



A report on

**Bradley Playgroup
Bradley Village Hall
Glanllyn Road
Bradley
Wrexham
LL11 4BB**

Date of inspection: June 2011

by

Anne Manning

for

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the setting's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2011: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.

Context

Bradley Playgroup was established in 1972.

The playgroup is located in Bradley Village Hall approximately three miles from Wrexham, North Wales. The medium-sized playgroup is managed by a voluntary committee and the general day to day running is carried out by the supervisors and volunteers.

The playgroup is based in the village hall that is owned by the community.

The accommodation is shared and this means that the practitioners have to set out and clear away the equipment before and after each session. There is an entrance hall outside the playgroup room that has information for parents to view when they drop off or collect their children. Inside, the room is divided into areas for play and outside; the group have access to a yard and a garden.

The playgroup operates during term time and is open from 9.15am to 11.45am.

Bradley Playgroup is registered with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales to provide sessional care and the last CSSIW inspection was in June 2011. This is the first inspection by Estyn.

The children attending the playgroup are aged between two and a half and three years eight months.

The three supervisors who work in the playgroup are qualified to level 3 and the assistant is qualified to level 2.

There were 13 children present aged three who were eligible for funding during this Summer term.

The playgroup is English speaking, providing care and education for children from families for whom nearly all this is their first language.

Ethnicity is nearly all White British and one child has additional needs.

The playgroup has an equal opportunities policy and an admission procedure that welcomes all children. The area served by the playgroup is considered to be neither advantaged nor disadvantaged. Nearly all children attending the playgroup are from the village or the local area and come from a range of backgrounds.

Bradley Playgroup receives support from Wrexham Early Education.

Summary

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

Current performance

Current performance is good because:

The playgroup is an integral part of the local community.
The quality of the experiences provided, including the range of visits and visitors and the impact this has on the learning of the children is excellent.
The management of the staff and resources is good.
The partnership with parents and the primary school is good and this facilitates transition arrangements for the children.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

There is a commitment to providing the best learning experiences for the children.
Enthusiastic practitioners work for the benefit of the children and to raise standards.
Self-evaluation and self-reflection are embedded into the ethos of the group.

Recommendations

Provide more opportunities to develop the standards in ICT.

Involve the children in the planning of activities.

Maximise more informal learning opportunities.

What happens next?

The provider will produce an action plan that shows how the setting will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The progress of the children is good and they achieve well.

Nearly all children's numeracy and mathematical skills are good and nearly all count accurately and can match shapes and recognise patterns. They are encouraged to guess how many of their friends are in playgroup that day and a few can give an accurate guess.

Most children communicate clearly and are confident to chat about what they are doing and nearly all carry out instructions promptly.

All children enjoy stories in both English and Welsh and all show an interest in books and their content and handle them correctly. Many look at books without an adult. The majority practise writing and take opportunities to write notes on pads, using them across several different areas of learning.

Although children have access to ICT, for example a mobile phone, their experience of ICT in the playgroup is limited.

Children's Welsh language development is good and they make good progress. The majority understand simple words and phrases and a few use the language spontaneously.

Wellbeing: Good

Many children greet their friends enthusiastically and give each other hugs when they arrive for the morning session.

Nearly all children are developing positive attitudes to learning and they show interest in what they are doing. They enjoy new experiences such as a visit from the police.

Most children are kind and considerate; they help each other and show concern, for example, giving a friend who was upset a special shell to make them feel better.

There is a caring attitude in the setting and children show consideration for their friends, towards one another and adults in the setting.

Almost all children show high levels of self esteem, are motivated and engaged in their learning.

Most children are confident, competent learners who work independently for long periods on their own when painting and junk modelling.

The children arrive at the playgroup happy and full of enthusiasm for the morning ahead. Many children are keen to talk about what they are doing and what they enjoy in the playgroup. Most are confident to choose their favourite activity and can concentrate on what they enjoy for a long time.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Excellent

Bradley Playgroup is an integral part of village life and is at the heart of the local community. The setting provides an excellent range of learning activities and experiences for the children that are not only within the community but also further afield such as a visit to a local Horse Sanctuary and experiencing painting and printing on a large scale by visiting the Oriol Gallery in Wrexham. The variety of outings and visitors to the setting is extensive and often includes chatting to 'Jonesy' the postman, who on inspection morning shared a piece of birthday cake with the children. Members of the police force are also frequent visitors to the group and they extend the learning of the children and progress their development. The playgroup children take part in community concerts and are an essential part of Bradley.

There is an imaginative curriculum which stimulates, motivates and sustains the interest of the children. Books are produced detailing visits and trips that capture the imagination and re-enforce the children's learning. Stories include puppets and resources that effectively extend the concentration of the children. Activities are well focussed and the organisation ensures that all are involved. Children are actively involved in projects such as 'Grow with Me' that include planting and re-cycling and they understand that some items can be re-used.

There are good opportunities for the children to develop their personal and cultural identity such as Welsh festivals and to extend their knowledge of others. The Welsh language is used formally and informally throughout the session and a playgroup book for parents displayed in the entrance outlines simple songs, words and phrases that help to consolidate the Welsh language at home and support the work of the playgroup.

Practitioners sometimes make good use of spontaneous learning experiences to develop the knowledge of the children, for example, going to watch the tractor and closely observing the features of cows by the playgroup fence, however this could be extended.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners encourage children to develop their play and find out for themselves. Although they know when to intervene in play and when to observe, they sometimes miss learning opportunities, for example, to let children give out the plates at snack time or to help wash and dry the beakers.

