



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

**Ty Du Playgroup
Old School Canteen
St John's Crescent
Rogerstone
Newport
NP10 9FL**

Date of inspection: January 2012

by

Mary Dyas

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:

| 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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About the setting

Tu Du Playgroup is an English medium setting which meets in a former school canteen in Rogerstone on the outskirts of Newport, Gwent. The playgroup is privately owned by the setting manager and the building is rented from the local authority.

The setting serves the community of Rogerstone and the surrounding area and the majority of children move on to Mount Pleasant Primary School. The children are considered to come mainly from advantaged homes and all children have English as their home language. The setting welcomes all children and makes good provision for those with additional learning needs. One three year old has recently been identified as having additional learning needs.

The setting is open from Monday to Friday from 9.30am until 12 noon for children aged from two years and three months to three years and from 12.15 until 3.00pm for nursery aged children. At the time of the inspection there were 15 nursery aged children on roll, 14 of whom were in receipt of funded educational provision. Six three-year-olds attending the morning session were also in receipt of funding.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in April 2011 and by Estyn in April 2006.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting is good because:

- Children enjoy their time in the playgroup and make good progress
- The playgroup provides a good range of stimulating activities which engage the children and support their learning
- Children are polite and well behaved in the setting. They understand the rules and routines of the group and play co-operatively together
- Relationships between children and adults in the playgroup are warm and caring

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- Practitioners are very committed to the playgroup and are keen to provide good quality education for the children in their care
- There is a strong sense of unity and co-operation between practitioners
- The self evaluation process is in place and there is evidence that targets in the action plan have been, and are continuing to be, addressed

Recommendations

The setting needs to:

R1 Ensure that observations of children's learning are clearly focussed and linked to Foundation Phase skills development

R2 Develop the use of, and planning for, the outdoor area to provide a range of activities which reflect those available indoors

R3 Develop practitioners' use of open and extended questioning in order to enhance children's thinking skills

R4 Consider more involvement with other professionals in the area and opportunities to visit and share ideas of good practice

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

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| Key Question 1: How good are outcomes? | Good |
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Standards: Good

All children, including those with additional learning needs, achieve well in relation to their starting point and make good progress in all areas of learning of the Foundation Stage. Almost all children develop a wide vocabulary and the majority speak in full sentences. All understand and follow instructions accurately, answer questions appropriately and speak to one another while at play. Almost all children join in enthusiastically with songs and rhymes and listen attentively to stories, showing their interest and understanding through relevant comments and questions.

All children make good progress with mark making and they experiment confidently with a range of instruments when doing this. Many children are trying to write their name unaided and a few can already do so successfully. Their mark making shows a good awareness of patterns and some letters. Nearly all children use mathematical language correctly when comparing length, height or the size of things and all count objects accurately to at least five. All show an awareness of the everyday use of IT when engaging in role play. Many use the computer with confidence and control a mouse accurately to select objects on a screen.

Many children engage imaginatively in role play and all enjoy singing and listening to music and respond creatively with their bodies. All children develop good physical skills and thoroughly enjoy their daily physical sessions. All children are developing their level of independence and self-confidence and many concentrate for extended periods. All develop a good vocabulary and simple patterns in the Welsh language. They answer the register in Welsh and understand more than they speak. Nearly all achieve good standards for their stage of development.

Wellbeing: Good

All children are very happy in the playgroup and enjoy their experiences. The warm relationships they have with their practitioners enable them to feel safe, happy and confident and they return the affection and respect they receive from them. All have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and know that good food and exercise are important to make them healthy. They know that milk makes their teeth and bones strong. All children go to the toilet unaided and wash their hands afterwards and also before snack.

All children develop a positive attitude towards learning which they demonstrate by taking an active and enthusiastic part in their learning experiences. Almost all children behave well during the sessions. They know the routines well and anticipate what is going to happen next. Nearly all are aware of the needs and feelings of other children and adults and show concern for them. They make friendships in the setting and they are clearly very fond of one another.

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

The setting manager has been mainly responsible for the planning and assessment of the children in her care. She works closely with the other practitioners who are now encouraged to take a more positive role. Planning is firmly based on the Foundation Phase learning outcomes and occasionally responds to the immediate interests of the children. A good range of learning experiences is planned and overall there is good provision for the development of children's literacy, mathematical knowledge and skills in ICT. Although there is no formal planning for differentiated activities to meet the needs of individual children, this is carried out informally as staff know the children very well and respond to their individual needs and abilities.

Through their daily play together, all children develop strong relationships with one another and with the adults who care for them and demonstrate respect and tolerance towards each other. Children celebrate the Welsh culture in a range of ways when they celebrate St David's Day and are increasing their understanding of other peoples when they enjoy celebrating other festivals such as Divali and Chinese New Year..

