

The inspection of educational provision for children before compulsory school age

Nursery report on Old School House Day Nursery

Registered Nursery Education Inspector: Alyson Roberts

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Report on the inspection of nursery settings in the non-maintained sector

Name of nursery: Old School House Day Nursery

**Address: Old School House,
Heol Eglwys,
Penyfai,
Bridgend.**

Post code: CF31 4LT

Telephone: 01656766767

Persons responsible for day-to-day management: Ms Jacqueline Roberts

Position: Manager

About the inspection

This inspection took place as part of a national programme of inspections of the educational provision for children before compulsory school age in Wales. It was commissioned by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales.

The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings so that providers can improve the quality of education offered and help children achieve their full potential. Another purpose is to inform parents and the public about the quality of nursery education. A copy of the inspection report must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the nursery and should be available on request to other people.

Inspectors have used a five point scale to record all judgements. Grade definitions are:

Grade 1	good with outstanding features
Grade 2	good features and no major shortcomings
Grade 3	good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5	many important shortcomings

1.0 Context of the setting

Context of the nursery setting

The Old School House Nursery, which opened in 2001, is housed in a converted school building in the village of Pen-y-fai, Bridgend. The building originates from 1899 and has been renovated to a high standard. The Nursery building is set in its own grounds, with a purpose built play area situated at the side of the building. The rear garden is covered by an all weather surface, which is securely fenced. The inside of the building has been thoughtfully designed to stimulate and educate the children in a safe environment. The Nursery includes a main play hall, a quiet room and a messy room, which are timetabled for the different age groups plus a small wooden outside classroom. The setting serves a wide area from within the town and the surrounding villages and the children move on to a number of different Primary Schools. Most children speak English as their first language; there is currently one child in attendance who has English as an additional language. The children come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The nursery caters for up to 46 children aged from 6 weeks to 8 years and is open for 52 weeks a year from 8a.m to 6p.m. There are currently 11 children on roll who are in receipt of government funding. These include 10 three year olds and 1 four year old. There were no four year olds present during the inspection. There are currently 13 full time and 2 part time Nursery nurses and a full and a part time cook employed and the ratio of staff to children is good. All staff are well qualified to a minimum standard of NVQ level 3. At present the Nursery has no children with a statement of Special Educational Needs but it offers appropriate provision and support for any individual identified with particular needs. There are policies in place for inclusion and equal opportunities. The Nursery was last inspected by Estyn in 2002 and by the Care Standards in Wales in September 2007. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Playgroup Association and is well supported by the link development officer. It is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association who provide appropriate information. The Nursery has established close links with the advisory teacher from the Local Education Authority who offers good advice and support.

2.0 Main findings of the report

2.1 The overall quality and standards of educational provision and whether or not the provision successfully promotes the goals for children's learning.

The quality and standards of educational provision, taken overall, are appropriate and successfully promote the desirable outcomes for children's learning.

2.2 Standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning

Six areas of learning	Grade for under-fives
Language, literacy and communication skills	2
Personal and social development	2
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Physical development	2
Creative development	2

2.3 Inspection judgement on the quality of education provided by the setting

Quality of education	Grade for under-fives
Quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
Quality of planning for children's learning	2
Quality of teaching	2
Quality of assessment and recording of children's progress, and reports for parents and carers	2
Quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community	1
The contribution made by the setting to children's well-being	2
Quality of the leadership and management of the setting	2
The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for action identified in the last inspection report	2

3.0 The standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning

Standards achieved by 3 – 4 year olds

3.1 Language, literacy and communication skills

Good features

Children make good progress with their language, literacy and communication skills and standards of achievement are good.

Children sing a variety of Nursery Rhymes and songs in English and in Welsh with good recall, pronunciation and energy. They readily choose a favourite story or a song. Their interest in books and stories is effectively promoted through the use of a local story teller and they enjoy actively participating in stories such as The Bear Hunt which they re-enacted on a visit to a local park. Children extend their speaking and listening skills through their work on a variety of topics. They remember a range of vocabulary related to vegetables in English and in Welsh. They ask questions and listen sensitively to the responses of other children. The children recount their own experiences and recall events in their families with humour and expression. They chat confidently about their visit to the shop and the church. They can identify and explain events illustrated in pictures and use appropriate language in group discussions and when involved in their play. Most children are beginning to understand that written symbols have meaning and sound and some children write their names independently. They write their shopping lists and are beginning to emerge as writers. They use pencils confidently when playing in the shop and they use different implements to make marks including paint, pencils and chalk when working outside. They use the movements learnt in their write dance sessions to develop their writing skills.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

3.2 Personal and social development

Good features

Children make good progress with their personal and social skills and standards of achievement are good.

