



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Sarnau a Llandderfel

**Neuadd y Sarnau
Sarnau
Bala
LL23 7LG**

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

About Cylch Meithrin Sarnau a Llandderfel

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Sarnau a Llandderfel
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Cylch Meithrin Sarnau a Llandderfel
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Llinos Rowlands
Person in charge	Cody Jones
Number of places	19
Age range of children	2-11 years old
Number of 3 and 4-year-old children	10
Number of children who receive funding for early education	9
Opening days / times	8:00-9:00 – Breakfast Club, 9:00-11:30 – Cylch Meithrin, 11:30-3:15 – Childcare, 3:15-5:00 – Childcare Club (when necessary)
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use the service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	This is the first inspection since its re-registration
Date of previous Estyn inspection	February 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	25/06/2024
Very few children come from Welsh-speaking homes.	

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	Excellent
Learning (only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	
Care and development	Good
Teaching and assessment (only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Develop practitioners' questioning methods to extend children's skills and understanding
- R2 Strengthen self-evaluation arrangements by ensuring that all practitioners contribute fully to the process
- R3 Develop more effective arrangements for appraising and evaluating practitioners, by ensuring clear targets for improvement

What happens next

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Well-being: Excellent

On arrival, nearly all children are happy and enthusiastic to attend and enjoy their time at the setting. They immerse themselves in their play immediately as they approach the range of resources and activities independently. The very small number of children who are a little upset on arrival at the setting are supported very effectively by practitioners. Children make choices and decisions regularly, choosing where to play both inside and outside the setting or what to have for breakfast. They enjoy the freedom to move between the activities and experiences that are available to them and do so confidently.

Nearly all children settle quickly and feel very comfortable at the setting. They cope very well when leaving their parents and carers. They understand that they have a voice at the setting and that practitioners listen and support them to state their opinions, aspirations and feelings. They are able to express an opinion about the activities that are planned. They make very effective choices in terms of which resources they would like to use in the areas; for example, they can choose books from the reading shed and take them to the top of the climbing frame to look at them with a friend.

Children interact excellently with each other and adults and speak maturely. They are very confident when asking practitioners for support or when explaining something. They forge strong and beneficial relationships with all practitioners, which has a positive effect on their well-being. Children take advantage of the effective care that has been tailored skilfully to their individual needs. They take pride in each other's successes and celebrate their friends' new achievements with practitioners, for example when catching a ball for the first time.

Nearly all children show enthusiasm when fostering independent skills successfully, for example when cutting fruit and putting butter on a cracker during snack time. They show a sound understanding of the importance of personal hygiene and wash their hands independently before eating and after taking part in activities. They behave exceptionally well and treat practitioners and their peers with respect. Nearly all develop exceptional social skills. They play together happily and help each other to solve problems in their imaginative play, including how to glue bricks to build a wall. They learn to take turns successfully under the skilful supervision of practitioners and respect the feelings and interest of others. For example, they pick up toys that fall from a pram and place them back safely to help a friend who is playing a family game. Children succeed in concentrating exceptionally well and persevere with tasks, and many spend extended periods taking part in the various activities that are available to them. They gain confidence when succeeding in tasks and repeat their successes when trying to master new skills, such as carrying water from one place to another or riding a scooter skilfully through an obstacle course.

Learning (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):

There is no report on children's learning. This is because there were not enough three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection, who do not receive funded education elsewhere, to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners interact with the children in a natural and friendly manner and this caring relationship is evident in all aspects of the setting's work. They understand the importance of allowing children to enjoy playing for extended periods. They hold lively and beneficial periods at the beginning of the morning so that children can socialise and sing familiar songs together. This means that children are happy in the company of each other and adults and are very willing to discuss and share while playing.