Provision for Welsh is good. It is well used by adults throughout the session and children are consistently encouraged to use the words and phrases they have learned. Children are learning about recycling and sustainability when they recycle plastic and foil and share some of their uneaten lunch with George the tortoise.

Teaching: Adequate

Practitioners have a sound understanding of the Foundation Phase and are experienced in working with young children. They have a good understanding of children's development and provide appropriate activities for the level of development of individual children. The use of open and extended questioning to challenge children to think about their learning is underdeveloped. There is a good mix of planned activities and opportunities for children to choose their own activities.

Observation and assessment of children's learning is still in the early stages of development. Practitioners know the children well and are beginning to support this with information from observations to inform the completion of the local authority's assessment document. Informal links with parents and carers are strong and there are good opportunities for the exchange of information when they bring and collect their children. Meetings with parents and carers are held during the summer term to discuss their child's progress before they move on to the next stage in their learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The care, support and guidance of the children in the playgroup is a strength. The setting provides a warm and welcoming environment for all children and staff provide good role models which encourage children to treat one another with kindness and respect. Transition into the group is smooth because many children have previously attended the morning sessions and are familiar with the staff and the routines of the setting.

The provision made for children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good

Practitioners have good experience of working with outside agencies and following individual play plans to support children with additional learning needs.

The setting has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding. All understand their roles and responsibilities. The setting has a good range of policies to ensure children's safety during sessions.

Learning environment: Good

Although the approach to, and the exterior of, the building is not attractive, indoors the playgroup presents an attractive and welcoming environment. The two rooms have a good variety of displays of children's work which are relevant to the current topic and all children have access to all areas of provision. Use of the securely fenced outdoor area is underdeveloped and does not fully support the ethos of the Foundation Phase.

There are sufficient trained practitioners with an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase to ensure all children's needs are met. All practitioners are keen to improve their own knowledge and attend regular training. Good resources are available and these are used appropriately to develop the children's skills and understanding.

Until recently there have been few opportunities for children to widen their experience of the world around them through visits to and visits from the local community. The setting has identified this as a target for improvement.

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

The setting is owned and managed entirely by the manager. She understands her role as a leader and is now sharing some of the planning and evaluating of children's progress with other staff members. All practitioners are fully committed to ensuring the best possible provision. The manager and her staff have created a very positive ethos and the children are well supported and valued for themselves as individuals. National and local priorities such as the Foundation Phase are met.

Appraisal procedures are in place. The setting is a small and close community where practitioners work well together towards shared goals and much information is shared informally.

Improving quality: Adequate

Self evaluation in the setting is developing and practitioners know their setting. Formal self-evaluation is still in its early stages but there is a positive culture of informal reflection on practice. The recently produced self-evaluation document is a realistic one which identifies many of the setting's strengths and appropriate targets for improvement and a start has been made on meeting the targets in the action plan. There is also evidence that targets which have been more informally identified have been achieved; for example the good development of provision for mark making in the setting.

Evaluation of improvements in terms of children's progress is still at an early stage of development. Practitioners have been working at the setting for a number of years and would benefit from meeting with other professionals in order to share good practice.

Partnership working: Good

Results from the parents' questionnaires show that parents are very satisfied with the care and the learning experiences provided for their children. Practitioners speak to parents every day about what their child has been doing and celebrate success. Parents are kept informed through half termly newsletters and planning is displayed on a board in the collecting area.

The setting enjoys a very positive relationship with the Early Entitlement link teacher from the Local Authority who provides support and advice. There is clear evidence that this advice has been acted on to improve provision for the children

Resource management: Good

The setting is appropriately equipped with good quality resources which are used effectively to support the children's learning both indoors and outdoors. The setting is appropriately staffed by qualified and experienced practitioners who motivate the children well and help them to learn. Good use is made of the building to deliver the Foundation Phase curriculum. Use of the outdoors has been mainly limited to providing opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills.

The proprietor manages the finances well and spending is discussed with other practitioners to consider the impact it would have on children's learning. Overall the nursery gives good value for money.

Appendix 1

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifteen questionnaires were received from parents. All were very positive about the care and provision provided by the setting and there were no negative responses. Additional comments focus strongly on the care provided by the staff to ensure children are happy and enjoy their time at the playgroup.

Responses to discussions with children

Children say they enjoy their time in the setting. They have made friends and play well together. Most are confident when talking to a visitor and speak positively about the activities they enjoy. They are familiar with the rules and routines of the setting and can explain what is going to happen next.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

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| Mary Dyas | 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.

Glossary of terms

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| 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 | Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government. |
| Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) | 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 partnership's conditions of registration. |
| Foundation Phase | 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. |
| Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP) | Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012. |
| Local authority advisory teacher | These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds. |
| Mudiad Meithrin | 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. |

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| National Childminding Association (NCMA) | This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support. |
| National (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. |