



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

**A report on**

**Little Puffins Playgroup  
Ysgol Gynradd Beaumaris  
Ynys Mon  
LL58 8HL**

**Date of inspection: March 2018**

**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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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## Context

Little Puffins is an English medium setting in the Isle of Anglesey local authority. It is based in the same building as the primary school in Beaumaris and is registered for up to 24 children. The setting is open from Monday to Thursday during school terms when it offers morning or afternoon sessions. Children are also able to attend for the whole day.

There were 22 children on the register during the inspection. Four three-year-olds receive early years funding from the local authority. There are three full-time members of staff at the setting, including two joint leaders who have worked together since 2014.

Most children attending the setting come from the local area. Most have English as their home language and a very few come from homes where Welsh is spoken. A very few children are learning English as an additional language. The setting has identified that there are no children with additional learning needs attending currently.

The setting was last inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in June 2017 and by Estyn in October 2011.

## Summary

<b>The setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- Nearly all children make good progress in their learning from their starting points
- Nearly all children behave well and mix with others readily
- Most children develop their literacy, numeracy and Welsh language skills well
- Nearly all children make confident choices and spend appropriate lengths of time at their chosen activity
- Practitioners provide a good range of interesting and stimulating activities to engage and motivate the children
- Practitioners know the children well and support them effectively

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The process of self-evaluation is well established and effective
- The self-evaluation document reflects the current practice in the setting accurately and targets for improvement are realistic and manageable
- Staff work together well as a strong team
- The management committee provides purposeful support
- The budget is managed effectively

## **Recommendations**

R1 Improve children's information and communication and technology (ICT) skills

R2 Improve communication with parents about their children's progress

### **What happens next?**

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Standards: Good**

During their time in the setting, most children progress well in relation to their differing starting points and achieve good standards across the foundation phase areas of learning.

Nearly all children have competent speaking and listening skills. During daily routines, most listen attentively and respond appropriately. Many start simple conversations and readily ask for things, for example when playing outside in the mud kitchen. Nearly all join in confidently with a range of familiar songs and rhymes in both English and Welsh. Nearly all sit quietly to listen to stories and most show their interest and understanding through their level of engagement and comments on what is happening. A few children choose to read books during free play. They handle them correctly, turning pages carefully and occasionally sharing a favourite picture with another child. Many recognise their names when they sit down for their morning snack. Nearly all children develop their mark making skills well. For example, they draw on the ground outside with large sticks of chalk and have fun making patterns in coloured 'gloop'.

Most children are beginning to develop useful number skills. They count and use numbers within their play effectively, for example, when they count jewels to put on their treasure chest. They use correct mathematical language such as when they talk about bottles being full or empty in the water tray. Most children recognise a range of simple shapes including triangle and star. They are beginning to identify numerals accurately, for example, when they make telephone calls in the home corner using a simple directory.

Many children use a programmable toy appropriately with adult support and a minority handle a mouse competently to play simple games on the setting's computer. However, overall children's ICT skills are underdeveloped.

Nearly all children are beginning to develop a sound understanding of the Welsh language. They understand and respond well to basic instructions given by practitioners. Nearly all children join in enthusiastically with songs and counting rhymes and most count in Welsh with accuracy and confidence.

Most children demonstrate good physical skills. They negotiate the steps to the outside space confidently and walk skilfully along a bench in the hall. Many children are beginning to develop effective thinking and problem solving skills, for example when they work out how to extract a ring from a frozen hand as part of their project on pirates.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all children arrive at the setting very happily. They are eager to see the practitioners and talk excitedly about things they have been doing at home. Nearly

all children are familiar with the daily routines and behave well. In particular, they sit attentively on chairs for circle time and most leave an area tidy when they have finished playing there. For example, they put instruments back in the box and books back on the shelf. They share equipment freely and interact with other children well. They discuss what they make out of dough with each other and admire their different creations. Most children move about the setting confidently and spend useful amounts of time at the activities they choose.

