



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

A report on

**Ladybirds @ OLSM
Our Lady and St Michael's Primary
Pen Y Pound Road
Abergavenny
NP7 5UD**

Date of inspection: March 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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Context

Ladybirds@OLSM opened in 2014 and is a privately owned setting in Abergavenny, Monmouthshire. It is run by three directors, one of whom is the setting leader. The setting meets in a demountable classroom on the site of Our Lady and St Michael's Roman Catholic Primary School. The setting has eight members of staff and the setting leader is also the Registered Person. The setting leader attends three days per week and a different member of staff manages the setting for the remaining two days.

The setting's registration allows it to take up to 26 children. It admits children from between two and four years of age. At the time of the inspection, up to 20 children attended, 10 of them funded by the local authority. The setting offers five morning educational sessions per week and a lunch club once per week in the school.

The setting serves an urban area. Most of the children speak English as their first language. A very few are from ethnic minorities. No families speak Welsh at home. Currently, very few of the children are identified as having additional learning needs.

Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in April 2014. It is the setting's first inspection by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Nearly all children are keen to learn, enjoy the activities offered and make good progress in all areas of learning
- The setting provides children with an extensive range of stimulating and engaging learning experiences across all Foundation Phase areas of learning
- High quality care and support assure children's wellbeing
- Practitioners are very good role models for children
- Practitioners make good use of the local environment to extend the learning of the children
- Highly imaginative and effective use is made of the indoor and outdoor environments to consolidate children's learning

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader and manager are reflective of their practice and are keen to improve
- Practitioners work well as a team and have a clear sense of purpose
- Partnership arrangements play a constructive role in improving children's achievements and wellbeing
- Leaders and practitioners are keen to receive training and support to improve outcomes for children
- The setting is well led and managed

Recommendations

R1 Use assessment information more effectively to plan activities that develop children's literacy and numeracy skills, especially the more able and talented, across all areas of learning

R2 Ensure that success criteria in improvement plans focus on improving children's outcomes

What happens next?

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

Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Nearly all children make good progress in all areas of learning from their individual starting points in line with their stage of development. They recall previous learning well, for example when remembering what plants need to grow.

Most children communicate successfully with each other and talk about their activities with enthusiasm. For example, when playing at tea parties outside they talk to each other about the cooking equipment and tableware. Nearly all show a keen interest in listening to stories and most are developing awareness of letter sounds and letter recognition. Many use mark making equipment well in their play with increasing control and are beginning to show competence in the function of writing. Nearly all children hold mark making equipment appropriately and draw shapes and patterns.

The numeracy skills of nearly all children are developing well. They count by rote to 20 as part of daily routines, join in with number songs and count backwards from five confidently. Many recognise numerals to six and count items correctly. For example, they count the number of spots on a dice and find the matching numeral. Many recognise the shapes on the programmable toy's mat successfully and most have a thorough understanding of the function of money as a medium of exchange.

Most children are competent at understanding a range of words and phrases in Welsh, and many respond appropriately to simple questions. With assistance, nearly all children are beginning to count to six successfully. For example, when putting petals on a flower, with support, they count accurately.

Many children are confident in using a range of information and communication technology (ICT) equipment to develop skills successfully in other areas of the curriculum. For example, they use a range of devices to take photographs of themselves and each other; they look at picture books on electronic reading devices and listen to talk buttons.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children are happy and relaxed in the setting and are eager to try new learning experiences. They are polite to each other and interact positively with one another and the adults in their learning. The majority put their hands up successfully and wait patiently to respond to questions without calling out. Nearly all children interact well with adults and ask for help when they need it.

Nearly all children are beginning to understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods and talk about these effectively. They broadly understand the importance of eating a wide range of fruit and vegetables. Most children manage their personal hygiene routines independently well. Nearly all are developing independent skills successfully, for example when washing their hands and putting on their coats to play outside.

Many children play co-operatively with others well and most share with others effectively. For example, they understand how to take turns on the bikes and scooters. Nearly all are competent at choosing their own activities by themselves and many play well together. Many choose play activities and resources successfully and join in with each other's games well.

Many children show good levels of concentration, for example when making flower prints with celery. Many children engage enthusiastically in challenging activities and sustain effective levels of perseverance.

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

The setting provides nearly all children with an extensive range of exciting and interesting experiences across the Foundation Phase areas of learning. All practitioners work very well together to ensure exceptional coverage of the curriculum. The stimulating indoor and outdoor environments are highly imaginative and develop a wide range of skills very well. Activities, both indoor and outdoor, support each other in an exemplary way. Children have a wide choice of stimulating activities both indoors and outdoors and are able to move between them seamlessly. Children have many regular and worthwhile opportunities to consolidate and extend their learning by reinforcing a wide range of skills. For example, when repotting plants, they remember the names and understand the function of different parts of plants previously learned indoors.

