



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

A report on

**Snuggles Day Nursery
Sunnymede
Rhyl Road
Denbigh
LL16 5TG**

Date of inspection: July 2016

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:

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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Publication date: 15/09/2016

Context

Snuggles Day Nursery is a privately owned English medium setting situated on the outskirts of the town of Denbigh, in Denbighshire local authority.

The setting is registered to provide sessional day-care for up to 82 children from three months to four years of age. It also provides after school and holiday care for children up to the age of eleven. At the time of the inspection, there were 18 funded three year old children attending the setting. Nearly all children speak English as their first language. The setting has identified that there are no children with additional learning needs attending currently.

The setting employs nineteen members of staff, three of whom work in the pre-school room. The setting is open for early education sessions four mornings per week from 9.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. and this inspection report refers to this provision only. The pre-school room leader was appointed in January 2016.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in November 2015 and Estyn last inspected it in February 2011.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Many children make good progress from their differing starting points and explore their surroundings and try out new experiences eagerly
- Most children speak clearly and are confident when talking to visitors about their learning
- Many children use appropriate mathematical language in spontaneous and structured play
- Nearly all children respond enthusiastically to Welsh words and phrases and use Welsh naturally in their play
- Practitioners work together well to provide a successful range of stimulating activities that engage most children
- The setting makes beneficial use of its immediate locality to support children's understanding of the world around them
- The setting is a happy and welcoming community, which places a high priority on children's wellbeing
- Practitioners make effective use of all the available space, both indoors and outdoors

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The proprietor, manager and pre-school room leader are well motivated and dedicated, and they share a clear vision for a happy and engaging learning environment
- Leaders pay good attention to local and national priorities and work hard to develop a stimulating outdoor learning environment and to promote healthy living successfully
- All practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- Practitioners reflect on the quality of the provision regularly to bring about worthwhile improvements
- The setting has a beneficial range of partnerships, which support children's learning and enrich their learning experiences
- Partnerships with parents are strong
- The setting plays a prominent part in the local community
- The setting makes effective use of staffing and resources to support teaching and learning across the Foundation Phase curriculum

Recommendations

- R1 Improve children's listening skills
- R2 Improve provision for the development of children's thinking skills
- R3 Develop effective behaviour management procedures to improve children's listening skills and engagement in learning
- R4 Improve the use of assessment to measure children's progress accurately and inform their next steps in learning clearly
- R5 Evaluate the impact of initiatives and training on standards of teaching and learning to ensure the best outcomes for children

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Many children make good progress from their differing starting points, and explore their surroundings and try out new experiences eagerly. Most children speak clearly and are confident when talking to visitors about their learning. Around half of the children have appropriate listening skills and listen carefully to each other and practitioners. However, around half do not listen well enough in large group situations and become restless and fidgety. This makes behaviour management difficult and disrupts the flow of learning in these sessions.

Many children show a keen interest in books and respond well to the content of the story, discussing what they think will happen next. In the story of the naughty monkey who thoughtlessly dropped fruit on the heads of other animals, many children enjoy predicting which animal the fruit would fall on next.

Many children experiment with mark making both indoors and outdoors readily. They enjoy using a variety of media such as pens, crayons, chalk and paint brushes. Many mark-make independently, for example when making a list of jungle animals in the jungle role play area or when making writing patterns with a paint brush. This supports their understanding of early letter formation well.

Many children are developing effective early numeracy skills. They use appropriate mathematical language in spontaneous and structured play. They discuss whether elephants, lions and monkeys are 'big' or 'small' and if snakes are 'long' or 'short', in the small world jungle area. Many children note the difference between 'full' and 'empty' when filling containers with water and confidently count and order objects to ten in English and Welsh.

Nearly all children respond enthusiastically to Welsh words and phrases and use Welsh naturally in their play with increasing regularity. Most children understand Welsh words colours and numbers up to ten, and use these frequently.

Many children develop their physical skills well and are able to select fruit at snack time using large tweezers with increasing control. They use outdoor equipment well to climb and balance, throw bean bags through hoops and pedal on bikes and scooters.

Many children use simple 'child friendly' computers and torches independently and understand that a button switches them on and off. Many use a simple programmable toy and are able to make it change direction. A few children are beginning to develop and apply their thinking skills well in a range of situations, such as when working out how quickly a ball will roll down different sized tubing. However, in general, opportunities for children to develop their thinking and problem solving skills are under developed.

Wellbeing: Good

Most children are keen to learn, have positive attitudes and readily discuss what they enjoy doing in the setting with visitors. Most enter the setting happily and are quick to settle into their routines. Many show a good awareness of the need for washing their hands before eating and after playing outside. Most children make independent choices confidently. Many remain busy and on task for appropriate periods of time when engaged in small group tasks or when playing by themselves. All children regularly discuss what they like about different topics and what they would like to find out. As a result, many are enthusiastic about their learning.

