



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

**Pinocchio Playgroup
Friends Meeting House
Priory Road
Milford Haven
SA73 2DS**

Date of inspection: June 2015

by

**Mr Eifion R Morgan
Reporting Inspector**

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

Pinocchio Playgroup is an English medium playgroup located in Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire. It was acquired by the current owners in November 2013 and meets in the "Friends Meeting House" from 9.15 – 11.45 a.m. each weekday for 39 weeks of the year.

The playgroup is registered by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accept a maximum of 25 children, aged two to four years. Currently there are six children aged three years of whom four are funded by the Early Years Partnership and these children were present during the inspection.

There are three full time members of staff, two of whom share leadership responsibilities. They are assisted by three volunteers who attend when required. All are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children. A link advisory teacher who is appointed by the local authority service supports the setting.

Nearly all children attending the playgroup come from the immediate locality and have English as their home language. None of the current intake has been identified as having additional learning needs.

Children around four years of age transfer to a number of local primary schools.

The setting was previously inspected by Estyn in July 2009 and by the CSSIW in January 2015.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting has strengths that outweigh areas for improvement because:

- all children are happy at the setting; they settle quickly and feel secure;
- many children have well developed listening skills and enjoy story time;
- most children enjoy class songs and sing enthusiastically;
- learning experiences interest children;
- all children are encouraged to eat healthily and to take regular physical exercise;
- relationships between adults and children are good;
- the outside environment is safe and provides children with a good range of activities.

However,

- assessment of children's progress is inadequate;
- learning experiences are not well matched to children's ability;
- planning for children's skill development lacks progression and continuity.

Prospects for improvement

Strengths outweigh areas for development because:

- the setting ensures that all children are well cared for and respected as individuals;
- the setting has positive relationships with children and parents;
- the staff work well together as a team;
- the leaders and practitioners have improved the accommodation substantially and are eager to improve the provision further.

However,

- self-evaluation is insufficiently focused on children's standards of achievement and wellbeing;
- planning does not prioritise areas for improvement nor indicate outcomes for children;

- the leadership does not monitor the educational provision effectively nor use appraisal constructively.

Recommendations

- R1. Develop a system for assessment that measures children's progress effectively.
- R2. Use the outcomes of assessment in planning children's learning experiences.
- R3. Ensure that children's knowledge, understanding and skills are developed progressively.
- R4. Ensure that self-evaluation is focused on children's standards of achievement and wellbeing.
- R5. Prioritise areas identified for improvement.
- R6. Extend leadership roles to include monitoring of the provision and staff appraisal.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Adequate
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Standards: Adequate

Many children make satisfactory progress and achieve acceptable standards. A minority of children have good recall of previous learning, such as remembering the days of the week.

Initially children listen well during circle time. They enjoy short periods of discussion and many are eager to take part. A minority, however, have limited concentration spans and tend to interrupt and this affects other children's learning. A few children recognise their names during morning registration, whilst the others do so with help and prompting.

Most children enjoy stories and take part enthusiastically in class songs in both Welsh and English.

Many children are able to hold writing instruments and follow the outlines of two-dimensional shapes reasonably accurately. About half the children handle books correctly, turning pages sensibly and follow the story.

Children's number skills are developing appropriately. Most children recite number by rote to double figures and the majority count accurately to ten. A few children are beginning to recognise written number to five. A few children use computers, moving icons on the screen and display competent ICT skills.

All children enjoy physical activities and demonstrate well developed skills. Hand-eye co-ordination is good and children know the different ways of moving, such as walking, hopping and running. They manoeuvre pedal toys skilfully and use small tools with good control.

Children's problem solving and thinking skills are underdeveloped. However, children are able to make choices, such as selecting appropriate activities during free play.

Most children are developing a worthwhile Welsh vocabulary. These children understand more of the language than they can speak, many have a reasonable Welsh vocabulary and know, for example their basic colours, number to ten and the names of items of clothing in Welsh.

Wellbeing: Good

All children enjoy coming to the setting. Many are eager to take part in activities set out for them and to play with their friends. Children, when engaged in their favourite activities behave well. They take turns, share and are considerate of others.

During snack time, most children behave well. These children sit quietly and when opportunities present themselves, they are happy to help to distribute the food and with little prompting say “please” and “thank you”. A few children have underdeveloped social skills and have difficulty waiting their turn and to eat sensibly. Most children are aware of the need for good hygiene.

Most children, when asked, make sensible choices about what they would like to do. Children use equipment sensibly and carefully and keep areas, such as role play areas, tidy. Many children persevere on tasks for a reasonable amount of time and speak to the Inspector confidently. These children show good attitudes to learning.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Adequate

Learning experiences: Adequate

The setting provides a suitable range of learning experiences for the children across most areas of learning. There is an appropriate emphasis on play with children learning through first hand experiences. For example, children collected paper flowers from their outside play area, glued them onto paper and counted them. Children show eagerness to take part in activities that motivate them, particularly role play activities.

No visits to the locality have taken place recently and no visitors from the community have been invited to the setting.

The setting provides children with limited opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. A few children recognise their names through self-registration each morning and practitioners prompt the others with sounds of letters in their names. Practitioners make good use of Welsh words and phrases, although sometimes practitioners lack confidence to use the language. There are regular opportunities for children to sing Welsh songs. There are appropriate opportunities for children to listen to stories.

There are both planned and informal opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills. For example all children are encouraged to count, such as counting the number of children present at registration. There are suitable opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills.

