoy listening to stories and show awareness that text and pictures convey the story. Most select their name before 'snack time' and more able children form letters and numbers when mark-making and write their names. Most children develop good skills in information and communications technology (ICT). They skillfully use the mouse to control programs and create pictures and begin to use buttons to operate the listening centre.

Children make good progress in the development of early mathematical skills. Nearly all count confidently to at least ten and many count objects accurately to at least five. They use mathematical language and skills correctly when sequencing objects and describing their position.

For their ages almost all children show very good levels of independence. They concentrate for sustained periods such as when finding animals in the 'jungle' and using different techniques to create pictures.

Children's progress in Welsh language is good. Most understand a range of everyday words and phrases. They count to five, name colours and understand simple instructions. A few use Welsh spontaneously in their play.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children confidently enter the setting, settle quickly into activities and show positive attitudes to the experiences provided. They are enthusiastic, well motivated and enjoy learning. Most make choices about how and what they learn within the setting and demonstrate good levels of independence, but their involvement in helping to plan and develop activities is underdeveloped.

In line with their age and stage of development nearly all children have an appropriate understanding of the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise. They are aware of the need to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Nearly all develop very good social skills, eat a range of healthy foods prepared for them and happily participate in energetic activities.

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All show appropriate respect and care for each other and respond very well to the excellent role models for relationships set by adults. This helps children to feel safe and secure and gives them confidence to ask for help if needed. Most co-operate well during play activities and small groups enthusiastically participate in structured games with adults. The children's behaviour is very good and nearly all show developing courtesy and increasing consideration for others. They take turns, share equipment, look after resources and develop responsibility by helping to tidy-up at the end of sessions.

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

The setting is successful in engaging children in a broad range of stimulating learning experiences. Planning is securely based on Foundation Phase Child Development Profile and Skills Framework and incorporates activities linked closely to the areas of learning. Practitioners work very well together to plan activities that engage and challenge many children to learn effectively. This planning helps to ensure appropriate balance across the different areas and builds well on children's knowledge and skills. There is good emphasis on promoting skills in literacy, numeracy and communication.

Topic plans and detailed weekly planning reflect a good understanding of the Foundation Phase Outcomes and provide a good basis to ensure the progressive development of children's skills. Practitioners show appropriate awareness of activities, but too few details of the expected learning outcomes and strategies to achieve them are recorded to guide them.

Over time practitioners plan many opportunities for children to solve problems, become independent, encounter new experiences and encourage them to think for themselves. They know the children very well and are beginning to tailor focused activities to children's needs and abilities. The learning experiences foster positive relationships, nurture respect and tolerance and promote awareness of other cultures, such as through celebrating festivals. Taken overall, there is an appropriate balance between indoor and outdoor activities. The use of visits and visitors to encourage wider awareness of the natural and man made world and to learn about sustainability, recycling and the impact we have on the environment is being developed. Use of the school grounds for 'Wellie Walks' and links with the church are good features in this regard.

Good provision is made to promote awareness of the culture and traditions of Wales and practitioners, who are all learners of Welsh, increasingly promote use of the language.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good. Practitioners are aware of the learning activities and have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase. They use a range of approaches to stimulate play and active learning experiences that the children clearly enjoy. Adults give children enough time to complete a task and

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develop their ideas. They intervene appropriately when needed. Practitioners encourage children to make choices and use questioning well to develop children's thinking skills. Teaching is most effective when practitioners challenge children to extend their learning and helpful oral feedback is given. The teaching of the setting leader often provides an exemplar. Weekly planning provides sound guidance for teaching, but details of the expected steps in learning for different groups of children are not always clearly defined.

The arrangements for the assessment of learning are developing well. Day-to-day observations are recorded and used well to praise children's achievements. The setting leader thoughtfully tailors procedures to match the needs of the setting and involves all practitioners. Day-to-day observations and the implementation of focused observations are used well to evaluate individual progress and form a good basis to plan children's next steps in learning. Practitioners make time before and after sessions to be available for parents or carers to discuss their child's progress. The setting also provides a detailed report of progress when children leave the setting.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Very good and effective arrangements are in place to ensure children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This provision contributes particularly well to children's personal development. It promotes a sense of curiosity about the world, fosters values such as honesty and fairness, promotes good behaviour and provides opportunities for children to engage in community and cultural activities.

There are effective induction and transition arrangements for children joining or leaving the setting. Links with the primary school are well developed.

Arrangements to provide children with personal and specialist support when required are well established, with the school and the relevant LA services. This includes arrangements to support and integrate children with identified additional learning needs. The provision to support more able children is sound, but opportunities to tailor provision to their particular needs are not fully developed.