Most children develop their self-help skills well. They wash their hands before snack time and help to give out bowls and cups. Nearly all eat cereal and milk without spilling and peel a whole banana successfully. Most make good efforts to put on their own coats before going outside.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

Practitioners plan a wide range of stimulating and imaginative learning experiences, based on themes that reflect the children's interests effectively. These motivate and engage the children well and help them progress effectively towards meeting foundation phase outcomes.

Practitioners plan good opportunities to develop children's communication, numeracy and physical skills. For example, they encourage children to count out how many jewels they will use to decorate a treasure chest. There are effective opportunities for children to practise their early writing skills across the areas of learning, such as using the notebook in the home corner. Practitioners promote children's speaking and listening skills effectively by encouraging them to talk about their learning experiences. However, overall, there are too few opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills systematically.

Practitioners use the outdoors well to develop the full range of children's skills. For example, children enjoy planting and eating vegetables over the course of the year and there are plenty of worthwhile opportunities for them to pedal bikes.

Provision for promoting children's Welsh language skills is developing well. Children have worthwhile opportunities to hear and respond to spoken Welsh throughout the setting. Practitioners encourage children to join in with Welsh songs and they learn about Welsh culture appropriately by celebrating St. David's Day and visiting the town to see attractions such as the castle.

### **Teaching: Good**

All practitioners have a good knowledge and understanding of foundation phase practice. They develop strong relationships with the children and engage with them fully throughout the session. They know the children well and manage behaviour successfully through well-established routines and regular use of positive praise. There is a suitable balance between practitioner led and child directed play. Practitioners provide a good range of first-hand learning experiences that engage the children well.

All practitioners model language effectively to develop and extend children's vocabulary, knowledge and understanding. They have high expectations and know when to intervene and when to stand back to allow children to explore and experiment for themselves.

Practitioners carry out regular and useful observations of the children to inform assessment records and to identify next steps in learning. They discuss children's progress informally and this helps to plan future activities. At the end of the year, practitioners invite parents to discuss their child's achievements and to pass on a 'Treasure Book' which chronicles the children's time in the setting. Daily interactions provide parents with informal feedback about their child's involvement in activities. However, there are no arrangements for parents to know how well their child is progressing in the setting or how they could help them to improve.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The setting provides a nurturing environment where children feel safe, settled and happy. All practitioners foster values such as honesty, respect and fairness skilfully and they help children to distinguish right from wrong effectively.

The setting has effective arrangements to support children's healthy eating and drinking. The daily morning snack follows a healthy and varied menu with a choice of milk or water to drink. Practitioners gently encourage children to try unfamiliar foods. There are worthwhile, planned opportunities to promote children's physical wellbeing. For example, the setting provides daily access to a range of physical equipment and activities.

The setting provides worthwhile opportunities for children's spiritual, moral and cultural development. For example, activities around Chinese New Year enabled the children to begin to learn about foods and customs from a different culture. The setting promotes children's sense of awe and wonder meaningfully. For example, they provide opportunities for children to grow their own potatoes which the school cook boiled and made into chips for them to eat.

Practitioners offer suitable experiences to develop children's understanding of sustainability and cultural development.

Although there are currently no children attending the setting with identified additional learning needs, the setting has effective processes to identify and support when needed.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The setting's ethos is warm and welcoming. Practitioners take account of the children's diverse backgrounds and act appropriately on the information. Practitioners ensure that children have equal access to the curriculum. They are good role models and encourage children to treat others with respect and kindness.