Planning the learning experiences is done collaboratively and takes into account children's interests. Children enjoy the planned activities and most children are soon actively involved. However, the learning experiences do not build sufficiently on children's existing knowledge, understanding and skills. Tasks are not well focused on the next steps in children's learning. Planned activities are insufficiently differentiated and learning is not always well matched to children's ability.

Children have suitable opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions through celebrating St. David's day and Christian festivals.

Teaching: Adequate

The setting has well-established routines that ensure that children settle quickly as soon as they arrive. Children feel safe and secure and enjoy a positive relationship with practitioners. Practitioners have a thorough understanding of child development and the basic philosophy of the Foundation Phase in that children learn through play. Practitioners plan a suitable balance between child-selected and practitioner directed activities.

Children's behaviour is, in the main, managed effectively, although a few children show antisocial behaviour, particularly when not sufficiently motivated. Practitioners do not always provide sufficient challenges for the children and in such instances children lose interest.

Practitioners know the children well and what they are able to do. Individual assessment records, including photographs, are a useful record of children's achievement. However, assessment records are inadequate in that they are too general and do not indicate what children can do, particularly in terms of skill development. They are of limited use in planning future activities so as to meet children's needs. Assessment records are insufficiently detailed to ensure that planning for the development of skills is progressive and well matched to children's ability.

Records of children's achievement, particularly their social development, are compiled when children leave for the next stage of their education.

Parents are not aware of what they can do to help their children improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. Children are encouraged to eat and drink healthily and to develop their social habits during snack time. They are encouraged to take responsibility, such as when serving food to each other and to make sure their hands are clean before eating. There are worthwhile opportunities for children to engage in physical activity.

Day-to-day activities foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences well. Circle and snack times provide worthwhile opportunities for children to develop important social skills such as listening and speaking, co-operation and independence. Celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year help children to better understand the world they live in. Practitioners encourage important values, such as respect and a sense of right and wrong and most children respond positively. Recycling and children's knowledge of sustainability is underdeveloped.

The setting has suitable arrangements in place to support children with additional learning needs and has established contact with the appropriate professional staff in the local authority. None of the present cohort has been identified with such needs.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a caring, supportive community where practitioners treat all children fairly and encourage good relationships. As a result children are happy in each other's company and are sufficiently self-confident to approach visitors and talk with them.

Practitioners have successfully created an appropriate learning environment indoors. Resources are well matched to the needs of the Foundation Phase curriculum, although not always used by the children. For example no child was seen during the inspection in the book corner, nor undertaking basic writing independently and without adult support. Resources, in the main, are easily accessible and are of good quality and age appropriate. Displays of children's work enhance the learning environment and reinforce learning. The role-play area has a particular attraction for children and supports their learning, encouraging them to play imaginatively with their friends.

The outdoor learning environment is a well resourced area that contributes well to children's learning. It is a safe environment, enabling children to undertake investigations, growing seeds and plants, as well as a suitable space for physical activity. This is a very worthwhile addition to the playgroup.

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

The playgroup is led jointly and both leaders have approached their task with a sense of purpose, focused initially on improving the accommodation and outside facilities for the children. This has been successfully undertaken. The setting successfully provides children with a safe, caring environment, where their wellbeing, care and

support is given priority. Staff who work well as a team share these values, aims and objectives.

The leadership has not given sufficient attention to improving learning outcomes for the children

Strategic planning focused on children's achievements is underdeveloped. There is insufficient focus on meeting children's learning needs. Assessment of children's progress is inadequate and the next steps in children's learning are not identified. Whilst learning opportunities interest and motivate children, they are insufficiently directed at providing suitably differentiated work to meet the needs of children of different abilities. Planning for children's skill development lacks progression and continuity. No appraisal system is in place and the setting is not clear as to what needs to be done to improve.

There are effective links with parents. Parents are fully supportive. However, there is insufficient encouragement for parents to support their children's learning.

Improving quality: Adequate

Since the new partnership assumed control (November 2013) the focus has been on improving the provision. This has been successfully accomplished. Practitioners work closely, sharing ideas about finding ways to improve and the improved provision has a beneficial effect on children's wellbeing.

Systematic and formal self-evaluation procedures are underdeveloped. The setting's strengths and areas for improvement are not clearly identified. Planning for improvement does not focus sufficiently on identifying the impact on children's standards of achievement and wellbeing. Targets are not prioritised and there is insufficient emphasis on monitoring and assessing outcomes. Whilst the leadership has overseen the improvement in the provision, it currently does not monitor the educational provision effectively nor use appraisal constructively.

Partnership working: Adequate

The setting works with parents for the benefit of the children. This partnership is appropriate and parents value the opportunities to meet with the practitioners. They receive an end of term appraisal of their child's achievements. They do not receive regular up-dates on their child's learning and how they can help them improve.

There are no effective links with the primary schools. Parents are invited by some of the schools to visit before their child transfers.

Links are in place with local authority support officers, such as speech therapists and health visitors.

Good links are in place with the local authority support teacher.

Resource management: Adequate

The setting makes suitable use of staffing and resources to support the delivery of the Foundation Phase appropriately.

Where possible, practitioners access suitable training that meets their development needs acceptably. For example, practitioners have attended courses to update their knowledge of safeguarding children.

Leaders have effective processes for keeping spending under review and funds are allocated appropriately. Funds have been focused on developing the outside provision and this is a valuable addition for children's activities.

In view of the outcomes for children and the shortcomings identified in the report, the setting is judged to provide adequate 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

Mr Eifion R Morgan	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)

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 partnerships 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>

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.