



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

A report on

**Ysgol Deiniol Playgroup Plus
Ysgol Deiniol
The Ridgeway
Marchwiel
LL13 0SB**

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:

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

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Context

Ysgol Deiniol Playgroup Plus is an English medium setting in the village of Marchwiel in Wrexham local authority. The setting provides education funded by the local authority between January and July and opens daily between 1pm and 3pm during term time.

The setting is registered to take up to 24 children between the ages of two and four years old. There are currently 12 children attending the setting and five of these receive funded early years education. Nearly all children come from the local area and speak English as their first language.

The setting was last inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales in March 2016 and by Estyn in January 2014.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- Practitioners provide a balanced curriculum that reflects the ethos of the foundation phase curriculum well
- There are good opportunities for the children to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills purposefully in their play
- The setting makes particularly good use of the outdoor area to develop children's literacy, numeracy and thinking skills
- Practitioners use careful questioning to help children develop their thinking skills
- Practitioners provide valuable feedback about their children's progress to parents
- The setting promotes children's awareness of healthy living well
- Practitioners manage children's behaviour positively

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because|:

- The setting leader has a clear vision
- Practitioners respond well to local and national priorities
- The setting leader provides strong direction for the team
- All staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities
- Practitioners know the setting well and identify its strengths effectively
- The self-evaluation report and most recent setting improvement plan prioritise key actions that are both relevant and achievable
- Practitioners work successfully to involve parents and carers in supporting their children
- Practitioners benefit from useful training and use the information effectively to evaluate and improve their own practice

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that the indoor learning environment reflects children's interests effectively
- R2 Ensure that leaders and managers monitor the setting's work rigorously and effectively
- R3 Carry out annual appraisals and regular supervisions for all staff
- R4 Embed effective self-evaluation and setting improvement procedures

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Standards:

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Wellbeing:

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The setting offers a broad range of worthwhile learning experiences. Practitioners provide a balanced curriculum that reflects the ethos of the foundation phase effectively and engages children successfully in their learning. As a result, children are active and involved in tasks, and develop their skills progressively.

Planning for developing children's literacy and numeracy skills is comprehensive, flexible and reflects children's interests well. For example, practitioners respond to children's interest in farming by providing an interactive small world farm play outside, which includes natural items such as soil and pebbles. Many children enjoy sorting the animals and place them appropriately on the farm. Practitioners make particularly good use of the outdoor area to develop children's literacy, numeracy, ICT and thinking skills. For example, there are effective opportunities for children to learn to sort and count seeds and learn how plants grow.

The setting provides good opportunities for the children to develop their ICT skills purposefully in their play. For example, the children use electric toothbrushes to learn about how to keep their teeth healthy.

The setting is making good progress with developing children's Welsh language skills. Practitioners use Welsh as part of the daily routine and expect children to respond to simple Welsh instructions. They teach new Welsh songs and rhymes regularly, such as 'Mr hapus ydw i' and promote an awareness of Welsh culture and traditions appropriately.

The setting takes advantage of visitors to the school to provide interesting experiences for the children. For example, children benefited from exploring different musical instruments when the peripatetic music service visited the setting. However, the children have fewer opportunities to go into the community to enhance their learning.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners have a good understanding of foundation phase practice and child development. They work well as a team and share ideas appropriately. They use effective teaching strategies to ensure that they engage children well and challenge them successfully. Practitioners question children carefully to help develop their thinking skills and give them plenty of time to answer. For example, when playing in the water tray they challenge children to think by asking: 'I wonder what else we could use to catch the eggs.' Practitioners know the children well and recognise when to intervene to help them move on in their learning. There is a strong emphasis on providing effective opportunities for open-ended play indoors and outside. As a result, the children are confident to explore and experiment. Practitioners focus well on developing children's skills in the stimulating outdoor learning environment. However, at present, the indoor learning environment does not reflect the children's interests well enough to engage them fully. All practitioners are good language role models and speak clearly, using appropriate language. Practitioners make valuable observations of the children on a daily basis. They use these effectively to identify the next steps for learning for individual children. Practitioners complete appropriate on entry observations of the children using the foundation phase profile. However, at present the setting does not use information from observations to inform planning, or to track and monitor children's progress.

Practitioners provide parents with valuable information about their children's progress. This includes sharing with parents what the children have been doing in the setting regularly. Practitioners share how well the children are progressing in their learning and, occasionally, how parents can support their child. This involves parents in their children's learning journey effectively.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has a warm, caring and friendly ethos where all children are valued. Practitioners establish effective relationships with parents and children. They use positive and beneficial behaviour strategies consistently, which result in a calm learning environment.

The setting promotes children's awareness of healthy living well. There is an appropriate menu of healthy snacks offered to the children on a daily basis. The setting encourages children to be active and provides regular opportunities for physical play. For example, practitioners plan regular opportunities for children to play with the parachute outdoors.

