



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
Caergeiliog Playgroup
Caergeiliog Foundation School,
Caergeiliog,
Ynys Môn
LL65 3NP

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by

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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

Caergeiliog Playgroup was established in 1981 by Caergeiliog Foundation School to provide part-time pre-school education for two-and-a-half and three year-old children. The playgroup is an independent setting. There are no children who are funded by the local authority (LA). Children are drawn from a wide area and are judged as being neither prosperous nor socially and economically disadvantaged.

Sixteen three year old children are registered at the setting with the majority of them attending five half day session per week. Children of all ability, linguistic and ethnic background are admitted to the setting, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) or from ethnic groups. Currently, very few children have ALN and there are no children who learn English as an additional language. English is the main language spoken at home for almost every child. The setting's main medium of teaching and learning is English although Welsh is frequently used.

Children's education is supported by five full-time practitioners all of whom are appropriately qualified to teach early years children.

Accommodation includes a large classroom and an outdoor area which is shared with the school's nursery class.

When children have completed their time in the setting all continue their education in the primary school's nursery unit.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in November 2009. This is its first inspection by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's performance is good because:

- children achieve good standards, especially in their communication skills;
- all children make significant progress in their learning skills;
- learning experiences and the provision for skills are of high quality; and
- leadership and procedures for self-evaluation are of good quality.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the sound strategies implemented are likely to lead to further improvements;
- leaders have a clear vision for the setting's development; and
- the setting benefits substantially from the close co-operation with the school.

Recommendations

In order to further improve, the setting needs to:

- A1. provide more opportunities for children to learn about other cultures; and
- A2. update practitioners' child protection training.

What happens next?

The setting will form an action plan showing how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Bearing in mind their age and stage of development, all children make significant progress in learning with a few achieving very good standards in their communication skills. Nearly all children demonstrate high level of knowledge and understanding across the areas of learning and cope well with challenging activities. They apply their skills securely in a range of contexts and develop wider skills and personal qualities needed to cope with the Foundation Phase curriculum. Children make good progress in gaining skills in Welsh language. Most persevere well with their tasks and respond confidently to free choice activities.

Wellbeing: Good

Most children demonstrate high level of interest and motivation towards learning and respond confidently to new learning experiences. They have a secure understanding of how to become healthy through what they eat and the physical activity they undertake. All children have a close relationship with the practitioners and trust their guidance. Every individual feels safe in the setting and free from physical and verbal abuse. A very distinctive feature of the setting is the very good behaviour and care shown by children towards one another. During their engagement in specific tasks or in tasks of their own choice, most children co-operate amenable demonstrating good levels of independence. All children enjoy their time at the setting.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The principles of the Foundation Phase are reflected strongly in the quality of the curriculum provided for children. Through detailed planning, practitioners succeed in providing a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities for all children across all areas of learning. Children are challenged by relevant activities which provide continuity and progression in their learning. Provision for communication, numeracy, information communications technology (ICT) and wider skills is coherent and firmly embedded into the experiences for every child. Practitioners use the indoor and outdoor environment imaginatively to encourage children to experiment with new experiences and develop their skills effectively. Children occasionally visit places outside the setting and learn from visitors to the setting. Children are actively involved in the setting's recycling arrangements. Through their celebration of Welsh festivals and traditions, children develop their personal and cultural identity effectively. Few opportunities are provided for them to learn about people from other cultures.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase and have high expectations for children's learning. They provide stimulating learning experiences across all areas of learning and use a good range of teaching strategies which ensure the engagement and interest of children of all abilities. Practitioners know when it is appropriate to intervene in children's learning and they do sensitively and skilfully to encourage children to challenge themselves as they learn. They succeed in maintaining a good balance between child-selected and practitioner directed activities. Practitioners make imaginative use of a variety of resources to appeal to children's interest and improve learning. Adult support is clearly focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of children's learning. Children's progress and learning are assessed and tracked thoroughly across all areas of learning and this information is used purposefully to plan children's next step in their learning. Parents are kept well informed about children's achievements, wellbeing and development.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has appropriate policies and procedures for promoting healthy living and children's wellbeing. Practitioners know how to respond appropriately if challenges arise in relation to bullying, unacceptable behaviour and safeguarding. Every child is confident in asking adults for support and guidance. Practitioners know the children well and strive to ensure that the needs of each individual are met. There are good arrangements for the support of children with additional educational needs with the setting making effective use of key agencies. Support is clearly targeted and has resulted in significant improvements in the development of individual children. The effective induction arrangements together with the close relationship with parent, ensure that children settle quickly into the setting. Learning experiences promote the personal and social development of children successfully. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. It has not yet responded to the recommendation in the latest CSSIW report to upgrade practitioners' training in child protection.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community, where all children have equal access to all the areas of learning and activities provided for them. There is a strong emphasis on developing tolerant attitudes and ensuring that children and staff are free from harassment. The setting has enough practitioners, who have sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. Practitioners succeed in creating a stimulating environment in which every child is able to take full advantage of the learning experience and to develop positive values and attitudes. There is an ample supply of good quality resources for all areas of learning which are carefully matched to the development and learning needs of each individual. Resources in the outdoor area and in the community are used very effectively to support learning in the classroom. The buildings and accommodation are of good quality and are used extensively.

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

The leader's strong sense of purpose promotes and sustains improvement effectively. Learning and teaching are managed well, and the setting's policies are implemented effectively. The leader has high expectations for securing improvement and challenging staff positively to good effect. Practitioners work effectively as a team and have shared values about learning, behaviour and relationships. They make sure that the Foundation Phase and other national priorities, are successfully delivered. Relationships with children, parents and the primary school are very positive and contribute significantly to a sense of community. The management committee which includes teachers from the school and parents, fulfil its responsibilities very thoroughly and is influential in maintaining high standards and setting priorities. Outcomes for children are good.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners know their setting well and through the purposeful management of the leader and the management committee, are continuously self-evaluating and exploring ways to improve. Secure procedures have been established to maintain good practice and implement change in areas that require improvement. Practitioners are very open to new ideas and are willing to try out different ways of working and to share their knowledge with others in the setting. Self-evaluation takes careful account of the views of parents and benefit substantially from the professional advice of teachers in the school. The steps taken to improve standards in areas such as Welsh, have led to positive outcomes.

Partnership working: Good

A very wide range of partnership activities make a strong contribution to children's achievement and wellbeing. There is a very productive partnership with the school and there are appropriate links with a number of establishments and educational agencies. Practitioners take active steps to involve parents in the setting. Parents are regularly informed about all aspects of the setting's work with the leader taking advantage of every opportunity to include them in their children's learning. Practitioners work very well together, share information about children and know who to contact and when, if additional support is required for children. Community links and resources are used appropriately to support children's learning.

Resource management: Good

The setting is appropriately staffed to teach the curriculum and staff are deployed effectively to make the best possible use of their time, expertise and experience. The comprehensive arrangements for meeting the development needs of staff ensure they have up-to-date knowledge of developments in the Foundation Phase. The leader and the management committee have an appropriate understanding of their budget and prioritise their spending in line with the setting's developmental needs. Financial decisions are carefully evaluated by the leader to make sure that they have a positive effect on standards and children's progress and wellbeing. The setting

a positive effect on standards and children's progress and wellbeing. The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

All four parents' questionnaires received were positive. Parents say their children have settled down well, they enjoy attending the setting and are making good progress in their learning. Parents are satisfied with the information they receive about their child's progress and say that the setting is well managed.

Responses to discussions with children

Children say they are happy in the setting and are confident to turn to any adult to ask for advice and support.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Wil Williams	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)