Many children help to tidy up willingly and standards of behaviour are generally good. However in larger group situations weaker listening skills have a negative impact on behaviour and around half the children become restless and disengage. Many children show good consideration for others, such as when sharing resources and when taking turns to pour their drink and select their fruit at snack time.

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

Practitioners work together purposefully as a team to provide a successful range of stimulating activities that engage most children well. They implement the Foundation Phase effectively and all areas of learning are represented appropriately. Both indoor and outdoor activities are well structured and child friendly themes, such as 'all about me' and 'a snowy day', provide an interesting context for learning. Recent changes in planning ensure that there is a stronger emphasis on planning for the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills, both indoors and outdoors. However, on occasions, planning for the development of children's thinking and listening skills is not always specific enough. Children's role in contributing ideas and suggestions for learning activities within topics is developing well. This flexible approach enables practitioners to respond to the changing interests of young children successfully.

Practitioners use the Welsh language well as part of daily routines. This supports children's use, understanding and enjoyment of Welsh highly effectively. Practitioners promote children's understanding of Welsh culture and heritage appropriately. The setting celebrates St. David's Day and displays children's Welsh art work in a local café. Planning to support children's understanding of other cultures is developing well. For example, children have good opportunities to celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year and listen to a range of stories from other cultures.

The setting makes beneficial use of its immediate locality to support children's understanding of the world around them. Visits to a local supermarket support children's understanding of healthy eating successfully. Trips to the library develop children's interest in reading, and nature walks around a local park and farm throughout the differing seasons develop their sense of awe and wonder in a worthwhile way.

Teaching: Adequate

Practitioners have strong and supportive working relationships with the children and have a good understanding of the importance of learning through play. As a result, children have worthwhile opportunities to follow their own interests and make independent choices. Practitioners work well together as a team and demonstrate a good understanding of when to intervene to help move a child's learning on and when to step back to support independence. The use of encouraging feedback and positive praise allows children to experiment and persevere for appropriate lengths of time and develops their willingness to share and take turns successfully.

Most practitioners use Welsh confidently as part of everyday routines. This raises the standard of children's Welsh oracy skills and contributes to their enjoyment of the language. Practitioners generally manage children's behaviour effectively, although whole group 'carpet time' tasks are too long. As a result, around half of the children do not listen well enough, become disengaged and disrupt the learning of others.

The setting's procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress are developing appropriately. However, practitioners do not always identify individual children's next steps in learning well enough. As a result, children that are more able are not always sufficiently challenged. The setting has recently strengthened these procedures to include more regular assessments, linking better to planned learning outcomes. This is beginning to support practitioners' understanding of how well individual children are progressing and to inform future planning more clearly.

Practitioners provide parents with useful short daily written and verbal updates about what their child has been doing. Information is available to them at any time through the setting's 'open door' policy. This encourages positive discussions about children's progress and wellbeing and is greatly appreciated by parents.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting is a happy and welcoming community, which places a high priority on children's wellbeing. All practitioners treat children fairly and value their opinions. Well-planned routines encourage children to eat and drink healthily and outdoor learning opportunities provide them with daily physical exercise.

Provision for children's moral, social, cultural and spiritual development is well planned. Practitioners encourage children to share and take turns happily and to say please and thank you appropriately. They support children's spiritual development in a meaningful way by reciting a prayer of thanks before lunch. There are useful opportunities for children to take responsibility for tidying up their environment and to re-cycle paper.

Practitioners place a strong emphasis on respect for each other and for property. This helps to develop children's understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour successfully. The setting promotes children's cultural awareness well. Children's art work is displayed prominently and the setting held an 'art gallery' event where parents could purchase their children's work. Children also made masks to take part in the local carnival parade.

At the time of the inspection, the setting identified that there were no children with additional learning needs in attendance. However, there are clear procedures to support children with additional learning needs and extra support and advice, if needed. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a welcoming and safe community, where all children have equal access to activities, and are valued highly and treated with respect. As a result, children feel confident and enjoy talking to each other, staff and visitors.

There is a sufficient range of good quality resources across most areas of learning and practitioners ensure that these match children's needs closely.

Practitioners make effective use of all the available space, both indoors and outdoors. There are clearly designated areas of learning and this enables children to access resources easily and fosters their independence well. Practitioners create a bright and stimulating learning environment that includes examples of the children's work, allowing them to see their work has value.

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

The proprietor, manager and pre-school room leader are well motivated and dedicated, and they share a clear vision for a happy and engaging learning environment that challenges and supports the individual needs of children. They work together effectively to bring about improvements and share responsibilities successfully. All practitioners have up-to-date job descriptions and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Leaders communicate the aims of the setting with all practitioners and parents well and demonstrate a good understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. They welcome external advice and training opportunities to help them achieve high standards and to improve provision. As a result, leaders have successfully developed children's Welsh language skills and the use of the outdoors to support children's early mark-making and physical skills, improving standards as a result.

