



*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**

**Rhostyllen Playgroup  
Parish Hall  
Vicarage Hill  
Rhostyllen  
Wrexham  
LL14 4AR**

**Date of inspection: May 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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court  
Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW

or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2013: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.**

**Publication date: 13/06/2013**

## Context

Rhostyllen Playgroup is located near Wrexham. 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 afternoon and seven present on the second morning. All children attending the setting are from the local village and come from a range of social backgrounds. Nearly all children are from a white British background and at present a few children have additional help and support for their learning.

Rhostyllen Playgroup receives support from Wrexham Early Education and is a member of Wales Pre-School Providers Association.

The setting is open during term time only and is registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales to provide care for up to 30 children aged from 2 years six months to 4 years of age. The children attend a varying number of sessions.

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

## Summary

<b>The Setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The Setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- teaching is good;
- care support and guidance for the children and their families is good;
- children are confident learners; and
- practitioners use very effective strategies to support the children's individual needs.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- leadership and management of the setting are good;
- self-evaluation identifies areas for development;
- partnership working with parents is good; and
- the setting has made worthwhile progress since the last inspection.

## **Recommendations**

R1. For learning experiences to provide more challenge and opportunities for children to regularly develop their thinking skills.

R2. Include Information Communication Technology when planning activities.

R3. Ensure that planning and assessment are more closely linked.

### **What happens next?**

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

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

N/A

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

#### Learning experiences: Adequate

The curriculum builds appropriately on children's existing knowledge and understanding and activities and experiences effectively encourage children to form relationships with each other and with adults around them and show respect for all cultural backgrounds.

All children make satisfactory progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes, however many experiences indoor and outdoor provide insufficient challenge and not enough opportunities for children to regularly extend their thinking skills. Opportunities to include Information Communication Technology when planning activities are too few.

Practitioners provide good opportunities to develop literacy skills including looking at books including those written in Welsh and listening to stories. They use a good level and frequency of Welsh particularly during circle time and effectively encourage the children. The children are confident and keen to respond spontaneously in Welsh and they celebrate festivals such as St David's Day.

Although planning engages all children appropriately and practitioners plan a range of activities, planning intentions are insufficiently well linked to the assessment of the children, for example by using the planned learning intention for observations of the children.

Learning experiences actively enable children to develop physical and creative skills such as playing football, riding cars, bikes and playing on the park equipment. Children learn effectively about number through counting, rhymes, songs and games. There are opportunities for outdoor play that include growing plants, vegetables and herbs, short walks and playing on large equipment in the park.

The playgroup has made books that successfully detail some of the children's learning experiences. Children have opportunities to learn about simple re-cycling and they find out about caring for living things by taking care of their fish.

## **Teaching: Good**

Practitioners use a range of successful strategies to encourage children to play together and share equipment and resources. They all have knowledge of child development and manage the behaviour of the children well. There are three practitioners and parents who take a turn on rota duty, all are deployed very effectively. Circle time is used well to share stories and play games.

Practitioners use a very good level of Welsh with the children particularly during circle time. Questioning techniques are effective and extend the learning and the achievements of the children. There are consistent expectations of the children and all practitioners and volunteers successfully develop and progress the learning of the children.

Most of the time practitioners intervene appropriately in children's play to support their achievements, however on occasion they do not always make best use of opportunities for the children to be independent and to think for themselves.

Practitioners carry out useful observations of the children. Parents are involved 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 has a range of policies and procedures to support the children and successfully promote their health and wellbeing including their moral, social and cultural development. The playgroup has an effective transition policy which encourages the development of good communication and help children to settle well in school.

There are appropriate policies and procedures in respect of safeguarding and the practitioners have undertaken training. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The playgroup fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect and effectively develops an understanding of living and sharing with others. They follow simple rules of behaviour such as sharing and they successfully learn to distinguish right from wrong. They have good opportunities to take responsibility such as being Helpwr Heddiw when they support their friends. They help each other by passing resources and effectively work together when tidying up.

The children are starting to develop a sense of awe and wonder about the world in which they live by growing plants and visits to the field and park.

Practitioners know the children well and they effectively provide consistency. 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 supported.

### **Learning environment: Good**

There is a well established ethos and the group has developed successfully an inclusive setting that values the diversity of background of the children. Equal access to the curriculum is offered and there is an effective range of policies and procedures that actively support the children, and promote their health and well being.

