



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

A report on

**Treowen 3 Plus
Treowen CP School
Newtown
Powys
SY16 1NJ**

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

Treowen 3 Plus Playgroup is an English-medium nursery in Newtown in Powys local authority. The setting is registered for 20 children between the ages of three to four years. It offers early education sessions from Monday to Friday from 9am until 11.30am during school term time, between September and July. There are currently 14 children in receipt of funded early education.

The setting has identified very few children as having additional learning needs. There are a minority of children from ethnic minority backgrounds and a minority of children have English as an additional language. No children have Welsh as their home language.

There are three members of staff including the management team. All members of staff work with the three and four-year-old children. The acting lead practitioner has been in post since September 2018.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspected the setting in December 2017 and Estyn last inspected it in November 2012.

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's communication and numeracy skills are developing well from their starting points
- Most children co-operate successfully with each other and share toys and equipment readily
- Nearly all practitioners provide a good range of interesting learning experiences indoors and outdoors that engage nearly all children successfully
- Nearly all practitioners have a good understanding of foundation phase practice
- Nearly all practitioners' caring approach creates a positive learning environment

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Leaders and practitioners are highly committed to improving quality
- The setting's arrangements for identifying its strengths and areas for improvement are effective
- Nearly all practitioners work together very effectively and understand their roles and responsibilities
- Nearly all practitioners use information from training well to improve the provision
- The setting makes good use of staffing and resources to support children's learning successfully

Recommendations

- R1 Improve children's confidence in using and applying Welsh language skills independently
- R2 Use information from observations to build on individual children's interests and plan next steps in their learning effectively and systematically
- R3 Ensure that the setting values, celebrates and reflects the diversity of children's backgrounds

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

Many children enter the setting with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. During their time at the setting, nearly all children make good progress, particularly in the development of their personal and social skills.

Most children listen attentively. They pay good attention when others are talking and allow others to speak without interrupting them. Most children understand and follow instructions successfully, such as choosing a book before joining the group for registration. Many children speak clearly, and a minority give simple verbal instructions, such as 'put them in here please', when requesting apples from a friend.

During group time, many children pay close attention to a story retold using repeated phrases and actions. Many select and handle books confidently and a few talk about the pictures independently. Most children readily take part in mark making activities with a range of equipment such as dry wipe pens and chalk. A few children show an understanding of writing for different purposes and a very few use recognisable letters independently. For example, they write 'm' on a card for mum.

Most children's numeracy skills are developing effectively from their starting points. Many children apply their numeracy skills in different situations when encouraged by an adult. For example, they say numbers in order to ten or count five apples into a bowl accurately. A few children use mathematical vocabulary spontaneously in their play such as 'one more' when adding another vegetable to their basket, or 'two pounds' when pretending to be a shop keeper. Most children explore simple shapes in their play and a minority recognise common 2d shapes when playing a 'find the shape' game in the outdoor area.

Most children's physical skills are developing well. Nearly all children handle and use small tools and equipment such as pens, spoons and brushes successfully. For example, they take the pegs off the washing line or stir their 'cake mix' in the mud kitchen with confidence. A majority of children develop good gross motor skills, such as balancing successfully on a ramp they have made with planks or negotiating space as they play a running game.

Nearly all children make decisions about the activities they undertake and the resources they want to use. Most explore their environment confidently and a minority develop their problem-solving skills successfully. For example, they persist and try different approaches when trying to remove soil and pebbles from a watering can.

Many children access and use familiar information and communication technology (ICT) effectively. For example, they explore programmable toys and use a battery operated till successfully. A minority of children use tablet computers to swipe screens, mark make and play maths games independently. A minority use a tablet computer to take a photo with confidence.

Nearly all children respond to a range of Welsh words and phrases positively. Many children join in with a range of simple Welsh songs when encouraged. Many children respond positively to a few simple questions given in Welsh during daily routines and repeat single words or phrases when encouraged. A few children are beginning to learn colour names and numbers. However, children's confidence in using Welsh language independently is underdeveloped.

Wellbeing: Good

Most children settle well as soon as they arrive at the setting. They co-operate well with one another and share toys and equipment appropriately. Most take good notice of instructions given by an adult and respond to requests enthusiastically. For example, they put out name cards for their friends and help prepare the table for tooth brushing time.

Most children look after the setting's resources well and treat adults and children respectfully. Most are courteous and show good manners when encouraged. A minority of children show an interest in a 'feelings display' and a few are beginning to recognise their own feelings stating, 'I'm happy'. Nearly all children are developing their independence, such as hanging their coat and bag in the cloakroom and collecting their own water to make 'potions' in the outdoor area.

