



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

**Kinnerton Under Fives Playgroup
Higher Kinnerton Village Hall
Bennetts Lane
Higher Kinnerton
Flintshire
CH4 9AJ**

Date of inspection: March 2013

by

Anne Manning

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

Kinnerton Under 5's Playgroup is located in the village of Kinnerton, about a quarter of a mile from the local school. This English-medium playgroup is managed by a committee and the general day to day running is carried out by a team of practitioners.

There were five funded 3-year-old children on the first inspection morning and six present on the second. Nearly all children attending the setting are from the village and local area and come from advantaged social backgrounds. Nearly all children are from a white British background and at present no children have additional help for their learning.

Kinnerton Under 5's Playgroup receives support from Flintshire Early Education and is a member of Wales Pre-school Providers Association.

The setting is open during term time and is registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales to provide care for up to 25 children aged from 2 and a half to 4 years of age who attend a varying number of sessions.

The last CSSIW inspection was in October 2012 and this is the second inspection by Estyn.

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:

- teaching is excellent;
- children make good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes;
- learning experiences are challenging, varied and interesting; and
- a good level of technology supports the children's learning.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is very strong leadership;
- self-evaluation is effective and identifies areas for development;
- partnership working is good;
- practitioners reflect effectively on their own practice; and
- the setting has made consistently good progress since the last inspection.

Recommendations

R1. Continue to develop planning and assessment.

R2. Develop skill opportunities at snack time.

R3. Increase opportunities for the children to learn about re-cycling.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan which 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?	N/A
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There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skill development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

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

Practitioners plan a good range of interesting activities that provide a challenge for the children, for example how to free a toy figure from a block of ice. A new planning process engages all children successfully and activities take into account their differing learning needs, although as a result of the changes, this is not always clearly recorded.

There are good opportunities for the children to mark make and to recognise their names. Numeracy skills develop effectively through activities such as matching bears and playing hopscotch.

Learning experiences provide occasions for taking turns and sharing, for example when using the phone in the home corner. Effective opportunities enable children to discover how Information Communication Technology works, including managing a remote control ladybird successfully, using a key board and a photocopier.

The range of activities develops respect and tolerance for people from all cultural backgrounds. Activities are focused well and the children have good opportunities to try things for themselves and develop their play and as a result children acquire good

thinking skills across all areas of learning. Although learning experiences encourage children to become confident and independent learners, a few opportunities are missed for the children to refine their skills, for example during snack time by pouring their own drinks and washing their own beakers and plates.

Children learn successfully about caring for living things through a range of different creatures visiting the setting such as an owl and a hamster.

There are good opportunities for the children to hear and use the Welsh language. Festivals and traditions are celebrated successfully including St David's Day, Chinese New Year and Pancake Day.

Children learn about re-cycling through their model making, but opportunities to develop their learning are insufficient.

Teaching: Excellent

Questioning techniques are outstanding in extending the learning and achievements of the children and as a result children develop skills well above expectation. All practitioners very successfully develop and progress the children's learning by allowing them to take resources home to continue their experimentation.

All practitioners are exceptionally well briefed each day and have extensive knowledge of the Foundation Phase and child development. Practitioners are very well deployed and make highly imaginative use of resources such as the hopscotch mat to keep the children's interest and focus on task.

Activities and learning experiences both indoor and outdoor provide highly effective challenge and through the superb creative use of resources, good relationships and innovative humour, practitioners enable the children to learn quickly. There are very high expectations of the children and because all practitioners know the children well they are aware of what to do to encourage them to improve. Practitioners develop an exceptional knowledge base in the children by introducing high level specialised resources. As a result of introducing a phone application of bird calls children are confident to recognise individual sounds and can use this superb technology independently to take responsibility for and develop their own learning.

All practitioners understand how children learn and are very clear about the development opportunities and expected outcomes from each activity. Activities are evaluated comprehensively and include the level of adult input. A daily diary records both children's and practitioners' ideas very effectively. The diary informs plans well and an innovative assessment grid successfully enables practitioners to note very quickly the children's achievements and their next steps for learning.

All practitioners intervene appropriately to develop and extend the children's play. They introduce new ideas or problems to solve and all provide very effective feedback. All are highly motivated and enthusiastic about the children's achievements.

All practitioners constantly review and evaluate their practice and the progress of the children during the session. This is highly effective and as a result they continually adapt or change an activity to extend individual achievement or provide a different level of skill or way of working to successfully meet the developing needs of the children.

Practitioners successfully provide good opportunities for children to hear and to speak the Welsh language.

Practitioners carry out useful observations of the children that very effectively inform This is Me assessment records and they note when children need more skill development, but these do not always include a review of progress. Parents are involved extensively in the achievements of their children and they are actively aware of their progress, particularly as a result of the time they spend in the group on rota duty.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The playgroup is a happy community in which children and adults respect and appreciate each other's contributions. There are good transition arrangements to the village school and the playgroup has a range of policies and procedures to actively support the children and promote successfully their health and wellbeing including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

There are appropriate policies and procedures in respect of keeping children safe and child protection and the practitioners have undertaken training. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meets requirements and gives no cause for concern.