In the short time since her appointment, the pre-school room leader has established high expectations leading to significant improvements. The reorganisation of the pre-school room provides more purposeful and engaging areas of learning and encourages children to be more independent. Recent changes to the setting's assessment procedures enable practitioners to track individual children's progress more carefully and have improved their ability to identify the most appropriate next steps in children's learning.

Leaders and managers understand the importance of staff appraisal in supporting practitioners' performance and in identifying their training needs appropriately.

Leaders use regular meetings to challenge underperformance and put steps in place to support a culture of improvement. They pay good attention to local and national priorities and work hard to develop a stimulating outdoor learning environment and to promote healthy living successfully.

Improving quality: Adequate

Although the self-evaluation process is relatively new to the leader, she is using it effectively to support practitioners in developing a greater consistency in behaviour management approaches, to monitor children's standards more closely and to improve provision. Practitioners reflect on the quality of the provision regularly, identify areas for development and work towards improving these purposefully. They have reorganised the learning environment to make it easier for children to make independent choices, and have developed a more flexible approach to planning to reflect children's interests and preferences more closely.

Practitioners and managers hold regular meetings and work together effectively on a daily basis to promote a better understanding of the setting's needs. However, current systems tend to focus on what practitioners do, and do not always focus well enough on the impact of any changes on outcomes for children. The setting listens to the views of children and parents carefully and acts appropriately on their suggestions. In response to parental feedback, the setting changed the format of its daily report to give more specific information about what their children have done well. In addition it provides helpful suggestions about how parents can support their children's learning at home.

There are suitable links between the setting's self-evaluation report and the targets in the current setting improvement plan. The plan includes a manageable number of priorities for improvement. However, it does not always provide enough detail to show how leaders will monitor and measure the impact of actions.

Leaders and managers are open to new ideas and are willing to experiment with different ways of working leading to regular improvements. They respond well to advice and support from the local authority, including using the local authority's planning and assessment systems, to plan more purposefully to develop a range of children's skills. This has improved the quality of children's learning experiences and their English and Welsh oracy and early mark-making skills successfully.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a beneficial range of partnerships, which support children's learning well and enrich their learning experiences. Partnerships with parents are particularly strong. They receive useful and relevant information via the setting's noticeboard, through daily personal contact and via the setting's social media page. As a result, parents feel well informed and knowledgeable about the setting's day-to-day work and appreciate the approachable 'open door' policy of the setting.

Valuable partnerships exist with local primary schools to promote a smooth transition for children from the setting. 'Family link workers' from the schools visit regularly. At the end of the summer term, they help to complete an informative 'in a nutshell'

report in conjunction with practitioners from the setting. This provides schools with useful information about what individual children like, what they do well and what they need support with. Visits to the school help children to settle quickly and confidently.

The setting plays a prominent part in the local community and visits various places around the town regularly. It holds a Christmas fayre on its premises and takes part in the annual Denbigh carnival parade. Visits to a local park, farm, supermarket and library further support and enhance the setting's topic work successfully.

There is a worthwhile partnership with the local authority advisory teacher and practitioners welcome this advice and support. Practitioners benefit from this in developing and improving the quality of the learning environment and planning for improving children's fine motor skills. This improves children's ability to hold colouring pens and pencils correctly and develops their early mark-making skills effectively.

Resource management: Good

The setting makes good use of staff and resources to support teaching and learning across the Foundation Phase curriculum. Leaders and managers ensure that there are enough well qualified and experienced practitioners in the setting, and deploy them well to make best use of their expertise. A fluent Welsh speaking member of staff supports colleagues with ideas and in modelling effective practice. This raises practitioners' confidence and skills and in turn improves children's Welsh oracy skills and enjoyment of the language.

Practitioners make effective use of any training opportunities to improve provision and to raise outcomes for children. Training on planning for the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills across areas of learning helps to develop the setting's use the outdoors successfully.

Leaders and managers monitor the budget regularly to ensure the most efficient use of funds. This means that spending decisions are well planned and in line with the targets identified as the setting's priorities for improvement in its improvement plan.

As a result, and in view of the positive outcomes achieved by children, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	12	12 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	12	12 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		81%	18%	0%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	11	10 91%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		72%	27%	0%	0%		
Teaching is good.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		81%	19%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		84%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		76%	23%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	11	10 91%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		72%	27%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	12	9 75%	3 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	11	10 91%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		66%	31%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	12	12 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		74%	25%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		64%	32%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	12	12 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Susan Davies

Reporting Inspector

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Glossary of terms

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

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (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.