



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

**Appletree Day Nursery
Greenfield House
North Row
Redwick
Newport
NP26 3DX**

Date of inspection: June 2012

by

Mary Dyas

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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About the setting

Appletree Day Nursery is an English-medium setting based in a converted barn on the property of the owner in rural countryside outside Magor near Newport, Gwent. The nursery is run by a manager and the pre-school group, called Busy Bees, is led by a qualified teacher supported by two appropriately qualified practitioners. The group has the sole use of a good-sized room with direct access to a dedicated outdoor space and also use of the nursery 'gym' and a quiet classroom space for small group work or whole group lively activities or music.

Children attending the nursery come from the surrounding area and most move on to a number of different local primary schools. The children are considered to come from mainly advantaged homes and all have English as their home language. The setting welcomes all children and makes good provision for those with additional learning needs. There are currently no children with identified additional learning needs although one three-year-old is receiving speech therapy support at home.

The nursery is open from Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm for children aged from babies to five years. At the time of the inspection there were 22 children on roll in Busy Bees aged from two and a half to four years. Of these, 19 were three and four-year-olds. Four three-year-olds and nine three to four-year-olds, who will move to reception classes in September, were in receipt of funded educational provision from the Local Authority.

The nursery was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in January 2012 and by Estyn in February 2006.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- all children are happy and relaxed in the setting;
- all children enjoy and participate eagerly in the range of interesting and stimulating activities planned for them;
- all children make good progress in relation to their starting points;
- relationships between children and adults are warm and caring; and
- the setting provides children with particularly good opportunities to learn about the natural world at first hand.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- self-evaluation is embedded into the setting;
- all staff in the setting are consulted during the self-evaluation process and have ownership of the agreed targets for improvement; and
- the current self-evaluation document is realistic and there is good evidence that targets set in the action plan are being positively addressed.

Recommendations

In order to improve the setting needs to:

R1 build in more structured opportunities for children to make choices about, and evaluations of, their learning experiences - the setting has already identified this in its self-evaluation;

R2 continue to develop the consistent use of incidental Welsh throughout the sessions to ensure children gain the confidence to use the language they have learned – the setting has already identified this in its self-evaluation;

R3 establish a process to evaluate the impact of staff training on children's progress and wellbeing; and

R4 continue to embed the process of observation and assessment to ensure that assessments of children's progress are based on observational evidence.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The progress of all children is good and they achieve well. Almost all children's numeracy and mathematical skills are good and all count by rote confidently to at least 10. Most three-year-olds are able to count objects accurately to at least 5 without support and older children confidently name and recognise written numerals to 10. Almost all children are very articulate and communicate clearly in full sentences. They are confident to talk to adults about what they are doing and all carry out instructions promptly. All children enjoy stories in both English and Welsh and all show an interest in books and their content and handle them correctly. The majority practise writing across different areas of learning and more able children are beginning to develop good independent writing skills.

All children are developing their understanding and use of ICT as they play confidently with a range of electronic toys and use the computer to play age appropriate games. All children enjoy and join in with Welsh songs and rhymes and occasionally make appropriate use of the words and phrases they have learnt.

Wellbeing: Good

All children are happy in the nursery and enjoy their experiences. The warm relationships they have with their practitioners make them feel safe, happy and confident. All have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and that good food and exercise are important to make them healthy. Together with their practitioners they have achieved the Sure Start Healthy Eating Award. All children know that they need to wash their hands after using the toilet and also before their meals because they don't want to catch germs. The children develop a positive attitude towards learning which they demonstrate by taking an active and enthusiastic part in their learning experiences. All children behave very well and are polite and show consideration for others when taking turns and sharing equipment.

Most children make friendships in the setting and show care and concern for one another. Children play in self selecting groups, in pairs and independently depending on the activity in which they are involved.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

Practitioners work well together to plan a wide range of activities which stimulate, engage and challenge the children to learn effectively. Plans are based on ensuring coverage of the areas of learning using the Foundation Phase Development Profile and Skills Framework and on specific needs identified from observations of children's learning. This ensures that more able children are challenged in their learning experiences and all children have their specific learning needs met. Planning is well co-ordinated and provides good opportunities for children to reinforce their learning across different areas of provision.

Practitioners know the children well and respond appropriately to their varying needs, abilities and interests. Planning clearly addresses the needs and interests of the children and children are beginning to make decisions about their learning. Overall, learning experiences successfully enable children to develop communication and numeracy skills every day.

Welsh words and phrases are introduced during group times and used informally during the sessions. The nursery celebrates some of the traditions of Wales, such as St. David's day when children play an active part, dressing appropriately and sampling traditional Welsh foods.