Children enter the setting happily and they know the routines well. They move around the rooms and the different activities with confidence. They have good relationships with other children and they respond to adult direction and cooperate when asked. The children are happy to share and take turns in their activities and show affection to their friends and to the adults. They work and play independently and they interact well with their friends when engaged in imaginary play. They know the importance of teamwork and often refer to it. The children concentrate very well for long periods, particularly in their cooking session. They take responsibility for putting on their shoes and coats and do so with increasing perseverance. They dress and undress independently when engaged in role-play. They respond well to adult requests or suggestions to change activities or groups and the good behaviour of the children is

a strong feature of the playgroup, particularly when they go on visits within the locality. Children sit quietly and patiently when asked to wait their turn when waiting for food and drinks. Children know the importance of personal hygiene and wash their hands when they have been to the toilet and before eating, with the minimum of fuss. The children looked after their pet rabbits well feeding them with the peelings from the kitchen. They are learning how to take care of their plants and their garden. They take responsibility for tidying up and are very helpful. Children understand a variety of Welsh phrases relating to likes and dislikes and respond appropriately when asked to select colours or to count in Welsh.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

3.3 Mathematical development

Good features

Children make good progress with their mathematical skills and standards of achievement are good overall.

The children know the names and the properties of flat shapes and use appropriate language to describe them. They name some shapes in Welsh. They recall a range of number songs and count by rote to 10 in Welsh and in English using the concept of more and less when counting the vegetables needed to make their soup. They match and sort their vegetables in accordance with their Welsh recipe and they use appropriate vocabulary related to size and shape when involved in the cooking activity. They recognise written numbers and use the number line to count.

Mathematical language is beginning to develop when playing in the sand and water and the children understand mathematical concepts such as full and empty. Children are developing a concept of money, which is reinforced when paying the coach driver for their trip to the Supermarket, and when paying for their purchases at the checkout till. They develop and consolidate these skills when involved in the role-play in the shop. They sort and match similar objects when playing games and when using a computer program. Children recreate simple patterns and sequence puzzles with developing skill. They are developing an understanding of positional language and use it when engaged in activities across a variety of areas of learning particularly when using the outside environment to position their bikes and cars.

Shortcomings

Children do not consistently count and match numbers to the symbols across a variety of activities.

3.4 Knowledge and understanding of the world

Good features.

Children demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the world. They make good progress in their skills, appropriate to their level of development.

Children are familiar with the routines of the session and show an understanding of the times of the day. They have a good understanding of the features of the different seasons and they talk about the weather on a daily basis. They understand the idea of things happening at different times of the day and know some days of the week in Welsh and in English and some months of the year. Children talk about their homes and where they live and they know about the different environments in countries around the world and recognise some of the flags. They know that they live in Wales and can describe some of the features. They post cards to their home address and they are beginning to describe different features of their houses. They link with a retired headteacher to talk about changes to the school and they understand some differences between present and past. They understand that changes happen in seasons and in nature and they know that foods change when they are cooked. They know about key roles of people in the community through visits from the police, the fire fighters and the lollipop man. The use of the community and the environment is a good feature of the playgroup and contributes widely to their awareness and understanding of the world through first hand experiences. They experiment with materials when making models and cards and develop the skills of cutting, folding and joining appropriately. They understand that changes happen in nature and in materials and enjoy experiences such as making cawl. The children are knowledgeable about healthy foods.

Shortcomings

Children's problem solving skills are under developed.

3.5 Physical development

Good features

Children make good progress with the development of their physical skills and standards of achievement are good overall.

Children are developing an awareness of their bodies and they move with increasing control and coordination. Children understand, appreciate and enjoy the difference between running, walking and jumping. They jump from side to side and in different directions. They climb under, over and through apparatus when being chased by the wolf from the story of The Three Little Pigs. Children peddle and push themselves around in cars and on trucks. They handle small tools and objects such as spreaders, paintbrushes and beads with increasing skill and dexterity. They show increasing control when involved in a variety of tabletop activities. Children identify and name parts of their body when singing action songs. They find suitable movements to portray actions in songs and they can imitate movements such as marching along.

Shortcomings

Children's skills in manoeuvring large equipment in order to develop their spatial awareness outside are underdeveloped.

3.6 Creative development**Good features**

Children make good progress with their creative skills and standards of achievement are good.

Children paint, print, cut and glue to produce a variety of creations, which they like to take home. They make some choices about colours and medium, for example, when making a Welsh Dragon and a daffodil for Saint David's Day, they select their own sequins and glitter to decorate their work. Children show great pleasure and pride in the finished product and they talk about their work. They experience and have opportunities to mix colours in a variety of situations, for example they create different autumnal shades. They print using fruit and leaves and other textures and explore a variety of mediums, such as pasta and clay, with confidence. Children enjoy role-play and they select from a good range of dressing up clothes encompassing some different cultures. Children have fun when exploring rhythm in music and they use their voices and a range of musical instruments to make different sounds in response to stories and songs. They understand loud and quiet sounds. Some children keep the beat when using musical instruments and accompany a variety of Welsh songs, including the National Anthem, with great gusto and enthusiasm.

