



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

**Kinmel Bay Playgroup
Kinmel Bay Community Centre
The Square (off Foryd Road)
Kinmel Bay
LL18 5BT
United Kingdom**

Date of inspection: July 2014

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

Kinmel Bay under 5s Playgroup serves the town of Kinmel Bay and the surrounding area. The setting meets for five mornings per week in Kinmel Bay Community Centre. It employs two practitioners.

The setting is registered to take up to 24 children. Children are admitted from the age of two. There are currently 15 children on roll, eight of whom are aged three and funded by the local authority. The number of children who attend each session varies. On the first morning of the inspection, there were seven three-year-olds present. On the second morning, there were five three-year-olds present.

Nearly all children have English as their home language. There are no children from Welsh speaking homes.

The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in May 2014. This is the 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. This is because:

- most children make good progress and achieve well during their time at the setting;
- nearly all children listen attentively and speak clearly and confidently;
- the setting is a safe and welcoming learning environment and children settle in well;
- all children are polite, behave well and play co-operatively;
- practitioners provide a broad range of interesting learning activities that engage the children effectively;
- practitioners are good language role models for children and treat them with care and respect;
- provision for pupils' Welsh language development is effective; and
- provision for the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills is appropriate.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- practitioners are reflective and are keen to improve their skills;
- the setting responds effectively to advice and guidance, which is impacting positively on children's outcomes and wellbeing;
- the leader manages the setting appropriately and communicates its aims successfully to practitioners and parents;
- practitioners have a clear picture of the setting's strengths and areas for development; and
- planning for improvement is a developing part of the setting's day-to-day practice and areas identified link to improving children's wellbeing and outcomes appropriately.

Recommendations

- R1 Provide suitable opportunities for developing children's understanding of other cultures and the wider world
- R2 Increase provision for children to use information and communication technology (ICT) in their everyday play
- R3 Use assessment to plan more effectively for children's next steps in learning
- R4 Within the setting's improvement plan, identify costs and timescales clearly and monitor progress more regularly

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan, which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most children make appropriate progress from their differing starting points. They readily acquire new knowledge and skills as they actively try out new experiences. This prepares them well for the next step in their education.

Most children's literacy and communication skills are developing well. Nearly all children listen attentively and talk freely about their activities. Many are confident to begin simple conversations spontaneously, for example during role-play when they approach adults happily to talk about their learning, expressing themselves using appropriate vocabulary. Nearly all children enjoy listening to stories and recite familiar songs and rhymes enthusiastically, in both English and in Welsh. Many children turn the pages of books appropriately and enjoy talking about some of the characters in stories. They respond positively to opportunities to develop early writing skills, using a variety of mark-making equipment. For example, many children demonstrate appropriate control when writing with a variety of pens and pencils to make shopping lists and write post cards in the role-play area beach shop. This impacts positively on children's understanding of simple sounds and supports their early letter formation well.

Most children are developing effective early numeracy skills. They are beginning to use appropriate mathematical terms when sorting and comparing objects, and when exploring shape and capacity. For example, when sorting objects linked to their shape, they can sort by colour or size. When working outside in the sand pit, most children understood the idea of full, empty and half full when filling a range of containers with sand. Most children count to ten correctly and a few older children recognise and sequence numbers to ten accurately.

Most children's Welsh language skills are of a good standard. They respond appropriately to words, phrases and commands used within everyday routines. They recite familiar phrases and songs readily, and use Welsh spontaneously during their registration and snack time. For example, most children understand and use the Welsh words they have learned for colours and numbers and can say 'yes please' and 'no thank you' and 'I am here' in Welsh correctly.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all the children are keen to learn and have very positive attitudes to learning. Most children make choices confidently as they move between adult led and independent learning tasks. They remain busy and on task for appropriate periods of time. Most children contribute confidently to what they learn and how they learn, through regular discussions with practitioners. This encourages nearly all children to feel involved in developing activities associated with the topic, for example the recent visit to the local beach to look at wildlife there.

Snack-time is a social occasion when children show good table manners and engage in conversations successfully whilst enjoying each other's company. Their independent learning skills are developing well, for example when brushing their teeth at the start of the session and when tidying up.