The procedures to ensure the setting is safe and secure are effective. Appropriate risk assessments are implemented and practitioners and regular volunteers have valid CRB checks. The setting has an appropriate policy and procedures for child protection and safeguarding. Practitioners receive relevant training and understand their roles and responsibilities in this area.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a high quality warm, friendly and supportive environment for children. It strongly reflects the values of the school's Christian foundation and has both a distinctive and inclusive ethos. The excellent quality of relationships ensures children are safe from undue anxiety. Practitioners value children as individuals, promote awareness of diversity and foster sensitivity and understanding towards others. They successfully encourage positive behaviour and ensure equal access to all areas of provision. Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that any future children with disabilities do not suffer disadvantage.

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A range of good quality learning resources is available to promote all areas of learning. The accommodation is sufficient, but there are shortcomings due to its layout and shared use. The indoor and outdoor spaces are not interlinked, the location of toilets within the reception classroom is a constraint and space for storage is limited. Practitioners work hard to overcome these shortcomings and do so with commendable success.

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

The setting has a clear sense of purpose and vision for improvement. Its leader creates a very positive ethos where practitioners and children are valued and respected. The setting has clear policies and procedures that are implemented well. The governing body and headteacher are appropriately involved in determining the strategic direction of the setting.

The setting leader sets high expectations and is successful in ensuring practitioners have a good understanding of their roles. A strong culture of self-improvement and teamwork is established amongst practitioners. This is a strong feature that helps to develop and maintain the good work of the setting. Close liaison with the school's headteacher is particularly beneficial and the work of a link governor is strongly supportive.

The setting is very well led and managed and there are plans to formalise arrangements for staff appraisal. Practitioners respond positively to professional advice and support and readily embrace national and local priorities. In particular the provision incorporates the Foundation Phase principles well.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has effective processes to evaluate its strengths and areas for development. It regularly consults parents and carers about aspects of the provision. Practitioners listen to children's views and reflect together with leaders to identify issues for further improvement. The setting's self-evaluation report is a useful document that links appropriately with the goals identified in the setting's improvement plan. The annual audit of provision and monitoring by the headteacher are good features, but although there is strong evidence of improvements in the provision of activities, plans of action to secure further improvements in practice are not sufficiently formalised.

The partnership with the LA provides effective support and challenge. This has a positive impact in improving quality. Visits by an advisory teacher promote 'best practice' and encourages practitioners to reflect on how the setting is organised. Practitioners value the support they receive from external agencies. They are keen to respond to advice and guidance and benefit from attending training organised by the LA. The setting has links with other settings, but such networking to share good practice is at an early stage of development.

Partnership working: Good

Partnership working contributes well to children's progress and wellbeing. Practitioners maintain very positive relationships with parents and carers. A good quality prospectus, newsletters, the school website and the parents' notice board keep them up to date with important dates and information. In partnership with the school, initiatives such as 'lunch club' and 'stay and play' enhance provision well.

Partnership working between practitioners within the setting is purposeful and close links with the primary school ensure a smooth transition from nursery to school. The setting provides placements for students undertaking vocational courses, has close links with the church and is beginning to draw on resources and people from within the local community to enhance provision further.

Resource management: Good

The provision of qualified and experienced practitioners to meet the needs of children and the curriculum is good. They are well deployed and effective routines ensure that the good quality resources available are set up each day to provide an appropriate range of activities.

Regular use is made of the outdoor area, but opportunities to integrate indoor and outdoor activities, such as with more flexible routines and groupings are not fully developed.

There is careful management of the available funding and the governing body, in partnership with the LA, ensures careful oversight of income and expenditure. The setting provides good value for money because the use and organisation of resources impacts well on standards.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Seven questionnaires were received and all responses were positive. All respondents strongly agree they are well informed about their children's progress and most indicate high levels of satisfaction with the setting. They agree it is safe and well run and say their children quickly settle, make good progress, behave well and are well prepared for school. They also say teaching is good, practitioners are approachable and that they treat children fairly and with respect. Around two thirds of respondents were in strong agreement and one third in agreement that their children are encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise, they receive appropriate support, there is a good range of activities and indicate that they understand the setting's procedures for dealing with complaints. Five written comments were included with the questionnaires; in one case it was suggested the range of activities could be improved. Brief discussions with parents bringing children to the setting confirmed high levels of satisfaction with the provision.

Responses to discussions with children

Observations of the children showed that they settle happily in the setting. They have excellent relationships with their peers and with the adults. An inclusive ethos helps to ensure children feel safe and secure. This was particularly evident in children's confidence to initiate conversations, ask questions and make their needs known. All children demonstrate a strong sense of trust and know that members of staff provide them with effective care and guidance.

Appendix 2

Reporting inspector

Michael T. Ridout	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)

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.