



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**North Cornelly Playgroup
Children's Centre
Greenfield Terrace
North Cornelly
Bridgend
CF33 4LW**

Date of inspection: February 2015

by

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Reporting Inspector**

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

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Context

North Cornelly Community Playgroup is a non-maintained English medium setting, near Bridgend. It is run by a voluntary committee and meets in North Cornelly Children's Centre. It is registered for 28 children between two and five years of age and operates two sessions a day on Monday to Friday during school term time.

At the time of the inspection 18 three year olds were registered and The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership funds 12 of these children up to 10 hours per week.

Most of the families using the playgroup live in North Cornelly. The pre-school children attending have a range of backgrounds and capabilities. All are English speaking and British born. None are from ethnic minorities. No families speak Welsh at home. No children receive additional support for learning.

The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales last inspected the setting in July 2013 and Estyn in November 2008. In collaboration with Flying Start, the setting provides places for a number of two year olds.

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 and achieve well;
- high quality care, support and guidance assures children's wellbeing;
- a good range of interesting learning experiences are provided;
- teaching successfully engages children's interest;
- the learning environment is happy and purposeful; and
- partnerships with parents and supporting agencies are very well developed.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for further improvement are good because:

- the setting is well managed and organised;
- there is good emphasis on practitioners' professional development;
- a teamwork ethos and clear strategic direction are evident;
- self-evaluation and planning for improvement are well established;
- leadership steadily develops professional practice; and
- there is a good track record of improvement since the last inspection.

Recommendations

R1. improve children's competence in Welsh and information and communication technology (ICT);

R2. involve children in initiatives to raise awareness of sustainability;

R3. ensure policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated.

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
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Standards: Good

Most children make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. They steadily acquire new knowledge and skills as they enthusiastically try out new experiences.

Most children have good speaking and listening skills. Many spontaneously begin simple conversations, for example during role-play. They ask sensible questions and express themselves clearly. A few use a wide vocabulary and confidently engage in extended conversation about what they are doing. With few exceptions children enjoy listening to stories and enthusiastically recite familiar songs and rhymes. A few handle books as readers and show awareness that the text conveys meaning. Mark making skills steadily develop and a few experiment with 'writing' in the cafe. Progress in early mathematical skills is good. Numeracy skills develop well as children count as part of daily routines, sing rhymes and play number games. Many have a good grasp of counting objects to at least 5 and confidently name a range of two-dimensional shapes. However, few children use a sufficient range of mathematical terms, such as when sequencing objects or exploring shape and capacity. Children's competence in using a narrow range of skills in ICT is developing.

Competence in Welsh develops well during group sessions. Many respond appropriately to the words and phrases spoken by adults, but the spontaneous use of Welsh is not established.

Wellbeing: Good

Most children are keen to learn and have positive attitudes to keeping healthy and safe. They engage in a range of activities with enthusiasm and confidently make choices as they move between tasks. With few exceptions children remain busy and on task for appropriate periods of time. They are well motivated and sustain interest and concentration well.

Children have good relationships with each other and with adults. They increasingly show consideration and courtesy, such as when sharing resources and during snack time. With few exceptions children work and play well together. Standards of behaviour are good.

Many children confidently state their likes and dislikes and practitioners encourage them to help choose which activities to keep or change in the setting. Most develop high self-esteem, increase in self-confidence and readily undertake simple day-to-day jobs well.

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

A good range of interesting learning experiences meets well the needs of children and the community. The Foundation Phase is embedded and planning successfully ensures progression. A good range of indoor and outdoor activities is provided and good use is made of the school environment and visitors from the community to enhance learning.

Broad themes provide interesting contexts for learning. Planning is detailed and activities are well defined with appropriate learning objectives. Long and short term planning is implemented flexibly and provides a good basis to guide practitioners in how and what children will learn.

Strong emphasis is placed on developing literacy and numeracy skills and focused sessions are introduced to consolidate skills as children mature. Stories are used skilfully to promote early reading skills and counting skills are developed well, such as when sorting coloured elephants. However, the focus on ICT skills is limited.

The provision for Welsh language development and to promote awareness of Welsh history and culture is appropriate. Welsh vocabulary is introduced and activities are planned, such as to celebrate St David's Day.

Teaching: Good

Teaching manages and supports children's learning well. Practitioners have high expectations of children's behaviour and provide good role models in language. They have good knowledge of the Foundation Phase and learning routines are well structured. Practitioners know the tasks they are to lead or support; they successfully engage children's interest and learning through play is often effectively encouraged. However, interventions are sometimes over directed and the focus on extending learning is variable. Children are given plenty of time to complete activities. Practitioners often use questioning and praise well to promote learning. In particular, they develop communication and social skills very well.