There are four practitioners, three qualified to level 3 and one to level 2. The playgroup has voluntary helpers that include a mature student with disabilities who

having finished her college course placement in the group continues to attend and works with the children.

Teaching makes a good impact on learning.

The practitioners have a good knowledge and understanding of Foundation Phase philosophy and have high expectations of the children.

Resources and accommodation are used well to support the learning of the children.

Practitioners re-cap on previous events, for example, the concert and build on children's experiences to move them forward and develop. Questioning is well used to develop thinking skills.

Parents reported satisfaction with the setting and the teaching.

Although practitioners make notes about the children that transfer into 'This is me', assessment books, they do not always record the next steps for individual children's learning.

Practitioners are very well deployed and the playgroup makes good use of visitors to the setting, including parents, to extend and progress the learning of the children, for example, making biscuits with Abigail's mum.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Children are effectively involved with the community.

There are robust procedures in place to support the wellbeing of the children that are underpinned by appropriate policies and risk assessments.

Children have meaningful activities, are busy and concentrate throughout the morning. The behaviour policy is known to parents and carers and this effectively develops the children's social and moral development.

All adults and children get on well together and children are confident to ask for help when they need it.

There are good arrangements in place to support children with additional learning needs and the group work in partnership with parents and other professionals. Induction and key workers identified for individual children are effective and a close working relationship with the school ensures a good transfer experience for the children.

Children are helped to distinguish right from wrong and the setting promotes values such as fairness and honesty. The social development of the children is good; they relate well to each other, to the adults around them, share resources and take responsibility.

Safeguarding arrangements are well established and understood by staff.

Policies reflect the requirements of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures.

Learning environment: Good

The playgroup is fully inclusive and is an integral part of the village community.

The four practitioners have good knowledge and understanding and know each child in their care well. They are experienced and well qualified.

Children have equality of access to activities and areas of provision.

Although all practitioners understand the philosophy of the Foundation Phase and are involved in planning, the children's ideas and suggestions are not always sought. Practitioners create a stimulating environment for learning and children are independent learners.

There is a good supply of quality resources that are easily accessed by all the children that effectively support their progress. The setting is an attractive learning environment and one room has been re-furbished into a Daisy and Ticw room that is effectively used for stories and quieter play.

The outside is used for growing plants, sit and ride toys, games and observing nature and tractors in the field. The local environment is very well used for walks, sometimes to Alyn Waters Country Park to observe the change in the seasons, the Horse Sanctuary and local shops and library. Playgroup welcomes an excellent range of visitors to the setting who enhance the learning experiences of the children and promote good standards.

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

Leadership: Good

The playgroup is well led and there are high expectations for all. There is a clear sense of purpose and direction throughout the day to day running of the group.

Practitioners are well motivated and enthusiastic and provide high quality teaching and learning opportunities and experiences. Practitioners are encouraged to take a leadership role and they are aware of their roles and responsibilities and work together very well as a team.

There is a very positive ethos throughout the group and national and local priorities are met.

Improving quality: Good

Exhibitions have been attended and then evaluated by both staff and parents as to the value of these visits, for example, to Print International. The playgroup has identified strengths and areas for improvement and targets for development are effectively met, for example, the completion of the Daisy and Ticw room and using the Welsh language with the children.

There is an ethos of self-evaluation and reflective practice and the playgroup is open to new ideas and is pro-active in moving forward and developing. The views of children, parents and carers, staff and other professionals who visit the group are taken into account.

Partnership working: Good

A good range of effective partnership working supports the playgroup and ensures good outcomes for the children's learning.

Relationships with parents and carers are good and a book in the entrance along with other information provides a good explanation of what happens in Bradley Playgroup. Information also includes planning, outcomes and details about the Foundation Phase. There are photographs of the Christmas concert and the visits undertaken to the library, the Horse Sanctuary and the Oriel Art Gallery for 2 and 3d work.

There are good links with the feeder school and three teachers have been to visit the playgroup children and have had contact with the practitioners, so building a good relationship and effective transition arrangements before the children go to school. The children have also made visits to the school and spent time joining in activities with the nursery class.

Two practitioners are members of the village hall committee and this further strengthens the playgroup links with the community through their annual concert.

The partnerships make a good contribution to the work of the setting, the children's well being and achievement. The playgroup also benefits from a partnership with WPPA (Wales Pre-School Providers Association), particularly to support children with additional needs.

Resource management: Good

Resources are managed effectively and are used in an imaginative way. This benefits the children resulting in good progress and achievement. Practitioners are aware of their roles and are pro-active in ensuring the success of the setting.

Monetary and budget matters are carefully considered to be of maximum benefit to the children, their progress and outcomes. The playgroup provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

93% parents strongly agreed that their child was helped to settle when he/she started at the setting. They also strongly agreed that the children were safe and that staff treat the children fairly and with respect.

All positive comments were received about the setting with all parents either agreeing or strongly agreeing to all the statements on the inspection questionnaire.

Responses to discussions with children

Children like coming to the group.

They show enthusiasm for the staff and the activities.

They enjoy stories in the Ticw and Daisy room and painting and playing in the water.

Appendix 2

The inspection team / reporting inspector – delete as appropriate

Anne Manning	Reporting Inspector
--------------	---------------------

Copies of the report

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

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.