Most children sustain interest in activities and move confidently to another activity when ready. Nearly all children make independent choices about what they want to play with from activities offered, and all children can do this when supported by an adult. Nearly all children show interest in the activities offered outside and particularly enjoy digging in the raised bed to find conkers.

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

The setting provides a good range of learning experiences indoors and outdoors that engage nearly all children successfully across all areas of learning. They focus well on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills. Practitioners reflect upon and adapt the environment to take account of children's needs appropriately. For example, they relocate the book area to a cosy room to support children's language and communication skills. However, this way of working is inconsistent and not yet an established way of working.

Practitioners provide effective opportunities for children to learn to care for living things. For example, they support children to grow and look after flowers and bulbs. Practitioners encourage children to show kindness to minibeasts they find in the outdoor area such as woodlice, by handling them with care.

The setting provides worthwhile opportunities for children to go on local visits to enrich their learning. For example, they visit a local retirement home to share stories with the residents. The children have also benefitted from taking part in a circus skills workshop, which supported the development of their literacy and physical skills.

Practitioners provide a range of opportunities for children to develop their communication skills effectively. They support children to join in with conversations and ask appropriate questions. The cosy book area is inviting and resourced well with a range of appropriate books, cushions and soft toys. The setting provides a wide range of opportunities for children to take part in mark making activities. These include using chalks, paintbrushes and shaving foam. Practitioners provide a variety of opportunities for children to develop their understanding of writing for different purposes. For example, they provide note pads in the construction area and shopping lists in the farm shop.

The setting's provision to develop children's numeracy skills is very effective. Nearly all practitioners provide children with useful opportunities to match, count and recognise shapes and patterns. For example, they encourage children to count the number of spines on their play dough hedgehog. Resources available, such as balance scales, money and a sand timer, provide children with a wide range of experiences that develop mathematical concepts and language well.

The indoor environment provides useful opportunities for children to develop their physical skills, such as pegboards, small construction and threading leaves. There are worthwhile opportunities for children to develop large-scale physical skills in the outdoor area such as wheelbarrows, a variety of balls and large tyres to balance on. Practitioners provide interesting planned activities to develop children's physical skills. For example, they support them to create and use a challenging obstacle course.

Provision for developing children's thinking and problem-solving skills is comprehensive. For example, practitioners challenge children to move a toy duck down a strip of guttering using water. Additional resources such as planks, pebbles and a large collection of conkers stimulate children's curiosity and creativity effectively.

The setting has recently improved provision for developing children's ICT skills. There is an effective range of equipment available, including programmable toys, digital cameras and tablet computers, which children access with interest.

Practitioners support children's Welsh language development effectively during large group time. They model Welsh through singing songs, counting and using a few Welsh words and phrases. However, practitioners' use of Welsh language throughout the session is limited. Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about their Welsh heritage. For example, they make cards as part of their St Dynwen's Day celebrations.

Teaching: Good

Nearly all practitioners have good understanding of effective foundation phase practice. They use a useful range of strategies to encourage and to motivate children to learn. They combine focused tasks with children's free play very effectively. As a result, children sustain interest in tasks and enjoy long periods of uninterrupted learning. Practitioners' interactions with children are respectful and caring.

Activities build appropriately on children's interests as practitioners observe how well children have engaged with different resources and activities. For example, practitioners ensure that suitable resources are available for a child who shows a particular interest in making books.

Nearly all practitioners provide beneficial challenge and support to individual children. For example, they adapt the level of difficulty for individual children when playing a large-scale shape recognition game. Practitioners explain things clearly, model activities and question children appropriately.

The setting has an effective range of assessment procedures. For example, practitioners observe children during their first few weeks at the setting and identify what they can already do. They also record useful observations on their weekly planning to show children's progress and responses to adult-led provision. However, they do not use this information consistently to identify next steps in learning for individual children.

Practitioners have developed an appropriate range of strategies to promote positive behaviour and many children respond to these well. Nearly all practitioners have clear expectations and explain rules to children appropriately. For example, they explain why the children should be careful when they stand up at group time. This ensures a team approach and consistency for the children.

The setting keeps parents and carers informed about the topics covered and what their child is learning effectively. For example, practitioners provide regular open mornings for parents to see first-hand, the skills that their child is learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has effective arrangements to support children's healthy life-styles. Practitioners encourage children to bring healthy snacks from home and practitioners provide a choice of milk or water to drink. Nearly all children's food choices are healthy. The setting provides valuable opportunities for children to take regular physical exercise. This develops children's co-ordination successfully and encourages them to adopt a healthy life-style.

Practitioners are good role models and support children to develop respect for others and a sense of right and wrong successfully. They encourage children to share equipment and to take care of resources effectively. As a result, many children learn to cooperate with each other well. For example, they collaborate as they make 'cakes' together in the mud kitchen.