A good feature of the setting is the children's involvement in sustainability and recycling. They know they should turn off taps to save wasting water and are actively involved in recycling paper in their classroom and helping to sort other items for collection. All scraps from the kitchen are fed to the owner's animals and the children often go outside to watch the pigs, donkeys, chickens and ducks come to eat.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good. All practitioners have a secure understanding of Foundation Phase principles and practice. They use a good range of approaches to stimulate play and active learning experiences which interest and appeal to children of all abilities. Adults give children sufficient time to complete a task or develop an idea and intervene appropriately and sensitively when needed. Teaching is most effective when practitioners use open-ended questions to challenge children's thinking. Practitioners provide children with helpful oral feedback as they learn.

Practitioners know the children well and use this knowledge to inform the completion of the Local Authority's record of progress. Spontaneous observations are recorded in a book by all practitioners but these records are too infrequent to provide a firm evidence base. Informal links with parents and carers are strong. All parents and carers are invited termly to view their children's records when they have been updated and when their child moves on to primary school they receive a written report covering the seven areas of learning of the Foundation Phase including ways in which they can help their child with their next steps in learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides a warm and welcoming environment for all children. Staff provide good role models which encourage children to treat one another with kindness and respect. Transition into Busy Bees is smooth and tailored to the needs of individual children.

The provision made for children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are good arrangements for supporting children with additional learning needs including provision for the more able.

The setting has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding. All practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where every child receives equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. There is a clear emphasis on acknowledging, respecting and celebrating diversity. Practitioners create a supportive environment for learning. There is a sufficient supply of good quality resources that are used appropriately to support the learning and teaching. The extensive and imaginative use of the local rural environment is a strength of the setting. Visitors from the community make a good contribution to enhancing pupils' experiences.

Practitioners have attended a range of courses organised by the Local Authority which has enabled them to cover all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum effectively. The setting succeeds in creating an attractive and welcoming environment for the children.

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

The owner and manager have created a setting with a very positive ethos where children are welcomed and are very much at the centre of planning and organisation. The setting has clear policies and aims which are understood and implemented well by all practitioners. There is a developing culture of self-improvement amongst practitioners which helps to develop and maintain the good work of the setting. Leaders respond well to advice and support, ensuring that changes impact positively upon children's standards and the quality of provision. There is a good range of clear policies to ensure the safety of the children and risk assessments are in place.

Leaders have a good understanding of their role and work together effectively to successfully deliver the Foundation Phase. Comprehensive appraisal processes are in place to support and improve staff. Practitioners respond well to local and national priorities. They are involved in training and developments connected with the Foundation Phase and share information with one another.

Improving quality: Good

Self evaluation in the setting has been developing over time and practitioners know their setting well. The recently produced self-evaluation document is a realistic one owned and shared by all practitioners. It identifies many of the setting's strengths and appropriate targets for improvement. Progress is regularly monitored and recorded.

Practitioners regularly attend training provided by both the Local Authority and the Wales Pre-school Providers Association. Although they reflect on their immediate response to the training, there are no arrangements to review the impact on children's learning. There are informal relationships with other similar settings in the local area and the pre-school leader has had the opportunity to visit another setting to observe good practice.

Partnership working: Good

Each term parents of children in Busy Bees receive a newsletter giving information about the main activities planned and ways in which they can support their children. More detailed information about the songs and rhymes and Welsh words and phrases their children will be learning is provided monthly.

Good links exist between the setting and some of the primary schools which the children move on to. The setting is a member of the Wales Pre-school Providers Association and has good links with Sure Start. It enjoys a good relationship with the Local Authority link teacher who provides support and advice. There is clear evidence that this advice has been acted on to improve provision for the children.

Resource management: Good

The setting has a good range of up-to-date resources which contribute effectively to children's learning. Staff are appropriately deployed and good use is made of the available space outdoors to provide a range of interesting learning experiences for the children. Finances are managed by the owner who has a good understanding of the budget and the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Responses to parent questionnaires

Ten questionnaires were received. Responses show that 100% of parents strongly agree that:

- Their child likes the setting;
- Their child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting; and
- Their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise

Almost all parents strongly agreed that their child is well prepared for moving on to school and almost all made very positive additional comments regarding the level of care and support provided for their children.

Responses to discussions with children

All children, in conversation, said they enjoyed their time in the nursery. Several responded that they look forward to coming to the nursery. They liked all the activities, especially playing outside with their friends.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mary Dyas	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)

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.

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.

National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National (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.