



A report on

**Puffins Pre-school
1 Glamorgan Street
Brecon
LD3 7DW**

Date of inspection: 22, 23 April 2013

by

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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

Puffins Pre School is a privately owned nursery which opened in 1996. The current proprietor took over in 2012. It is situated in a building converted for purpose in the centre of Brecon. It provides care for children from the local community and surrounding areas for five days a week from 8.00 a.m. until 6.00 p.m. for fifty one weeks a year. The setting is registered to care for twenty-six children from the age of three months to four years. The three year old children are in a separate group. It provides also care for children of four years to eight in the form of after school and holiday clubs. At the time of the inspection five children of three years of age received funding. The area is recognised as one which is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged.

The building is of a good size. It consists of two large playrooms situated on different floors. There is a well-equipped kitchen and toilet facilities which are appropriate for young children. Immediately outside the ground floor there is an attractive outdoor area which is enclosed by a wall and shrubs and which leads to a very spacious yard with beautiful flowerbeds, trees, benches and a shrubbery. This is owned by the convent and shared with the setting for the benefit of the children. In order to ensure children's safety, entry is gained to the building by means secured entry.

The nursery is divided into two main groups namely children up to two years of age and those over this age. During the inspection all the children came from English speaking backgrounds. Children from different ethnic backgrounds are welcomed by the setting. At the time of the inspection there were no children of three years of age identified as having additional learning needs. The children at the nursery leave to attend the primary schools in Brecon and the locality.

Five full time practitioners are employed in addition to the proprietor. All work with the children. All practitioners have appropriate qualifications in the education of young children. All have received training for the Foundation Phase, child protection and safety and first aid. The last inspection by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales was conducted on 26 February 2012 and the last Estyn inspection took place on 10 June 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;
- the setting makes very good use of the locality and community to enrich the children's learning;
- 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 self-evaluation process to focus clearly on strengths and areas for development

R3. Increase the provision for outdoor learning

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan which sets out how these recommendations will be met.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Not applicable

There is no report on children's progress, standards in the development of their skills, the Welsh language or wellbeing because there are too few children of three years of age to report on without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

Children enjoy learning experiences of a good quality which are well planned. The process of planning begins after practitioners have discussed and evaluated the previous week's provision and outcomes. They discuss the achievements, progress and needs of each child in addition to general matters. Observations which have been made are considered and practitioners use all this information to plan the next cycle of provision. The 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 sort paper for recycling.

The provision for Welsh is good. Children develop a wide vocabulary and learn a range of language patterns which practitioners encourage them to use daily. Adults develop children's language through listening to stories, browsing through books and a wide range of rhymes and songs. They celebrate the Welsh culture in many ways including Saint Dwynwen's day and Saint David's day celebrations. They also visit places in the community which are related to the theme, for example, the post office, the shops and the library. These experiences enrich very 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 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 plenty of 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 discussing 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 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 well, for example, through celebrating Diwali and the Chinese new year and through stories from different cultures. They celebrate the main Christian festivals and say a prayer before going home. There is a close relationship with the nuns in the convent next to the setting who come in frequently to see the children and the children enjoy speaking to them when they visit the convent garden. Practitioners develop well in the children a sense of awe and wonder about the world around them through the very good opportunities they have to explore outdoors and in the locality when they go for walks in the park, to the Brecon canal to feed the ducks and to visit the market.

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 relationships with the main schools they feed ensure a successful start 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. There are good arrangements in place for children with additional learning needs when required.

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 affection and 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 friends, 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. Although practitioners use the outside area to provide children with stimulating experiences which promote their skills across each area of learning its use is under-developed. The setting's use of its immediate environment and the community enriches well children's learning experiences.

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

The proprietor is also the leader and she gives clear and strong direction to all aspects of the life of the setting and the process of improvement. She has a clear vision and this is evident in the aims and objectives which are set together with the provision. She and her team 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 in the interests of the children. 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 well informed about the performance of the setting and regular meetings are held with staff to discuss the setting's performance. The leader is the registered person. She makes good use of robust information to make effective decisions and fulfill legal responsibilities. The leader 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 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 makes good use of the support of the local authority's advisory teacher with regard to self-evaluation in particular and 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.

Every practitioner has an annual appraisal interview with the leader in order to identify their continuing professional development needs. They 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.

She works well also with representatives of the Wales Pre-school Providers Association and 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 partnerships with the schools to which children transfer have a positive effect on them when they start school. 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 at times 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 if they are unhappy or worried about something.

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.