All children have an appropriate understanding of keeping clean and healthy relative to their age. They wash their hands after activities ready for snack time, without prompting by practitioners.

Children have very supportive relationships with each other and with practitioners. They show consideration and courtesy, such as when sharing resources and taking turns to speak. Standards of behaviour are very good. Many children are confident and feel valued. As a result, they are willing to take risks and learn from their mistakes.

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

Practitioners plan well together and provide a broad range of interesting and engaging learning activities based on themes that interest most children, such as studies of favourite stories or the seaside. They base their planning firmly on the Foundation Phase principles of learning through high quality first-hand experiences. Recent changes to planning have placed a strong emphasis on the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills across most areas of learning successfully. Planning for the use of the outdoor area in support of these skills is particularly effective. This has improved most children's speaking, listening and number skills appropriately. However, provision for ICT is under developed. This is largely due to a lack of suitable ICT equipment being available to support the development of children's ICT skills appropriately.

Practitioners encourage children to be independent, to think for themselves and to experiment with new experiences. They often adapt activities following children's suggestions and interests. These build well upon children's prior knowledge and understanding. Planning provides effective opportunities for children to develop their physical and creative skills. They learn to care about living things successfully by planting seeds, looking after plants in the outdoor area and studying wild life at their local beach.

The setting makes effective use of trips and visitors. For example, a visit from the ambulance service and a trip to the local Forest School enhance children's understanding of their locality and the services it provides successfully. However, children's understanding of the wider world and other cultures is limited.

The setting promotes the Welsh language well through daily focused sessions and informative displays. For example, children complete a daily weather chart and the use of 'Helpwr Heddiw', the Welsh helper of the day, reinforces children's understanding of familiar phrases successfully. Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions through St David's Day celebrations. Practitioners use Welsh consistently during whole-group carpet time

and during activities. They encourage children to respond in Welsh when reading stories, singing songs and giving instructions. This supports children's acquisition of the language effectively.

There are worthwhile opportunities for children to learn about sustainability and recycling. For example, the setting recycles food waste and reinforces the children's understanding of the need to care for their environment by planting flowers and feeding birds.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase and provide interesting learning experiences for children across areas of learning effectively. The appropriate pace of sessions engages children well and motivates them to learn through play. The clear daily routines and strong teamwork provide a consistency of approach. This enables all children to feel happy, safe and confident in the setting.

Through the effective use of questioning and ongoing praise, practitioners intervene appropriately to move children's learning forward successfully. Practitioners act as good language role models. This contributes to the good standards of children's oracy skills and enhances their vocabulary effectively.

Practitioners know the children very well. Regular observational assessments of individuals and groups of children are beginning to enable practitioners to identify children's next steps in learning clearly. These assessments inform future planning successfully. However, practitioners do not always use assessment well enough to identify individual children's next steps in learning.

Parents are well informed about their child's general progress through regular formal and informal update meetings with practitioners.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting promotes children's awareness of healthy living well and has appropriate policies and practices for ensuring children's emotional and physical wellbeing. For example, there is daily access to a range of physical activities, both indoors and outdoors. This encourages children to use apparatus confidently and promotes their understanding of sharing and working co-operatively.

Clear daily routines ensure that children settle quickly and confidently into the setting and this contributes significantly to children's emotional and social development. Children know to wash their hands before eating food, after being outside and after using the toilet. This helps them to become responsible for their personal hygiene.

The setting identifies children's learning and emotional needs well and works hard to meet these needs. It has clear procedures to support children with additional learning needs and has a suitable range of contacts with external agencies in order to provide extra support and advice, as and when required.

An appropriate range of learning experiences fosters children's spiritual, moral and social development effectively. For example, children say a prayer at the end of the day to give thanks for their friends and families and have a very clear understanding of what is right and wrong.

Children learn about the importance of caring for the environment by growing flowers and participating regularly in recycling activities. For example, they recycle food waste from snack time and build models with cardboard boxes.

The settings arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

Practitioners nurture and support children well, creating a very inclusive community. All children have equal access to activities, both indoors and outside. The outdoor area is readily accessible and used effectively to support a range of skills across most areas of learning. The use of the raised bed encourages children to grow flowers to attract insects and birds. This enables them to appreciate nature first-hand.