A beneficial range of learning experiences foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Practitioners foster a sense of awe and wonder in children, for example, through encouraging them to observe tadpoles grow into frogs. Many children enjoy opportunities to play musical instruments and perform enthusiastically on the outdoor stage.

Practitioners provide a few resources that represent diversity. However, children have limited opportunities to learn about different cultures.

The setting provides meaningful opportunities for children to learn about sustainability such as recycling their food waste. Practitioners act as positive role models through using many recycled resources in the learning environment. The setting encourages children to use natural and recycled materials in their play such as twigs, egg boxes and milk cartons.

There are beneficial processes to support children with additional learning needs. These include effective links with a range of support agencies that help meet children's individual needs.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting is very welcoming, and practitioners are friendly and approachable. They encourage all children to take part and have equal access to each area of the setting's provision. Practitioners lead by example in encouraging children to show tolerance towards one another and respect for the setting's equipment. As a result, many children play and learn happily. For example, they help a friend put on a tiara, when dressing up.

The setting's accommodation is secure and well maintained. There are enough good quality resources across the areas of learning, which meet the needs of the children well. The setting has suitably qualified practitioners to meet the requirements of the foundation phase.

Practitioners make very creative use of the spaces both indoors and outdoors, which are attractive and welcoming. Resources and furniture are generally of good quality and appropriate. Practitioners have made recent improvements to the organisation of learning areas, resulting in resources being easily accessible for children.

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

Leaders manage practitioners and children effectively to ensure that the setting runs smoothly, following well-established routines. Practitioners work well together and understand their roles and responsibilities. The acting lead practitioner has a clear vision to support children to become independent learners. She works effectively with setting staff to provide a caring and nurturing environment for all children.

The setting has effective arrangements for managing staff performance. Nearly all staff have appropriate opportunities to discuss and reflect on the quality of their work. They take advantage of opportunities for continuous professional development that link appropriately to the setting's priorities for improvement. Recently, this has helped improve the quality of provision for developing children's ICT skills.

The acting headteacher of the school supports the setting well as the responsible individual. She contributes actively to long term strategic planning and has swiftly established effective monitoring and evaluation procedures. However, this is in the early stages and not yet sustained practice.

There are a range of beneficial policies and procedures to support the organisation of the setting, and staff review these appropriately. Leaders pay good attention to local and national priorities and, as a result, there is a successful focus on developing children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

Improving quality: Good

Arrangements for identifying strengths and areas for improvement are highly effective and all practitioners are committed to improving quality. The setting makes beneficial use of information from a range of sources to inform the self-evaluation process. Nearly all practitioners know what the setting does well and areas that they need to improve. They explain clearly their priorities for raising standards. Leaders identify appropriate targets for improvement and make clear who is responsible for these and how they will be monitored.

Leaders and practitioners have a very strong focus on providing a quality service and this has led to substantial improvements over a short period of time. For example, provision now focuses well on developing children's numeracy skills across the curriculum.

The setting has made suitable progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has an effective range of partnerships that improve the quality of provision and outcomes for children.

Parents receive a good range of information through a useful noticeboard, social media and day-to-day contact with practitioners. This helps parents keep informed about daily activities and feel comfortable in approaching the setting about any concerns. The setting involves parents in children's learning effectively. For example, they send home a 'mystery bulb' for families to plant and observe, during a topic on growing.

The setting has very well-established links with the local school in which it is situated, and the school invites children to attend regular events, such as assemblies. Children become familiar with the school building and staff through settling in visits to the reception classroom, which prepare them well for the move on to the next stage in their education.

The setting has beneficial links with the local authority and acts on the advice it receives. This has led to positive improvements in standards and provision. Practitioners make suitable use of links with the community to enhance the curriculum. For example, the children visit the local library to listen to stories and share books.

Resource management: Good

The setting makes good use of staffing and resources to support children's learning. Leaders and managers make sure that the setting has enough suitably qualified and well-trained practitioners to support the effective delivery of the foundation phase curriculum. Resources are plentiful and of good quality, such as the wide range of equipment to support role-play.

The setting ensures that most staff access training based on needs identified through the appraisal process. Most practitioners also make good use of training to improve provision. This has supported them to improve aspects, such as the use of resources for developing children's ICT skills. Nearly all practitioners reflect on their practice and are aware of personal strengths and areas to develop. They share ideas and support each other's professional development well.

Leaders manage the setting's budget suitably and there are appropriate systems for keeping spending under review. In view of the good quality of teaching, the quality of provision and the progress children make, 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.
Muddied Meithei	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