Shortcomings

Children do not observe and appreciate the work of others.

4.0 The quality of educational provision

The quality of educational provision for 3-4 year-olds

4.1 The quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**Good features**

The quality of provision for children's spiritual development is good with outstanding features, and the quality of provision of moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

The playgroup has clear policies and procedures which outline its inclusiveness, its values and principles and promote respect for all. The Nursery has very effective links with the church and the children understand the need to give thanks for their food and they often offer prayers with the vicar with whom they have established a warm relationship.

Their understanding of the relevance of different stories from the Bible and how the principles and attitudes are transferred to modern day life is an outstanding feature. The children show gentle care and respect to the babies and younger children in the Nursery. Children respond well to staff who provide good guidance for appropriate behaviour and they work together towards shared outcomes, which are clearly understood by all. Opportunities to develop socially and morally are effective and impact very positively on the children's development. The children are kind and considerate to others and they share and cooperate in their play. They are guided gently but firmly and are developing an awareness of the need to help others less fortunate than themselves through raising money for Children in Need, Comic Relief and Barnados. Sensitive issues are integrated into circle time and topic work. Cultural awareness is promoted through the celebration of St. David's Day when the children dress in national costume and other festivals from different countries, as they occur during the year. Children are encouraged to know about links with other countries for example some children have grandparents from other countries and they find out about different traditions. Christmas carols and songs for different celebrations in English and Welsh are performed by the children in the church, which is used on a very regular basis. The children are confident performers and these social events are very well received by the members of the community.

Shortcomings

All staff do not use incidental Welsh consistently.

4.2 The quality of planning for children's learning

Good features

The quality of planning for children's learning is good overall. Planning is very detailed and makes appropriate reference to the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning and there is a good balance of activities offered across the six areas of learning. Staff work together to plan activities within the different topics to ensure that children have equal access in all areas to make appropriate progress towards the Desirable Outcomes. The long-term plans are in the format of schemes of work for each of the areas of learning. The programme of medium term planned work follows a half termly topic approach with weekly activities planned as rotations. Learning outcomes relate to resources and these are different for each topic, which helps to maintain good levels of interest and enthusiasm. Boys and girls are treated equally and the topics sensitively promote racial equality and respect for diversity. A topic such as Homes focuses on the culture of Wales for example. Weekly planning is evaluated and the staff discuss outcomes of activities informally as they prepare the following week's work. Planning includes the use of resources and they are effectively set up so that children can make some choices within structured activities and free play. Planned activities are modified to meet any specific needs and support is given sensitively and appropriately.

Shortcomings

There is no differentiation in the planning of activities to take account of the different levels of skills and stages of development of the children.

4.3 The quality of teaching

Good features

The quality of teaching is good overall.

The teaching staff are all qualified and experienced in Early Years development and the manager is a qualified teacher. Teaching sessions are based on a secure knowledge and understanding of the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning. The staff work well as a team under the direction of the manager. The children are organised into one group which moves to different areas for activities which are housed in different spaces. The group is well supported and the teaching promotes racial equality and respect for diversity. All staff have a good relationship with the children and they know them very well. The care, support and guidance given to all children is good and the adults set appropriate expectations to ensure that instructions are consistently followed through. There is an appropriate variety of resources which are of a good quality. The use of visits to the supermarket, the church and to many places in the local area positively reinforces the teaching. Questioning is stimulating and the staff offer lots of opportunities for the children to contribute to conversations and to effectively develop their language and skills across most of the areas of learning.

An appointed qualified teacher from the Local Education Authority visits the playgroup periodically to give advice and support. This, together with attendance at courses organised by the L.E.A is beginning to impact on the quality of teaching in the Nursery.

Shortcomings

The organisation of whole group sessions does not always promote maximum development.

The organisation of continuous provision is constrained by the timetabling of space and resources.

4.4 The quality of assessment and recording of children's progress and reports to parents and carers

Good features

The quality of assessment and recording of children's progress and reporting to parents and carers is good. Information gathered about what a child can do on entry to the Nursery is used to track the progress of the children through their time at the Nursery to their transition into school. Records of achievement are kept and summative reports are presented to parents at the end of the year. These are passed on to the local Primary School and the information provided feeds into the school's assessment system. All members of staff observe the development and progress of the children and information is shared informally during staff discussions. The key workers make evaluative notes of what the children in their group can do and keep annotated examples of work to exemplify coverage of all aspects of the Desirable Outcomes. The assessments are linked to each area of learning and are beginning to focus on individual skills.