Practitioners are suitably qualified and very experienced in working with young children. They make effective use of the available space. The accommodation is well maintained and secure. Practitioners succeed in creating a bright and stimulating environment for learning. By dividing the class base into areas of learning successfully, children have easy and effective access to all resources. These are of good quality and generally meet children's needs effectively. However, resources to support children's understanding of the wider world and other cultures and information and technology skills are limited.

The setting uses community resources effectively, for example the use of the local beach, visits to the nearby shop and workshops in the local Forest School project. These provide additional learning experiences and have a beneficial impact on children's physical development and social skills in particular.

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

The leader manages and implements changes within the setting effectively. She communicates the setting's aims well. Her vision focus strongly on providing an inclusive and caring learning environment that caters for individual children's interests appropriately, whilst striving to improve children's reading, writing and mathematical skills.

All practitioners have clear and up-to-date job descriptions and well-understood roles and responsibilities. They work together as a team successfully to move the setting forward. They manage their time well and provide effective support for all children.

The setting makes suitable use of informal appraisal systems to support and challenge practitioners. Targets for staff link to the setting's improvement plan and to training needs successfully. These impact positively on raising children's outcomes, particularly their Welsh oracy skills and numeracy skills. Practitioners make sound use of meetings to discuss children's achievements and progress and to develop planning.

The setting has made good progress in taking forward national initiatives, especially the development of outdoor learning to support children's numeracy and literacy skills. The leader keeps the management committee well informed about the setting's work and the standards it achieves.

Improving quality: Adequate

All staff demonstrates a clear commitment to continuous improvement. They contribute to an audit to identify the settings strengths and areas for development effectively. Leaders use this information well to write an honest self-evaluation report and to develop an appropriate setting improvement plan. This plan identifies a suitable number of relevant priorities. These priorities relate well to improving outcomes for children and clearly identify the people who are responsible for developing each target. However, they do not identify costings, training needs and timescales clearly enough. The leader reviews the plan informally but there is no formal monitoring of the plan on a regular basis. Success criteria are not always measurable or linked well enough to pupil outcomes.

Practitioners are open to new ideas and respond positively to support from the local authority advisory teacher resulting in improvements in children's outcomes and the quality of learning experiences provided. For example, the purchase of a broader range of equipment to support children's physical development skills, both indoors and outdoors, has improved children's co-ordination and raised their self-confidence.

Practitioners make suitable use of training opportunities and visits to other settings to share good practice. These impact positively on the setting's planning and assessment procedures.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has appropriate partnerships with parents and carers. Leaders are proactive in sharing the setting's aims and objectives regularly with them. Parents receive relevant information via the setting's noticeboard, newsletters and via daily personal contact. As a result, parents are well informed and knowledgeable about the settings day-to-day plans and feel involved in supporting their child's progress.

Beneficial partnerships exist with the local primary school and this promotes a smooth transition for children from the setting to the next stage in their education. The setting has effective partnerships with the community. For example, children visit the local beach as part of their nature studies and visit the local ambulance service to develop their understanding of the world of work.

There is a strong partnership with the local authority advisory teacher. Practitioners benefit from advice and support in developing and improving the quality of the learning environment and on planning for skills. They attend local authority meetings and training updates regularly. They also have effective links with other settings to share good practice.

Links between the setting and outside agencies are appropriate. For example, the setting makes effective use of the local health visitor to help children with additional learning needs and their families.

Resource management: Good

The setting makes appropriate use of staffing and resources to support learning and teaching. Practitioners make effective use of training opportunities to improve provision and outcomes for children and to improve children's outcomes. For example, practitioners have attended Welsh language course improving their own skills and consequently those of the children. Visits to another setting to look at planning and self-evaluation are also supporting good practice.

The leader manages the setting's financial resources appropriately. The chair of the setting's committee and the leader monitors the budget regularly and systematically to ensure the most efficient use of funds. This means that spending decisions are appropriate and in line with the targets identified in the setting's priorities for improvement plan.

In view of fact that children's outcomes are good, the effective learning experiences available and the many strengths in leadership, the setting provides 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

Mrs Susan Davies

Reporting Inspector

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	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) 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 partnership's 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 3 to 7 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 which 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 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.