Practitioners have a sound understanding of their responsibilities to keep children safe and implement the setting's safeguarding policies and procedures effectively. They ensure the health and safety of users of the setting successfully by completing daily checks of the indoor and outdoor environment. They have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in terms of child protection and update their safeguarding training promptly. As a result, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

A majority of practitioners have up-to-date first aid certificates and administer appropriate treatment and record accidents and incidents purposefully. They understand their responsibilities in terms of administering and storing medication safely. A majority of practitioners have up-to-date food hygiene certificates and these procedures are effective. They ensure dignity and privacy when following the nappy changing policy and purposeful records are kept. Practitioners have a well-organised registration system, which includes ensures that consent records are in place.

Practitioners have a warm and natural relationship with the children and treat them with care and respect at all times. They are kind and enjoy playing alongside children to develop their imagination and encourage their curiosity. Practitioners encourage children to behave appropriately, by teaching them to share, wait and take turns. They praise children skilfully, which has a positive effect on the development of their skills, their understanding of routines and their self-confidence. During snack time, beneficial opportunities are provided for children to socialise effectively around dedicated tables.

Practitioners have a good knowledge of the children's needs and their individuals wishes and interests. They observe and record children's progress sensitively and effectively and this has a positive effect on their development. They cater well for children with additional learning needs through effective links with external agencies. They make effective use of guidance from the local health service's speech and

language team. Practitioners plan and provide interesting activities and experiences that promote the learning and overall development of these children.

Teaching and assessment (only applies to three- or four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Good

Practitioners encourage the development of children's spoken Welsh suitably. Where this practice is at its best, practitioners are effective language models and feed vocabulary successfully to develop children's understanding of the language. Practitioners motivate children skilfully to develop a love of books by creating an ethos where they feel confident about going to get books independently, so that they can browse through them on their own or approach an adult for an opportunity to listen to the story. As a result, children's early reading skills develop robustly as they turn pages intelligently and repeat stories or create an original narrative about the characters in the pictures. Practitioners prepare extensive opportunities for children to start making marks and develop their early writing skills. A majority of children understand that marks are equivalent to words and understand the reason for writing. A few children recognise letters from their names on a laptop keyboard.

Practitioners provide an effective range of opportunities and resources to develop children's numeracy skills. They ensure that there are containers of different sizes in the mud kitchen and the water tray and encourage children to play and experiment with the equipment. They help the children to identify missing numbers and count while playing indoor and outdoor games, such as dominoes and hopscotch. As a result, most children count to 5 independently and a few count to 10 correctly. Practitioners plan successfully for the development of children's digital skills. As a result, they understand that digital equipment is an integral part of their lives, for example by playing with a shop till when selling goods and communicating with pairs of radios and mobile phones.

In the outdoor area, there is a good range of large resources that provide children with beneficial opportunities to develop their physical skills. Practitioners support children to develop a good understanding of how to manage risks when making decisions about the places in which they would like to play. They enjoy climbing over and through the large equipment, tying ropes carefully to expand their imaginative play. They are also given many opportunities to play together enthusiastically with bikes and vehicles and control them masterfully as they travel quickly around the playground.

Practitioners play well with the children and question them skilfully about how to solve different problems, such as when a vehicle gets stuck in a ditch. They discuss which resources are needed to succeed in the task and consider different options with the children. However, practitioners do not always question children effectively enough to extend children's skills and understanding.

Provision for children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is effective. Practitioners ensure opportunities to learn about interesting events in other cultures, for example by creating original Rangoli patterns with different resources when

learning about Diwali. Practitioners intervene sensitively and reason sensibly in the rare cases where children disagree with each other or want the same toy. As a result, children have a sound understanding of fairness and right and wrong. Their behaviour is excellent, which leads to a calm and purposeful environment within the setting. Practitioners promote children's awareness of their Welshness and their '*cynefin*', or local area, appropriately, for example when celebrating St David's Day, by asking children to wear traditional dress and cooking 'cawl' with the children. They also celebrate charity events and raise money by selling cakes and wearing fancy dress and mark Remembrance Day by making their own red poppies from different materials.