Systematic procedures for assessment are implemented. Practitioners record individual achievements and this information is often used well to plan the next steps in learning. Individual assessment booklets and collections of work provide an informative profile of progress.

Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress, such as through story café meetings and they receive a written report before transfer to the nursery.

Care, support and guidance: Good

High quality care, support and guidance impacts well on children's personal and social development. Strong emphasis is placed on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Healthy eating is appropriately promoted through the choice of foods offered at snack time and children regularly participate in energetic activities. Practitioners strongly promote good behaviour. Children are encouraged to distinguish between right and wrong and to reflect on the wonders of the natural world. Positive values, including fairness, honesty and respect for others are sensitively promoted. Cultural awareness is appropriately promoted through celebrating festivals. However, provision to promote awareness of sustainability is insufficiently developed.

Procedures to provide children with specialist support when required are well implemented. This includes appropriate arrangements to support and integrate children requiring extra help with their learning.

Arrangements to assure children's health and wellbeing are implemented consistently. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a happy, lively learning environment with a welcoming and inclusive ethos. Appropriate account is taken of children's backgrounds. Practitioners treat all children equally and with respect. They are strongly supportive and foster good relationships. This helps ensure children feel safe and free from undue anxiety.

Practitioners strongly encourage sensitivity and understanding towards others and skillfully manage occasional challenging behaviour. Equal opportunities are well promoted, but arrangements to ensure any child with disabilities does not suffer disadvantage are not sufficiently formalised.

There are sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced practitioners for the number of children. There are sufficient learning resources to deliver the Foundation Phase, although provision for ICT is limited. Imaginative use is made of available resources and the school grounds to enrich learning. The accommodation is well designed and provides a safe and secure learning environment.

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

The setting is well managed and organised. Leadership sets high expectations and communicates effectively with parents. Practitioners have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. A purposeful teamwork ethos and a strong sense of purpose are embedded in the work of the setting. An appropriate range of procedures is in place, but the setting's policies require review. Leadership successfully provides strategic direction and sustains improvements in educational provision.

An appropriate management committee is elected annually. Members provide strong support for playgroup events and are supportive of the setting's goals. There is little

evidence of the committee's involvement in monitoring developments, but an annual meeting receives a detailed review of progress in meeting the setting's goals.

Practitioners contribute to an annual appraisal. This process identifies individual needs and sets appropriate targets. Good emphasis is placed on practitioners' professional development.

The setting takes forward national and local priorities well. The provision embraces well the Foundation Phase philosophy and approach. There is strong emphasis on equality and improving outcomes for children.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has systematic procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement. A culture of reflection is evident. All practitioners are involved in the process and good account is taken of the views of parents, carers and stakeholders. The self-evaluation report and improvement plan written prior to this inspection provide a good basis to prioritise key goals and structure initiatives. The goals identified are both relevant and achievable. However, the absence of planning to show how initiatives will be resourced limits the focus on their implementation.

Areas for improvement and appropriate targets are identified annually. The setting leader monitors the development of initiatives and knows their impact well. Progress is recorded in the next self-evaluation report. There is a good track record of improvement in meeting the recommendations from the last inspection and evidence of steady improvement in relation to the targets set annually is strong.

Partnership working: Good

Partnership working has a positive impact on children's learning and wellbeing. Friendly day-to-day contacts with parents encourage the informal exchange of information. When children join the setting parents receive an informative induction pack and they are strongly encouraged to support their child's learning, such as through home tasks using story bags. The exchange of information about children's progress is well promoted through events organised in the setting.

The setting is proactive in seeking the views of parents through an annual questionnaire. Effective liaison with the receiving nursery class ensures a seamless transition to the next stage of education. A range of visitors from the community organisations enhances provision.

The partnership with the local authority and other agencies, including the Wales Pre-school Playgroups Association, is beneficial. The impact of support and quality assurance provided by the local authority is appropriate.

Resource management: Good

Practitioners are well deployed; playgroup sessions are well-structured and learning resources accessible. The use of resources is successful in motivating children to learn. Effective use is made of indoor and outdoor facilities. Practitioners benefit from attending appropriate training events and have visited other settings to share good practice. However, opportunities to improve professional expertise, for example in speaking Welsh, are sometimes overlooked.

The impact of resources on learning and teaching is reviewed informally. The setting leader prudently manages income and expenditure with the support of the management committee. Financial records are detailed and accounts are published annually. However, financial procedures are not sufficiently formalised and little planning for future resource needs is evident.

The setting uses its own resources and the funding received for early entitlement education, to good effect. This impacts well on children's outcomes and represents good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received were fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Michael T Ridout	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

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

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.