The setting promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are sound opportunities for children to learn to be independent at snack time. For example, pouring their own water, choosing, and collecting the snack. An appropriate range of learning experiences develop children's awareness of their natural environment effectively. For example, they look around the school grounds for signs of spring and examine the exposed roots of a large tree. The children show

care for living things making bird feeders and hanging them around the school. Practitioners provide suitable opportunities for children to act sustainably, such as recycling the empty yoghurt pots.

The setting has clear and effective processes to support children with additional needs. Practitioners involve parents fully in supporting their children. The setting make good use of outside agencies when appropriate, including working with speech and language therapists.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting provides a warm, welcoming and inclusive learning environment where every child is valued. As a result, the children demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and confidence. There is an appropriate emphasis on promoting diversity.

Practitioners provide a beneficial range of resources for the children to be active learners. The resources are clean and well maintained and appropriate for the age of the children. Practitioners make good use of the very limited display space made available to them in the corridor to celebrate children's work. However, at present, children do not see their work displayed in the indoor learning environment.

The setting make particularly good use of the outdoor area. The children use the covered area regularly for both adult focus activities and free play. The growing and garden area is developing appropriately and includes access to a water butt and composting bin. Practitioners have improved the outdoor area recently by adding a mud kitchen. This provides further opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills by filling containers, pouring water and counting the number of mud pies they make.

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

The setting leader and responsible person have a clear vision for the setting as a caring and safe learning environment for children. The setting leader provides strong direction, sets high standards and is a very good role model for practitioners and children.

The setting keeps relevant policies up to date and implements these appropriately. However, they are not all signed by staff to show that they are fully aware of processes and procedures. Job descriptions are suitable, and all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Practitioners benefit from sufficient training. However, they do not receive annual appraisals. This limits their opportunities for professional development linked to the setting's priorities for improvement.

The responsible person knows the setting well and supports the setting on a day-to-day basis appropriately. The setting uses the support teacher's notes appropriately to inform the management of strengths and areas for development for the setting. There are acceptable procedures for monitoring the setting's work. For example, managers observe sessions while visiting the school. However, they do not discuss the outcome of visits with practitioners in order to improve standards of teaching and learning.

Practitioners respond well to local and national priorities. For example, they promote healthy living successfully and focus well on providing regular opportunities for outdoor learning.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has recently established procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement that impact successfully on the quality of the setting's provision. Although this is at an early stage of development, practitioners know the setting well and identify the setting's strengths effectively. They have a thorough understanding of the children's achievements and they focus appropriately on evaluating and improving outcomes. They are beginning to develop a suitable culture of reflection that leads to regular improvements in the quality of the provision.

Practitioners evaluate their daily work regularly during worthwhile meetings. This leads to regular improvements in planned activities. For example, in response to recent observations, the setting has provided more opportunities for children to practise their mark-making in the outdoors.

The self-evaluation report and most recent setting improvement plan prioritise key actions that are both relevant and achievable. Practitioners identify helpful improvement targets from the setting self-evaluation. They monitor actions carefully and can point to positive improvements in standards in a short space of time. For example, children develop their independent skills more effectively as a result of changes to the routine at snack time.

The setting has made acceptable progress in addressing the recommendations from the last inspection.

Partnership working: Good

Practitioners involve parents and carers in supporting their children successfully. The setting operates an 'open door' policy and values parents' questions and comments. Practitioners inform parents on a daily basis about the activities their children have participated in. There are sound systems in place for the setting to give individual feedback to parents and provide ideas to help them support their child's learning.

Transition arrangements into the setting are effective. Parents receive an appropriate welcome pack before their child starts at the setting. The setting uses the information effectively to support the children when they start at the setting. The setting benefits from a strong partnership with the school. This supports the quality of the provision as well as preparing children well for when they move on to the next

stage of their education. The funded children feel valued as part of the school. They are familiar with many of the staff and attend school events such as the leavers' assembly.

The setting works effectively with outside agencies. For example, it benefits from support and guidance from the local authority, which has a positive impact on improving outcomes for children. There are suitable arrangements for children to engage in the wider community.

Resource management: Good

The setting makes good use of staffing and resources to support teaching and learning well. Resources are appropriate and of good quality both inside and outside.

Practitioners attend useful training provided by the local authority. They use the information effectively to evaluate and improve their own practice. For example, following recent ICT training, practitioners plan more purposefully to develop children's ICT skills. The setting benefits from the support of the advisory teacher, who provides useful advice and practical help. This has led to regular improvements, such as providing books that boys enjoy in order to develop their early reading skills effectively.

The responsible person oversees the budget appropriately. The setting purchases consumable goods as they need them to support the curriculum effectively. However, planning a budget to meet the setting's specific development priorities is at an early stage of development.

In view of the standards children achieve and the effective teaching, the setting provides good value for money.

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
CIW	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 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 partnerships 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 three to seven 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 that 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
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 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