Practitioners monitor children's progress effectively by recording their observations in a 'learning journey' book, which summarises and celebrates children's progress over time. They reinforce their understanding of the children by talking with parents regularly and asking them to complete a 'your child's development journey' form occasionally. This provides practitioners with an additional view on children's development. All this information provides a useful foundation, which is used effectively to plan the next steps and target progress for each child.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure that the environment is safe and clean. They ensure that visitors log in and practitioners keep all records relating to ensuring that the site is safe. Leaders ensure that the building's maintenance records are up-to-date and ensure that purposeful fire drills are held regularly. They also ensure that the setting and the environment's safety equipment are serviced thoroughly and regularly, including the fire equipment and first aid boxes. Leaders conduct purposeful risk assessments which are reviewed regularly. Practitioners keep a register of children and practitioners, noting the arrival and departure times at the site.

Leaders ensure a welcoming and warm environment and ensure that there is enough space for the number of children who attend on a daily basis. The setting has suitable toilets and dedicated nappy changing facilities which ensure respect and dignity for all children. They ensure that the indoor area ensures that children are given opportunities to be independent and that the outdoor area ensures that children have a play area that provides challenges and opportunities for them to take risks that are appropriate for their age. For example, the outdoor resources enable children to develop their physical skills by climbing, riding bikes and cars and building different objects. They are encouraged to experiment with leaves, water and soil in the mud kitchen area to make cakes in the various baking tins.

Practitioners ensure that the furniture, equipment and various resources are of a good standard for the children. They encourage them to learn by using a wide variety of resources, including some that have been recycled. They are encouraged skilfully to choose equipment and resources independently and pursue their interests.

Leadership and management: Good

The leader has a robust vision to ensure that all children are happy and safe at the setting. She is passionate about providing the best possible foundation for the children while they are under her care. With the support of her colleagues, she realises this vision successfully. She is very dedicated to her work and the whole team works together effectively for the benefit of the children in their care. The setting complies with regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

Leaders make a valuable contribution to the development of the setting in a practical manner, for example when investing funding to ensure resources of a high standard within the setting. They are supportive and listen sensibly to suggestions from practitioners and officers from external agencies.

The leader undertakes a suitable range of self-evaluation activities to identify the elements that need to be developed further, such as holding regular informal discussions with practitioners and by sending questionnaires to parents and carers occasionally. However, not all practitioners are always given opportunities to contribute actively enough when evaluating the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. Improvement priorities have been divided into sensible steps and the leader and committee evaluate them from time to time. For example, they have improved aspects of the outdoor area to develop children's skills successfully and safely.

The leader and practitioners have a close and supportive relationship with parents and carers. They share useful information regularly by using digital methods. Parents and carers can contact the setting directly to ask any questions or make a comment about their child's progress or well-being. Leaders have a beneficial working relationship with officers from the local education authority's early years advisory team. This relationship is mature and makes a valuable contribution to the development of provision over time. They also have a practical working relationship with officers from the umbrella organisation that works with them. This ensures a range of policies and procedures and beneficial training that maintain the provision effectively.

The leader follows safe and robust recruitment policies and all practitioners have an appropriate qualification and relevant experience of working with children. The leader undertakes practitioners' performance evaluation procedures regularly. Although these sessions provide evaluations that are beneficial in ensuring that practitioners feel valued, they do not provide clear enough targets for their development.

The setting has forged a close and beneficial relationship with the local school. Practitioners promote this co-operation by ensuring opportunities for children to attend the school one morning a week to be part of the school's youngest class. The leader also attends and helps children to engage in the classroom experiences. This means that children settle easily at the beginning of the next stage in their learning.

The leader works closely with the local community, for example by organising regular visits to the local gardens. This develops children's awareness of their local

community successfully. A limited number of visitors come to the setting to enrich children's experiences, such as the dentist who promotes the importance of cleaning teeth.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (<http://careinspectorate.wales>) (www.estyn.gov.wales)

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
Poor	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).

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