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a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Priory Tots
Priory Church in Wales Primary School
Pendre Close
Brecon
LD3 9EU

Date of inspection: 20, 21 May 2013

by

Branwen Llewelyn Jones

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

Priory Tots Nursery is situated in Priory Church in Wales Primary School in Brecon. It was registered under the Children Act 1989 in the former school building and was established in 1999. The setting is managed by a management committee.

The nursery provides care for children from the local community and surrounding areas for five mornings and afternoons a week from Monday to Friday between 9.00 a.m. and 1.00 and between 1.00 p.m. and 3.30 p.m. for thirty eight weeks a year. The morning sessions are attended by three year olds and the afternoon sessions by two year olds. Children leave when they begin in the nursery class of the school. At present 16 funded children are registered. The area is recognised as one which is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged.

The well-resourced setting contains one large room and a smaller carpeted room which is used for story time and quiet activities. There are appropriate toilets and hand basins for young children. There is an attractive, well-equipped outdoor area leading on to a grassed area which is used by the setting in every session.

It is an English medium setting and all the children come from English-speaking homes. At the time of the inspection there were no children of three years of age identified as having additional learning needs. Children from different ethnic backgrounds are welcomed by the setting.

Two practitioners are employed including the leader and both work with the children. There is also a volunteer who helps every week for two days. The leader and deputy have appropriate qualifications in early years education and considerable experience. Both have received training for the Foundation Phase, child protection and safety and in first aid. The last inspection by Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales was conducted on 10 June 2012 and the nursery was last inspected by Estyn in July 2007.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- children make good progress from their starting point;
- they feel safe and happy in the setting;
- they are actively involved in their learning;
- children receive experiences which meet well their needs and interests;
- the standard of teaching is consistently good;
- assessment through observation is used effectively to plan the next steps, and
- the practitioners work well as a team.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is a culture of professional reflection which is founded in self-evaluation;
- the standard of leadership is good, and
- there is a clear commitment to continuing professional development.

Recommendations

- R1. Improve children's Welsh language skills.
- R2. Improve the setting's links with the community.
- R3. Improve children's awareness of other cultures and beliefs

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

Standards: Good

Every child achieves well according to their starting point and stage of development and each child makes good progress in all the areas of learning of the Foundation Phase.

All children have good communication skills. All understand and follow instructions correctly and answer questions appropriately. All speak in full sentences often using elaborate language and complex sentences. They listen with great interest to stories, concentrating well and saying together parts they know. Nearly all develop a good vocabulary and phrases which they use when responding to adults in familiar situations such as snack time and Welsh sessions. Many know a number of Welsh rhymes and songs and enjoy looking at Welsh story books. Their use of the Welsh they know is, however, underdeveloped.

The majority enjoys browsing through books and chooses books voluntarily, handling them like readers. All enjoy mark-making both inside and in the outside area and they experiment confidently with a wide range of materials. Every child uses mathematical language correctly when comparing the length, height or size of objects when playing. The majority uses fingers to count and all recognise common shapes. They develop their information and communications technology skills well through using a laptop and computer programs, electric toys and cameras. The majority demonstrates good creative skills during role play, responding to music through dance and in their art work which is of a high standard.

All have developed high levels of independence, self-confidence and self-control. All concentrate for extended periods while playing or exploring their outdoor environment and all enjoy their learning.

Wellbeing: Good

The children enjoy all their experiences in the nursery. The close and warm relationship between the adults and the children makes them feel safe and happy. The self-confidence and happiness of the children shows that they are appreciated and respected and they, in turn, respect and like the adults. All children show concern for and like one another, the adults and visitors. All are courteous and show consideration towards others. All make friends in the nursery and seek out their friends to play them. All have a positive and enthusiastic attitude to learning and take an active and energetic part in their learning experiences and behave well.

Each one understands that eating healthily, dental hygiene and keeping fit are important to their health and they name healthy foods and things they should not eat. They enjoy eating lunch together every day and they behave nicely at the table. Every child goes to the toilet independently and then washes his/her hands. All the children make decisions and choices about their learning and almost all are very confident.