The indoor learning environment is set out with clearly designated areas of learning, and equipment is easily accessible to the children. The indoor accommodation and outdoor areas are secure and well maintained. Displays include recent examples of children's work and create an attractive and welcoming environment. In general, the setting provides plentiful resources that are of good quality and which practitioners use well to support planned learning activities. However, the setting's supply of resources to promote children's ICT skills is less well developed. The setting uses the outdoor area appropriately to support children's learning. In particular, they provide good quality resources to develop children's physical skills. Practitioners further enhance children's experiences through regular visits to the school grounds and the local community.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

Staff in the setting have worked together for many years and share a clear vision for improvement based on a thorough understanding of the needs of the setting. They work together successfully and share responsibilities well. They provide a happy and purposeful learning environment, where children are stimulated and eager to learn. All practitioners have clear areas of responsibility and fulfil their duties efficiently.

The setting leaders share information about the settings' work with the management committee appropriately during regular termly meetings. Committee members visit the setting regularly to encourage and advise the practitioners and support all fundraising activities.

The setting has well-established performance management procedures, which provide appropriate opportunities for practitioners to reflect on their practice.

The setting pays good attention to national and local priorities. For example, practitioners develop the concept of healthy living effectively through a clear focus on healthy eating, exercise and brushing teeth.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The setting makes good use of the local authority's self-evaluation guidance to reflect on its provision and practice. As a result, practitioners know the strengths of the setting and are able to identify areas for improvement successfully.

Current areas for development in the setting's development plan arise directly from the self-evaluation process and are relevant to the needs of the setting. This has already led to worthwhile improvements to the provision. For example, the addition of a 'mud kitchen' to the outdoor area has greatly increased children's opportunities for imaginative messy play while practising sharing and taking turns.

The setting consults parents and carers through an annual questionnaire and respond well to their suggestions. For example, practitioners improved communication with parents by setting up noticeboard in the waiting area to provide information such as the snack menu, a copy of the latest newsletter and dates for the term.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting has a strong partnership with parents and carers. Parents and carers value the quality of care and concern shown by practitioners towards their children highly. The setting keeps parents well informed about the activities that take place through a noticeboard, and regular newsletters.

Practitioners make effective use of support from the local authority advisory teacher to seek advice and to access training. They act on this advice to improve the provision for children in the setting. For example, following recent training, the setting has provided the children with an outdoor mud kitchen where children enjoy themselves while developing important physical, social and emotional skills.

The setting has a strong relationship with the school. Parents can pay for children attending the school's afternoon nursery class to attend the setting in the morning. This allows younger children to get to know children already attending the school. The headteacher visits the setting regularly. In addition, the school invites the setting to join them for events such as a Christmas dinner, St David's Day and sports day and allows the setting to use the school hall and equipment. All of these activities help younger children become familiar with the school and develop their confidence ready to move on to the next stage in their education.

Practitioners often take the children out into the community for walks. They visit the post office to buy stamps and post letters home, practise how to cross roads safely and investigate the woods to observe changes in the seasons.

### **Resource management: Good**

The setting is appropriately staffed to teach the foundation phase curriculum effectively. Practitioners work closely together as a strong team and deploy themselves appropriately during the sessions.

The management committee supports practitioners' professional development well by helping them access training provided by the local authority regularly. This leads to improvements in the provision that benefit the children, such as the recent addition of a mud kitchen to the outside area. Although there are no formal procedures to share and evaluate the impact of training, practitioners do so informally as part of their daily interactions.

The treasurer oversees the budget effectively together with one of the setting leaders. Practitioners consider all spending carefully to ensure efficient use of funds and discuss together the cost of any new equipment. This ensures that spending decisions are appropriate and in line with identified areas for improvement.

In view of the positive outcomes for children and interesting and purposeful learning experiences, the setting provides good value for money.

## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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"> <li>• personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li> <li>• language, literacy and communications skills</li> <li>• mathematical development</li> <li>• Welsh language development</li> <li>• knowledge and understanding of the world</li> <li>• physical development</li> <li>• creative development</li> </ul>
<b>CIW</b>	<p>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012</p>
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings that provide education for three and four-year-olds.</p>
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	<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>
<b>Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)</b>	<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>

<b>National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)</b>	This organisation aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
<b>Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)</b>	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education