Photographic evidence is collected as record of coverage of the different skills and activities and these are displayed for parents and children to view. Parents are provided with useful information regarding the Desirable Outcomes and they respond to questionnaires seeking their views on the quality of the communication regarding children's progress. Targets are shared with parents on an informal basis as parents discuss their children's development and needs on a daily basis or as appropriate.

Shortcomings

Systems are not fully established to use information evaluatively to plan further activities to meet specific developmental needs.

The collating of observation field notes is not fully refined.

4.5 The quality of relationships with parents, carers and the community

Good features

The quality of relationships with parents, carers and the community is good with outstanding features.

Parents and carers are provided with information brochures with specific sections relating to the educational provision. The Desirable Outcomes are referred to and examples of play activities are included to encourage parents to support and to reinforce their children's learning. A website gives further information. Parents are invited to a formal session when the manager explains the curriculum and how the Desirable Outcomes are planned for and taught. They support their children's learning by sending appropriate resources to assist in the delivery of the topic work and they enjoy participating in home school tasks. Parents have face-to-face discussions with staff on a regular basis to discuss any particular problems.

Questionnaire responses indicate that parents are very happy with their relationship with the setting and value the care of the staff. Parents' views are sought and their ideas are often used in the Nursery. Groups from the locality are very well used to support children's learning and the community links are an outstanding feature of the Nursery. The children use the local environment very well to contribute to their learning and many skills are effectively developed by going on visits. The regular use of the church to perform promotes the children's self confidence. They have a very good basic understanding of the importance of the church in the community and visit a variety of local amenities on a regular basis. The school has very strong links with the local school and thus the transition into school is effectively managed.

The manager is currently involved with other agencies within the community to develop another outside area for the Nursery to share with the Infant School. She shows outstanding commitment to raising the profile of the Nursery positively in the community which impacts on the provision for the children and on their progress.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings

4.6 The extent to which the setting contributes to children's wellbeing

Good features

The contribution made by the Nursery to children's well being is good. There are a range of policies in place that include well-documented procedures contributing to children's wellbeing. These are readily available for staff and parents and are reviewed annually. All staff clearly follow the policies throughout the daily routines in the Nursery. Risk assessments are carried out for the trips and visits and also for identified areas within the Playgroup. Procedures for reporting accidents to parents are firmly embedded in practice. The children are encouraged to reflect and to understand the effects of non-compliance with acceptable behaviour and the playgroup is very effective in promoting positive and safe behaviour. Activities are planned to help the children develop an understanding of relationships between feelings and actions and much emphasis is placed upon helping and caring for each other. The day begins with circle time, when the children use masks to denote their feelings and some children can talk about the reasons for different feelings. The children are open and receptive to their environment and to new activities, situations and people. They are happy and relaxed when engaged in activities and play. They know about the importance of healthy food and hygiene and they understand that medicine is taken to make them feel better.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

4.7 The quality of the leadership and management of the setting

Good features

The quality of the leadership and management of the setting is good. The manager of the Nursery has clear aims and values, which are shared and understood by all. She has specific responsibilities as do all of the staff and they work well together as a team. The manager carries out self-evaluation through self-reflection as she observes the practice in the Nursery and by analysing the responses of questionnaires to staff and parents. Following this process, an annual education plan is formulated and training and resource implications are considered. The manager organises staff development in line with the targets identified in her improvement plan. Areas for development are prioritised through discussions with the staff and appropriate training is given, either in house, or through courses organised by the Local Education Authority. The manager is developing a good relationship with the L.E.A. and the advisory teacher has helped to identify some targets for improvement. There are structured systems in place for evaluating teaching and learning. Lesson observations are carried out and feedback is systematically given, which impacts on improved quality of teaching. Resources are effectively managed and the accommodation is well maintained.

Resources are purchased to support developments identified in the education plan and fund raising events are often organised to support this. The Nursery is in receipt of grants from Children's Partnership 0-10 and these are used creatively.

Shortcomings

A systematic approach to the evaluation of all aspects of the Nursery is not fully established.

4.8 The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for inspection identified in the last inspection report

The setting has made good progress overall in implementing the key issues from the last inspection.

Recommendations

The setting needs to:

refine systems for assessment and self-evaluation that can be used to raise standards and quality of provision.

plan and organise sessions to include some differentiated activities appropriate to the level of development of the children and to include more continuous provision to enable the children to practice and consolidate their skills.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days, or 45 working days if the plan needs to be translated to or from Welsh, showing how the issues identified above will be addressed. The action plan must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the setting. A copy of the action plan must be sent to Estyn. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection.