



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

A report on

**Red Robins Nursery
Llanthony Close
Caldicot
NP26 4HN**

Date of inspection: October 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

Red Robins Nursery is an English-medium setting in Caldicot, in Monmouthshire local authority. The setting is registered for 26 children from the ages of two to four years. It offers early years education sessions from 9.00 am to 11:30 am during school term time, for five days each week. At the time of the inspection, there were 17 children in receipt of funded early education.

The setting has identified a very few children as having additional learning needs. No children speak Welsh at home.

There are three full-time and two part-time members of staff including the full-time setting leader. The leader took up her post in 2008.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspected the setting in October 2015 and Estyn last inspected it in October 2013.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Most children make good progress from their differing starting points, explore their surroundings and try out new experiences enthusiastically
- Many children use appropriate mathematical language in spontaneous and structured play
- Most children understand and respond eagerly to Welsh phrases and instructions
- Most children enter the setting happily and are quick to settle into routines
- Many children make choices with growing independence as they move between tasks and persevere well
- Practitioners adapt learning activities to reflect children's interests successfully
- Practitioners make effective use of their questioning skills to engage children, to check their understanding and to develop a sense of curiosity
- The setting is a welcoming community, where all children have equal access to activities, are valued and treated with respect

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Leaders have high expectations of themselves and others, which supports the strong ethos of self-improvement evident within the setting
- Regular observations of teaching encourages a reflective approach to evaluating and improving the setting's provision
- All practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities and work together well to ensure that sessions are interesting
- Self-evaluation processes focus successfully on what practitioners do well, and the impact of change on improving outcomes for children
- The setting listens to the views of children and parents carefully and acts appropriately on their suggestions
- The setting has a beneficial range of partnerships, which support children's learning well and enriches their learning experiences successfully
- Practitioners make effective use of any training opportunities to improve provision and to raise outcomes for children
- As a result, and in view of the positive outcomes achieved by children, the setting provides good value for money

Recommendations

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

R2 Plan regular opportunities to develop children's thinking and problem solving skills systematically

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most children make good progress from their differing starting points, and explore their surroundings and try out new experiences enthusiastically. Most speak clearly in well-constructed simple sentences. Many children are confident to name the insects they find outside, describing a worm as 'long and wriggly' and a large spider as 'black and spotty'. Many children have appropriate listening skills and listen carefully to each other and practitioners during whole group sessions.

Many children show a keen interest in books and respond well when listening to stories. They discuss what they think will happen next and describe eagerly what they see in the pictures. They enjoy looking at books independently, holding them correctly and turning the pages like a reader.

Many children apply their mark making skills well in a range of contexts indoors and outside. They form numbers using water and a large brush with growing control, write lists of vegetables needed to make soup in the role play shop, and draw ladybirds accurately, carefully noting the number of spots and legs.

Many children are developing effective early numeracy skills. They use appropriate mathematical language in spontaneous and structured play. Many use correct mathematical language such as full, empty and one more, when planting daffodil bulbs outside. Most count forwards and backwards to 5 confidently, and a few count to 10. More able children describe vegetables as bigger, smaller, longer or heavier and have an increasing awareness that money has a value. For example, they pretend to buy their drink and a piece of fruit at snack time from the Red Robins café.

Most children understand and respond eagerly to Welsh phrases and instructions. Most join in enthusiastically when singing an action song about feelings and emotions.

A few children are beginning to develop and apply their thinking and problem solving skills suitably in a range of situations. For example, when working out how to get a ball to roll down guttering and tubes into a bucket. After a few mistakes they move the bucket further away and proudly celebrate their success. However, in general, opportunities for children to develop these skills are at an early stage of development and are not planned for systematically enough.

Most children bounce like a rabbit, jump, and run around the garden area as part of a daily warm up session. They demonstrate accurate co-ordination when using a small outdoor climbing frame and slide. Many spread glue and sprinkle glitter carefully when making numbers on a card and demonstrate increasing control and accuracy when painting a self-portrait of their face.

Most children develop a narrow range of ICT skills appropriately. Around half use simple torches independently and understand that a button switches them on and off. A few use a simple programmable toy and car confidently, and make it change direction with support. However, very few children use ICT devices independently well enough.

Wellbeing: Good

Most children demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They discuss what they like about activities and what they would like to find out about. As a result, many are enthusiastic about their learning. Most enter the setting happily and settle into daily routines quickly.

Many children remain busy and engaged in their learning and play for appropriate periods during small group tasks and by themselves. Many make choices with growing independence as they move between activities and when pouring their drink at snack time and peeling their fruit. Many show a good awareness of personal hygiene when they wash their hands before eating snack and after playing outside.

Standards of behaviour are good. Most children are polite and courteous to each other and adults. Nearly all children enjoy each other's company and many share resources and take turns willingly, for example when playing with a doll's house and pretending to be firemen rushing to put out a fire.

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

Practitioners work together to meet the needs of young children successfully. They adapt learning activities according to children's changing interests effectively. They provide interesting learning activities that develop children's literacy and numeracy skills well, and utilise indoor and outdoor spaces to good effect. As a result, children's speaking, early mark making and number skills are developing well.

Recent changes to planning fosters children's independence and levels of perseverance and resilience well. However, opportunities for children to develop their thinking and problem solving skills are not always planned for systematically enough across the areas of learning.

Children's role in contributing ideas and suggestions for learning activities within topics is developing well. For example, when a child brought in a toy knight on a horse the children suggested they could build a castle outside. Practitioners provided blocks and others resources enabling the children to make a large role-play castle in the garden. This fostered high levels of co-operation and supported imaginative play successfully.

Practitioners use Welsh regularly as part of daily routines. This supports children's understanding and enjoyment of the language successfully. The setting promotes children's understanding of Welsh culture and heritage appropriately when celebrating St. David's Day and visiting places of interest around the locality.

Practitioners develop children's understanding of other cultures and the wider world in practical ways. For example, children built a dragon from recyclable materials and performed a dragon dance as part of Chinese New Year celebrations.

The setting makes beneficial use of its immediate locality to support children's understanding of the changing seasons. Visits to a local supermarket to purchase vegetables develops children's understanding of the benefits of healthy eating successfully. As part of a community project 'Caldicot Rocks' children decorated small stones with robins and hid them in the grounds of Caldicot Castle. Parents enjoy discovering them with their children when going for walks.

There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by the children. As a result, children are becoming more independent and resilient.

There are suitable opportunities for children to learn about sustainability and recycling, with fruit waste being recycled for compost. Practitioners make worthwhile use of visitors to enrich children's learning experiences. These include visits from the local fire brigade to talk about safety and the job they do. Following this practitioners set up an outdoor role-play fire station. The children enjoy dressing as firemen and recreating and talking about rescue scenarios, making models and paintings of fire engines.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners foster supportive working relationships with the children and provide worthwhile opportunities for them to follow their own interests. They work well together as a team and demonstrate a firm understanding of when to intervene to help move a child's learning on and when to step back to support independent choices. The use of positive praise allows children to experiment and persevere for appropriate lengths of time. Practitioners make effective use of questioning to engage children, to check children's understanding and to develop a sense of curiosity, for example when challenging children to move a programmable car around different shapes and obstacles.

Practitioners are good language role models, and this helps to develop children's communication skills, particularly their mathematical vocabulary, successfully. All practitioners use Welsh regularly as part of everyday routines. This raises the standard of children's Welsh oracy skills and contributes to their enjoyment of the language.

The setting's procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress are effective. Practitioners use on entry assessments to identify individual children's next steps in learning. As a result, they challenge children of all abilities, including those that are more able, sufficiently. Practitioners work with and assess specific groups of children, acting as a 'key worker'. This enhances practitioners' understanding of how well individual children are progressing and informs future planning and resource needs clearly.

Practitioners provide parents with useful updates about what their child has been doing. Information is available to them at any time through the setting's 'open door' policy.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides a happy and caring environment where children settle quickly. Clear daily routines encourage children to eat and drink healthily and outdoor learning opportunities provide them with daily physical exercise. For example, children enjoy the daily circuit of the garden, moving in different ways.

Practitioners encourage children to wash their hands before eating food and after being outside. This helps them to become responsible for their personal hygiene. They encourage children to share, take turns and to say please and thank you appropriately. Children learn about the importance of caring for their environment by growing potatoes and picking apples and plums from their fruit trees. They study the lifecycle of a butterfly and gently hold and release the butterflies into their garden area. This develops children's sense of awe and wonder, and curiosity in a meaningful way.

The setting promotes children's cultural awareness well. Children's art work is displayed prominently and the setting holds an 'art gallery' event displaying children's paintings outside for parents to view.

There are clear procedures to support children with additional learning needs, and the setting uses links to outside agencies to gain advice when necessary. As a result, they cater for the differing needs of children identified as requiring extra support well.

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

Learning environment: Good

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

Practitioners are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children. There are plenty of good quality resources for most areas of learning and practitioners ensure that they match children's needs closely.

The setting is safe and secure and makes effective use of all available space, both indoors and outdoors. Practitioners plan activities carefully to allow children to experiment to widen their interests and to encourage them to be inquisitive. The attractive outdoor area enables children to access role-play areas, grow flowers and vegetables and to take part in daily exercise, enriching and embedding skills taught inside.

An appropriate range of children's work and educational displays, enhance the learning environment. Children enjoy pointing out and talking about their work to visitors.

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

Leadership: Good

The setting leader and her deputy organise the setting well and provide clear leadership. They communicate the aims of the setting with practitioners and parents well and have high expectations of themselves and others. There is a strong ethos of self-improvement evident within the setting. Practitioners engage in regular assessments of each other's work, including observations of teaching. This encourages a reflective approach to evaluating and improving the setting's provision and planning.

Leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the requirements of the foundation phase curriculum and welcome external advice and training opportunities. As a result, leaders have improved children's Welsh language skills and the use of the outdoors to support children's literacy and numeracy skills.

All practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities and work together effectively to ensure that sessions are interesting. Regular meetings support practitioners in understanding and implementing the setting's policies and procedures consistently well. The leader keeps the committee suitably informed about the setting's progress.

Leaders understand the importance of staff appraisal in supporting practitioners' performance and in identifying their training needs. They pay good attention to local and national priorities and work hard to adapt planning to take account of curriculum changes. This promotes children's independence well.

Improving quality: Good

Regular review meetings ensure practitioners have a good understanding of what works well and what needs improving in the setting. Systems focus successfully on what practitioners do well, and the impact of any changes on improving outcomes for children. For example, the reorganisation of the learning environment, indoors and outside, makes it easier for children to make independent choices.

Leaders are open to new ideas and are willing to experiment with different ways of working, for example in developing children's sense of curiosity and in encouraging them to actively suggest ideas about what they would like to learn about.

The setting listens to the views of children and parents carefully and acts appropriately on their suggestions. In response to parental feedback, the setting provides more information about what children are learning about and gives helpful suggestions about how parents can support their child's learning at home.

There are clear links between the setting's self-evaluation processes and its targets for improvement. The setting has a manageable number of priorities for

improvement and its processes demonstrate in detail how leaders will monitor and measure the impact of actions. Leaders identify possible resource costs and training needs and this helps the setting to move forward purposefully.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a beneficial range of partnerships, which support children's learning well and enrich their learning experiences successfully. Parents receive useful and relevant information via the setting's noticeboard, website and social media, and through daily personal contact. A cookery programme involving parents develops this partnership further. Children receive a bag of cooking utensils and story books such as 'Gruffalo's Crumble' to read with their parents at home. Parents also appreciate the 'open door' policy of the setting and feel comfortable to approach practitioners to discuss their child's progress.

Valuable partnerships exist with the local primary school on the same site. This promotes a smooth transition for children from the setting. Visits to the school and participation in the school's sports day, supports children in feeling confident about moving onto reception class.

Visits to a local supermarket and shops and walks around the locality looking for signs and different shapes 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, particularly in regards to developing outdoor learning.

Resource management: Good

Leaders ensure that there are enough well qualified and experienced practitioners in the setting, and deploy them well. Practitioners use professional development opportunities successfully. For example, following a Welsh language course practitioners have the confidence to use a range of Welsh songs and phrases throughout the day with children. This is beneficial in encouraging children to use Welsh more as part of their play.

Leaders 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.

The setting makes good use of the Welsh Government Early Years Deprivation Grant funding to purchase resources and access training. This supports the development of children's numeracy skills well.

As a result, and in view of the positive outcomes achieved by children, 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