Although the children enjoy frequent walks in the locality the use of the local community is underdeveloped.

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

Children enjoy learning experiences of a good quality which are well planned. Practitioners discuss and evaluate the previous week's provision and outcomes, the children's achievements, progress and the particular needs of each child in addition to general matters. Formal observations which have been made are also considered and practitioners use all this information to plan the next cycle of provision; this is a good feature. Planning matches well the needs and interests of the children and a wide range of interesting and active learning experiences is planned which enables the children to make good progress towards meeting the outcomes of the Foundation Phase. The planning is flexible and practitioners adapt it to meet children's interests. Adults build well on the knowledge, understanding, skills and interests of the children in activities which are meaningful to them.

Children develop positive relationships with others and they demonstrate respect and tolerance towards everyone including people from different cultural backgrounds. All children develop into enthusiastic, confident and independent learners and all develop good thinking, creative, physical, linguistic and mathematical skills in all areas of learning. Practitioners develop children's knowledge of sustainable development well through planting and growing vegetables, flowers and recycling fruit waste for compost.

The provision for Welsh is good. Children develop a good vocabulary and learn phrases and some language patterns which practitioners encourage them to use. Adults develop children's Welsh language through stories, browsing through books and a wide range of rhymes and songs. They celebrate the Welsh culture in many ways including Saint David's day celebrations. They also visit places in the locality which are related to the theme, for example, the Cathedral and its grounds. These experiences enrich well their learning.

Teaching: Good

The standard of teaching is consistently good. Practitioners have a good knowledge of child development and current developments in the field. They understand well the requirements of the Foundation Phase and have high expectations of each child according to his/ her stage of development. Behaviour is managed positively in a sensitive manner and as a result, children learn lifelong dispositions including the importance of showing respect, tolerance and kindness towards others.

Practitioners make effective use of open-ended questions in order to extend the children's learning and develop their thinking skills. The flexibility of the teaching meets well the children's individual needs. The flexible organisation ensures good opportunities for the children to make their own decisions about their learning and develops well their independence and self-confidence. Practitioners give children sufficient time to become engrossed in their learning experiences and intervene only when there is an opportunity to extend their learning.

Practitioners know and understand the children well. They assess through observing the children while they engage in their experiences noting significant things and discuss their observations. The information gathered is fed into the next stage of planning. They track children's progress regularly and keep a termly record of their achievements in all areas of learning in individual files. Parents and the school receive a full and informative report about their children together with their file when they leave to attend school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Practitioners have created an inclusive family atmosphere in the setting where children feel safe and happy. Each child is valued and respect is shown for their ideas and interests.

Practitioners develop well the children's awareness of the importance of healthy eating and keeping fit by giving them healthy food and through regular sessions of dance and physical exercise. Children's curiosity about their lives and beliefs is developed through stories and dressing up clothes from different cultures. Their knowledge of other cultures is, however, underdeveloped. They celebrate the main Christian festivals and say a prayer before lunch. Practitioners develop well in the children a sense of awe and wonder about the world around them through the opportunities they have to explore outdoors and in the locality when they go to the cathedral, its grounds and for walks in the park.

Staff nurture well the morals and values they believe are necessary to the development of the responsible child. The children learn about the importance of fairness, honesty and truth and they know well the difference between right and wrong in the context of their young lives. The provision enables the children to socialise well, to take responsibility, to display initiative and to develop a good understanding of living and sharing within their small community. They have regular opportunities to make decisions and all enjoy their learning.

There are good relationships between the setting and outside agencies. The very close relationship with the school ensures a very happy transition for the children when they begin school. A selection of parents said they were very satisfied with every aspect of the setting's provision and they feel that their children receive very good care.

The setting has an appropriate Child Protection policy and practitioners are aware of its contents and the steps to be taken. The necessary procedures are well established and meet fully safeguarding regulations. These are implemented appropriately and ensure the safety of children at all times. There were no children with additional learning needs at the time of the inspection but there are procedures in place for such children should the need arise.