There are sufficient practitioners with relevant and appropriate qualifications. The supervisor and assistant both have level 3 and the other practitioner is working towards a level 2.

The playgroup has a base room where the children's work is displayed, however this does not include any children's comments or information about the work that they have done.

Resources are appropriate, suitable and sufficient both indoors and out to address the requirements of the Foundation Phase and the needs of the children attending. Children are kept safe and accommodation is used effectively, however more challenging learning experiences for the children need to be developed.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
----------------------------------------------------------------	-------------

### **Leadership: Good**

There is a sense of purpose and the core practitioners have worked successfully in the setting for many years and as a result the setting is well managed. There is a positive ethos, and values, aims and objectives are shared and all are focused effectively on the needs of the children and are working for their benefit.

Children are valued and there are high expectations and well established links with parents that effectively support the learning of the children. Parents have the opportunity to take part in a rota duty in the playgroup which effectively provides a time for them to observe what is happening in the group and a parents' evening for them to be fully aware of the progress and achievement of their children.

The leaders fully understand their roles and are effectively informed about the performance of the setting. Relevant legislation and guidance are taken into account and information is used well to make informed decisions.

Leaders are aware of initiatives such as healthy eating, and are involved in working towards other priorities, for example Designed to Smile, a scheme which encourages children to take care of their teeth and Grow with Me.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Self-evaluation identifies strengths and areas for improvement successfully and the setting carefully considers any changes to be made. All practitioners are involved in the evaluation of provision resulting in positive gains for the children, for example the introduction of three small egg timers rather than one large one that the children could not see sufficiently well.

The setting has made worthwhile progress since their previous Estyn inspection. Practitioners are able to evidence the improvements made including the development of the outdoor area and the increased usage of Welsh with the children.

Practitioners are engaged in professional development and attend courses that effectively raise standards and the support the well being of the children. Practitioners share their knowledge to benefit each other and parents on rota duty and ensure a positive impact on the provision.

Practitioners have visited other settings and as a result have improved and developed the provision by including new and good ideas.

### **Partnership working: Good**

A successful range of partnership working effectively enhances and supports the learning and achievements of the children, for example the development of the Welsh language through the Mydiad. There is a good relationship with the local school and transition arrangements benefit the children and enable them to settle quickly.

Parents have information about the playgroup and the Foundation Phase that is displayed in the entrance. There is clear communication between parents and the playgroup and they are involved in decisions about their children and their learning. Parents are actively informed of their child's progress by speaking to the practitioners, an assessment booklet and by taking a turn on the parent rota. The playgroup utilises the skills of parents effectively by encouraging them to visit the group to extend the experiences of the children.

There is an appropriate working relationship with the local authority teacher who provides support and suggests learning experiences. The practitioners are able to evidence the positive impact that many of these ideas have had on the provision and achievements of the children.

The playgroup is an active member of the Wales Pre-school Providers Association, and has achieved a Quality Assurance Award through this organisation. Successful partnership working with other professionals ensures active support for any children with additional learning needs.

Practitioners undertake training and meet with colleagues from other groups and share practice to appropriately develop this provision.

**Resource management: Good**

Practitioners including rota parents are well deployed and as a result move around the areas of learning effectively to support the children in their play. A basic range of resources is used appropriately and motivates the children to learn although these are not always used creatively or to maximum potential.

Future resource needs are identified through training and visits to other settings. They are planned for and take successfully into account the developing needs of the children.

The outdoors is used appropriately to develop the skills of the children, for example growing plants and visits to the field and park where the children have opportunities for discovery with magnifying glasses, bug catchers and binoculars and the development of their physical skills.

Leaders effectively deploy the setting's own resources including a large hall to develop the children's physical skills successfully. There is a good understanding of budget matters and spending is prioritised to develop the provision and improve outcomes for the children.

The funding that is received is used well and the playgroup provides 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 and busy in the playgroup. They are confident and enjoy coming to the playgroup. They like all the staff, painting, baking and going outside.

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

Anne Manning	Reporting Inspector
--------------	---------------------

### Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

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

## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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"> <li>• personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li> <li>• language, literacy and communications skills</li> <li>• mathematical development</li> <li>• Welsh language development</li> <li>• knowledge and understanding of the world</li> <li>• physical development</li> <li>• creative development</li> </ul>
<b>CSSIW</b>	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	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.
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	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.
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	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.

<b>National Childminding Association (NCMA)</b>	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
<b>National (NDNA)</b>	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
<b>Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)</b>	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.