Practitioners enhance the children's learning experiences particularly well by making frequent visits into the community. For example, recent visits include the fire station, Abergavenny castle and the local supermarket. These experiences allow the children to become confident learners and extend children's experiences effectively. This is a strength of the setting.

Practitioners know each child individually very well and have a very good understanding of what they can do and what they need to learn. Planning ensures that children are successfully involved in making effective decisions about their learning. Planning also places an appropriate emphasis on the development of skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT.

Practitioners offer many worthwhile experiences to help children develop their literacy skills. They are very good role models for the children and are highly effective in developing their speaking and listening skills. Nearly all children recognise their name through self-registration each morning and recognise their place names at snack time. There are worthwhile opportunities for children to look at a good range of quality books. Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to practise their early writing skills both indoors and outdoors. The outdoor learning environment provides very good opportunities for children to understand the role of ICT. For example, when going through the car wash on their bikes and scooters, children understand that they have to 'press' the button to make it 'work' and that they must stop if the 'red light' is on.

Practitioners are very effective role models of bilingualism and are skilful at changing from one language to another. They consistently provide the children with a comprehensive range of Welsh commands and phrases, which they use naturally. There is a good range of bilingual displays at the setting. Children have valuable opportunities to learn about Welsh traditions through celebrating St. David's Day and by making visits in and around the community.

The setting provides worthwhile opportunities for children to develop cultural understanding. They celebrate and learn about festivals such as St David's Day, Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners work particularly well together as a team and have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Phase curriculum. They provide a stimulating environment that actively promotes children's participation and achievements. The setting has well-established routines, and effective teamwork ensures a consistent approach that enables children to feel happy and safe.

Practitioners have very positive relationships with the children and interact with them very well. For example, at snack time, they all sit down with a group of children to provide good role models for expected behaviour and language. Staff manage behaviour very successfully. They are very calm and respectful towards the children, which ensures that happy and positive relationships exist between all staff and children.

Practitioners know the children very well. They observe and assess children's progress effectively. They discuss observations of the children at weekly staff meetings and use the information consistently well to plan for children's progress. For example, practitioners ensure that they revisit activities to help children improve particular skills. Practitioners use the Foundation Phase Profile as an assessment tool accurately to determine progress made by children. Staff record assessments of children's focused tasks diligently and use this information successfully to inform future planning. They undertake daily observations of children's progress and record these in pupil progress files. These provide a useful overview for both practitioners and parents. However, practitioners do not always use assessments effectively to plan activities that challenge the more able children to improve their numeracy or literacy skills through other areas of the curriculum.

The setting uses social networking effectively to keep parents informed of activities as well as a range of helpful letters sent home. The setting keeps parents well informed about their children's day-to-day progress through regular informal feedback. Practitioners provide useful discussions on progress twice a year for each child's parents/carers and send helpful written summative reports home on the children's progress once per year.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The provision for ensuring children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Practitioners promote healthy living

successfully and encourage children successfully to eat a variety of fruit and vegetables. Practitioners are effective in developing opportunities to encourage children to take turns when, for example they wash their hands before snack or lunch club. At snack times, children's social skills are developed skilfully when staff sit at the table to eat with them. These provide worthwhile occasions to promote good manners and discussions. The setting has beneficial arrangements for children to begin to understand sustainability issues such as composting and recycling by providing bins to recycle plastic bottles, paper, cardboard and food.

The wide range of indoor and outdoor experiences offered to children gives them many opportunities to discover cultural traditions found in Wales. Staff supplement these through a variety of valuable visits, such as to the local library, the fire station and Goytre Wharf. Practitioners also provide a range of worthwhile activities to learn about other cultures and festivals.

Robust arrangements are in place to identify children with additional learning needs. All children identified with additional learning needs, including communication difficulties, have detailed action plans. Practitioners and parents regularly and appropriately review these. The setting has good links with specialist services and practitioners make effective use of these when required. A practitioner at the setting with responsibility for children with additional learning needs provides valuable support to the child and family. Regular liaison with the relevant outside agencies, for example the Team Around the Family and health visitors, enables careful planning to meet the needs of this group of children.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting has a strong ethos of welcome and support. It has a successful 'key worker' system in place where practitioners greet children warmly in the morning and parents are welcomed to discuss any issues or concerns. Practitioners are sensitive to the needs of the children and parents find them easy to approach. Staff show positive support and care, ensuring that all children feel valued and respected. Displays are of a high quality and used well to celebrate children's learning and achievements.

Staff are very well qualified and have much experience of working with young children. Managers have strong systems in place to make sure that the accommodation is secure and maintained well.

Resources are plentiful and of good quality and support the children's learning across all areas of the Foundation Phase curriculum. These resources are clearly labelled and are accessible to all children. Outdoor and indoor areas are appealing and are very effective in developing children's skills. Practitioners provide a wide range of opportunities to study the natural world. For example, a local farmer brought in a lamb to the setting for children to have first-hand experiences of live animals. The setting also benefits from using the facilities at the adjoining primary school to enrich the learning experiences of the children.