Learning environment: Good

There is a warm family ethos in the setting and adults show affection and kindness towards each child. Practitioners know the needs and interests of the children very well and they respond to them with sensitivity using their thorough knowledge of the children's backgrounds. Each child has equal access to every aspect of the curriculum. As a result of the respect for the child and the values and standards displayed by the staff, all children develop tolerance, positive attitudes towards their learning and good behaviour. All children show concern and kindness towards their peers, adults and visitors.

The setting has positive policies and procedures for dealing with any problems of aggressive behaviour and to promote equal opportunities and the rights of the child. These are known to all and are monitored and implemented effectively. The nursery is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales and there were no recommendations in its last report. Risk assessments are conducted regularly and every practitioner has received training in first aid.

The ratio of adults to children is good and each practitioner has appropriate qualifications. Practitioners address the requirements of the Foundation Phase well and the children receive interesting experiences which respond well to their specific needs. Practitioners use the outside area daily to provide children with stimulating experiences which promote their skills across each area of learning. The setting's use of its immediate environment enriches children's learning experiences.

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

The leader gives clear direction to all aspects of the life of the setting and the process of improvement. She has a clear vision which is seen in the nursery's aims and objectives and in the provision. She and her deputy work well together and she

shares principles and objectives which are based on a good understanding of child development. These are implemented in the active and interesting learning experiences which the children receive and the system of organisation which allows children to make decisions and choices about their learning, to develop self-confidence and independence and to make good progress.

All practitioners fulfill their responsibilities effectively and demonstrate a strong commitment to their role. All contribute to the strategic planning of the setting. They share the values they wish to promote by personal example and through discussion. The leader has high expectations of the staff and of the children together with targets which ensure good provision and high standards of achievement. Progress towards achieving them is monitored regularly. The setting's improvement plan is derived from the results of the setting's self-evaluation process and gives positive direction to the life and work of the setting.

The leader is well informed about everything that happens in the setting and she fulfills her role well. She is aware of the performance of the setting and regular meetings are held with staff to discuss the setting's performance. The registered person is a member of the school's staff and visits the nursery daily. The leader makes good use of sound information to make effective decisions and fulfill legal responsibilities. She meets national and local priorities in accordance with the requirements of the Assembly and the local authority.

Improving quality: Good

The setting makes effective use of its self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The self-evaluation report is thorough and leads to sound strategies for improvement which ensure positive outcomes for each child. The leader consults with parents, children and care-givers to inform the self-evaluation. She uses the information collected from parents' questionnaires to gather opinions and to identify areas for improvement. The setting also makes good use of the support of the local authority's advisory teacher in the self-evaluation process and implements successfully her recommendations.

Following the process of self-evaluation a setting improvement plan is produced which indicates a good awareness of the setting's performance and focuses on raising standards by improving provision and setting clear targets. All practitioners contribute to this.

The leader has an annual appraisal interview with the registered person in order to identify her continuing professional development needs and she conducts the deputy's annual appraisal interview. Practitioners attend training courses regularly and the positive impact of this is seen in the teaching and children's welfare as practitioners implement what they have learned.

Partnership working: Good

The setting works well with others in order to provide learning experiences. The leader works very closely and effectively with the local authority's Foundation Phase advisory teacher in order to improve provision and wellbeing and to raise standards.

Practitioners meet regularly in cluster meetings with colleagues from other settings to share professional knowledge; this is a very good feature. The positive effect of these partnerships is seen in the good quality of provision. The partnership with the school is very close and fruitful and has a positive effect on provision. Practitioners work closely with parents and are very willing to consult with them and to implement their suggestions.

Resource management: Good

Practitioners are well deployed in order to make the most effective use of their expertise and to ensure good provision. They use resources indoors and outdoors creatively in order to provide interesting experiences for the children and to broaden their horizons. They measure the effect of resources on learning and teaching and plan well for future resource needs. Practitioners use the outdoors well to develop children's skills in all areas of learning. Leaders make good use of the setting's resources and budget in order to offer the best provision. The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Responses to the parents' questionnaire

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received.

Response to discussions with children

Every child is comfortable when talking with a visitor and they say that they are very happy in the nursery. They talk about their friends and say that they know what to do.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Branwen Llewelyn Jones	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.