Learning experiences ensure that all children actively learn about sharing and taking turns particularly when using remote control toys. The children know how to distinguish right from wrong successfully and the playgroup fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect and develops an effective understanding of living with others.

Children have good opportunities to take responsibility such as being Helpwr Heddiw. They show good levels of initiative and help each other by working effectively together, for example when using remote control equipment.

The children develop a sense of awe and wonder about the world in which they live by celebrating different nationalities, taking care of plants, using technology, observing wildlife and birds and listening to their songs.

Practitioners know the children well and they provide consistency of care. Successful strategies are in place to assist children with learning needs and to work with parents and other professionals. As a result children achieve well and their families are well guided, supported and there are effective links with their homes.

Learning environment: Good

The four main practitioners, including two team leaders who job share, have valuable knowledge of child development and the Foundation Phase ethos. The group has developed successfully an inclusive setting that values the diversity of background of the children.

The playgroup has the use of three rooms in the village community centre and practitioners set out the areas consistently well every day for the children's play and learning. All children are confident learners and are keen to develop their play by accessing resources independently.

A range of policies and procedures underpins effectively the running of the group and successfully promotes the wellbeing of the children.

Resources are appropriate, suitable and sufficient and used well to address the requirements of the Foundation Phase and the needs of the children. All children are kept safe and accommodation is secure. Indoors and outdoors are used effectively to develop play and learning and the local environment is used well to enhance the facilities at the setting.

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

Leaders have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are kept well informed. Values, aims and objectives are effectively shared through day-to-day working practice and meetings for the benefit of the children.

Leaders effectively create a positive ethos; there is a sense of purpose and a need to make improvements to enhance the provision for the children.

Practitioners and children are valued and were all observed to be very enthusiastic and highly motivated. Practitioners receive regular advice and support from the local authority teacher and the Wales Pre-school Providers Association and this has positive gains for the children.

The committee supports the playgroup effectively and leaders respond very quickly to any advice and guidance and ensure that any changes impact positively on the provision. Regular appraisals and a very strong culture of self-reflection develop the setting and lead to successful improvements in knowledge and practice.

Leaders set challenging targets and relevant legislation, guidance and national and local priorities are taken into account and used well to improve the well being of the children, for example healthy eating.

There are well established links with parents that support consistently the learning of the children.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has made consistently good progress since their previous Estyn inspection. Action plans are effective and as a result all the recommendations have been met well. All practitioners are involved in self-evaluation that effectively identifies strengths and areas for improvement. Information is used successfully to prioritise areas for development.

Practitioners constantly review their practice during the session and make adaptations to the activities and resources and as a result this ensures flexibility and positive gains for the children in their learning.

Practitioners attend a range of courses and ensure their knowledge is current. All practitioners share their practice for the benefit of the children and the successful development of the setting.

Partnership working: Good

Children benefit from trust and clear communication between all parties. There is an effective working relationship with the local authority teacher who visits the setting, providing support and guidance. Any suggestions are quickly acted upon and impact positively on the progress and achievements of the children.

There is a good relationship with the parents of the children and an information folder ensures that parents are successfully involved with the learning of their children. Children take things of interest into the setting and then home to continue actively with their learning. Parent helpers ensure consistently good links between home and playgroup are maintained.

There is a highly effective working relationship with the local school and as a result children experience an easy transition from playgroup. A good level of information is passed on particularly when the children visit the school and teachers and the head teacher come to the playgroup. After a month the practitioners check that all their children have settled well into the school routine. One of the practitioners is also a school governor which further strengthens the link for the children.

The playgroup is an active member of the Wales Pre-school Providers Association and partnership working with other professionals ensures active support for any children with additional learning needs.

There are good links with the local community and a range of visitors have been into the setting including the village lay preacher, the police and dentist to extend the knowledge and understanding of the children.

Resource management: Good

There are four experienced practitioners. All are qualified to level 3 and are deployed successfully. Equipment is well organised in a four-weekly-cycle, resources are obtained where gaps have been actively identified and ideas come from courses and visiting other settings and take successfully into account the developing needs of the children. Practitioners use a range of resources well to motivate the children to learn effectively. Outdoors is used successfully to promote the Foundation Phase outcomes.

Leaders have a strong understanding of budget matters and ensure that any extra resources and equipment benefit the children and improve standards. Spending is prioritised well to develop the provision. Leaders evaluate financial decisions effectively to ensure a positive, direct impact on the children's well being and progress.

The funding that is received is used well and the playgroup provides consistently good value for money.

Appendix 1

Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received. (This is because there were only a small number of relevant children at the time of the inspection.)

Responses to discussions with children

Children are happy at the playgroup. They are very confident learners with well developed thinking skills. They enjoy coming to the group and finding out. They settle quickly and like all the staff and the activities.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Anne Manning	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	<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 partnership's 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>

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.