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

Leadership: Good

Leaders have a clear sense of purpose and have a strong vision for the setting. Their vision focuses well on ensuring that children make good progress during their time at the setting and that there is a cycle of continuous improvement. Leaders successfully ensure that all practitioners understand and are committed to the aims and ethos of the setting. They have high expectations of themselves and other staff, and manage all aspects of learning and teaching well. Rigorous staff recruitment procedures are in place. A comprehensive induction programme and regular and relevant staff training ensure high standards for practitioners and good progress for children. Staff are effective in sharing responsibilities according to their skills, knowledge and interests. They fulfil these responsibilities enthusiastically and professionally, providing good support for children, their parents and one another.

Policies and procedures are robust and leaders review them regularly. Leaders have a good knowledge of national and local priorities such as implementing the Foundation Phase Profile, developing effective outdoor learning opportunities and promoting healthy eating. Staff show effective commitment to developing children's understanding of healthy eating and sustainable development, for example through their involvement with the Healthy and Sustainable Preschool Scheme.

Improving quality: Good

The setting leader and her staff are committed to continually improving provision in the setting. They are reflective practitioners who want to provide the best for the children in their care and ensure that they make good progress. The setting's self-evaluation report is a comprehensive document that is mainly evaluative. All staff contribute effectively to it. As a result, the leader and practitioners know the setting well. They identify its strengths accurately and highlight important areas for improvement.

The priorities identified for improvement in the self-evaluation report link closely to targets in the setting improvement plan. Although it is a brief document, the setting improvement plan identifies relevant actions, manageable timescales, realistic costs and responsibilities and highlights suitable methods of monitoring. However, success criteria focus too much on the completion of actions, and not enough on measuring the impact that these improvements have on outcomes for children over time.

Staff monitor progress successfully towards these targets every term, with support from the local authority advisory teacher. They respond positively to her suggestions and those of others, including parents. For example, practitioners include incidental Welsh in activities across all areas of learning, following support from the consortium.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has developed many useful partnerships that contribute effectively to improving children's experiences and progress. Links with parents are strong and

are mutually beneficial. Parents speak passionately about the quality of the setting and its staff and are confident to share concerns with them. Leaders give good quality support and guidance to parents, which help them to become more involved in their children's education. Recently, parents received information from the setting on how to develop children's Welsh speaking skills at home. This is beginning to make a difference to the way children respond to Welsh commands and use simple language both in the setting and at home.

Close links with the primary school on the same site ensure effective transition between the setting and the school. They share physical resources, including the school field and some play areas. Children from the setting attend a weekly lunch club, where they eat alongside Foundation Phase pupils in the school. These links, along with a good range of transition activities before children move on, mean that children settle quickly and well in the reception class at school.

Strong partnerships exist with the local authority, the regional consortium and other agencies that provide the setting with support and guidance. The link with the local authority speech and language team is well-established. Training from this team has enabled practitioners at the setting to provide sustainable, skilful support for children experiencing difficulties with speech and language development. The setting makes the most of a wide range of community links with local organisations and businesses, including the farming community, the castle, library and local shops, which provide additional and exciting experiences for children.

Resource management: Good

Practitioners are very well qualified and all have suitable experience of working with young children. They bring a wide range of work and life experiences to the setting, which enhance children's experiences considerably. The leader deploys them effectively to make the most of their skills and experience, enabling them to contribute significantly to the professionalism of the setting. Practitioners undertake a good range of appropriate training, relevant to their role. For example, members of the local authority's speech and language team have helped staff to develop their skills in this area to ensure good support for identified children. All staff work very well together, learning from one another, and networking and sharing good practice with a partner Ladybirds setting, and other settings in the locality.

Practitioners make creative use of a wide range of resources that motivate children and ensure good skill development. For example, a variety of locks, bolts and door latches mounted outside on a wall display encourage children to develop their fine motor skills in a fun, challenging way.

Leaders manage the setting's finances robustly and are creative in raising additional funds, for example by providing training for practitioners from other settings. They prioritise spending in line with planned improvements and monitor the impact of these decisions carefully. The setting spends its Early Years Pupil Deprivation Grant effectively on resources to improve early literacy and numeracy skills.

In view of the strong leadership of the setting that leads to good provision and progress for 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.	10	10 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	10	9 90%	1 10%	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.	10	10 100%	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.	10	10 100%	0 0%	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.	9	5 56%	4 44%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		72%	27%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	10	8 80%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		81%	19%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	9	9 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1	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.	10	8 80%	2 20%	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.	10	9 90%	1 10%	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.	8	7 88%	1 12%	0 0%	0 0%	2	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.	10	6 60%	4 40%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	31%	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.	10	8 80%	2 20%	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.	9	6 67%	2 22%	1 11%	0 0%	1	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		65%	31%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	9	6 67%	3 33%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhlentyn 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.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		63%	32%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Joanna Burdett	Reporting Inspector
Sarah Morgan	Team 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.