



Arolygiaeth Gofal
Cymru
Care Inspectorate
Wales



Estyn

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

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Pontyberem

Ysgol Gynradd Pontyberem

Heol y Felin

Pontyberem

Llanelli

Carmarthenshire

SA15 5EB

Date of inspection: December 2024

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Cylch Meithrin Pontyberem

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Pontyberem
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Cylch Meithrin Pontyberem
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Anita Evans
Person in charge	Claire Thomas
Number of places	26
Age range of children	2-3 years old
Number of 3 and 4-year-old children	7
Number of children who receive funding for early education	7
Opening days / times	09:00 – 15:00 Monday to Friday
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	First inspection since re-registration
Date of previous Estyn inspection	December 2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	03/12/2024
Manon Mainwaring was the acting person in charge during the inspection.	

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	Good
Learning (only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Good
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 Refine provision to develop children's independence further

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Nearly all children enjoy themselves and are happy when playing and they interact exceptionally well with practitioners and visitors. Most are very keen to talk to adults and are enthusiastic when working together and talking to each other. As a result, most children express their feelings confidently.

Most children make effective choices and decisions about where and with whom they would like to play. They play well together and enjoy each other's company when socialising around the setting. Most children look for their friends and call them over to come and play with them or to help them, for example when building a train track. They show perseverance in their play and learning, and play with resources that interest them for extended periods. For example, a few enjoy using the interactive whiteboard and choose different colours to create patterns and practise their early writing skills.

Most children are lively and ready to play and learn. Nearly all children are happy and comfortable in the practitioners' care. Most understand the setting's procedures well and understand the importance of washing their hands before having a snack and after coming in from playing outside. They understand that practitioners listen to their wishes and concerns and approach practitioners for help confidently.

Most children understand and adhere to the setting's rules of behaviour well. Nearly all children communicate politely with other children, practitioners and visitors. They work together happily and share resources successfully with support from an adult. They learn how to wait and take turns patiently.

In general, most children have good independent procedural skills, including washing their hands effectively and taking off and putting on their coats and placing them on the peg. They also self-register at the beginning of the session.

Most children enjoy learning new skills when they experiment with a wide variety of interesting play opportunities, both indoors and outdoors. Most children are proud that their artwork is displayed in different places across the setting. This creates a sense and feeling of self-worth and belonging among the children.

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

Nearly all children make good progress from their starting points and develop a range of skills effectively while playing and learning. They listen attentively to instructions and, as a result, get to know the setting's procedures successfully. For example, they know that it is everyone's responsibility to tidy up at the end of a sessions and to wash their hands before having a snack. Many develop early reading skills appropriately. They choose books from the reading corner voluntarily and browse through them in a leisurely manner, pointing at the pictures and inventing their own story. Most children develop their early writing skills successfully in line with their stage of development. They create patterns in ice and sand and make marks on paper to convey words, for example when making a shopping list. Many children make suitable progress in their oral skills. They increase their vocabulary regularly and use it in a relevant context, for example when asking for specific vegetables to put in a soup. Most enjoy singing songs and nursery rhymes, which has a positive effect on their oral skills and development.

Many children develop sound numeracy skills and use correct mathematical language when counting bricks up to 20 or when creating and naming 2D shapes in sand. They show an increasing grasp of mathematical language and apply their knowledge when discussing simple patterns and objects that are bigger or smaller than each other.

Most children's physical skills develop effectively. They handle small objects such as pumpkin seeds and decorative balls by using tongs with precision. They make marks carefully and handle paint brushes and pencils correctly. Most children also develop their gross motor skills successfully by travelling along large objects skilfully in the outdoor area.

Nearly all children develop their digital skills successfully and understand that digital devices have an effect on their everyday lives. They use digital scales when cooking in the mud kitchen and play purposefully with digital cameras.

Many children develop their creative skills well, for example when choosing which decorations to put on a Christmas card. They spread wet glue carefully, place decorations purposefully and pour glitter with precise control. Many enjoy using the percussion instruments and performing on the small stage. A majority of children work together on tasks and show perseverance when solving problems, for example by helping each other build a tall tower from light bricks.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners follow thorough and robust systems to ensure the children's health and safety. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities in terms of child safeguarding. They keep accurate records securely of concerns, accidents, incidents and any relevant information. Practitioners have received a range of appropriate and up-to-date child protection training which supports their work well. They are aware of what to do with any problems or concerns that arise. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners have attended first aid training recently, which ensures a sound understanding of the processes to follow should an emergency arise. They follow hygiene procedures and practices effectively, including encouraging children to wash their hands independently at the appropriate times. Practitioners promote children's awareness of healthy eating and drinking by providing healthy snacks on a daily basis.

Practitioners interact effectively with the children while playing with them in the different areas. They praise them regularly and this has a positive influence on their self-confidence and their enjoyment of being at the setting. Practitioners foster a wonderful and natural relationship with the children and hold regular conversations with them, for example when discussing Christmas and their visits to see Father Christmas. Practitioners manage behaviour well and speak to the children sensibly and positively and in ways they understand. They model effective behaviour and treat the children and each other with respect consistently. During snack time, practitioners provide opportunities for the children to socialise with practitioners and their peers.

Practitioners have good knowledge of each child's needs and preferences. They are aware of the children's stages of development and act effectively on the next stages in their development. Practitioners follow clear processes to identify and refer any children about whom they have concerns about their development. They work closely with external agencies, such as a speech therapist, the health visitor and the local authority to ensure that children are supported regularly. As a result, the setting's additional learning needs (ALN) procedures are robust and support children's development effectively.

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

Practitioners plan and provide a wide range of diverse learning experiences that meet the needs of nearly all children successfully. They ensure regular opportunities for children to make choices in relation to their learning and provide a wide range of resources that spark children's imaginations regularly. Practitioners know the children well and adapt activities to respond effectively to their needs. They have a good understanding of the way in which children learn through play and experimentation.

Practitioners forge a wonderful relationship with the children and encourage them to develop a wide range of skills purposefully. They often interact with the children in the areas to expand their skills or attract them masterfully to play in specific areas. Practitioners support learning effectively when playing alongside children and, on the

whole, intervene in a timely and effective manner to reinforce learning. However, practitioners sometimes intervene too much in children's play, which prevents them from applying their independent skills effectively. Practitioners make good use of detailed assessments and observations to plan the next steps in children's learning.

Practitioners prepare interesting and purposeful indoor and outdoor learning areas, which enable children to practise and apply their skills continuously. They prepare a reading area that attracts children to choose books spontaneously. By sitting with the children and questioning them skilfully about the pictures and the story, practitioners reinforce their understanding and create early readers who love books. They model language continuously and use songs effectively to develop children's skills. Practitioners provide a wide range of opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills and to make marks. There are clipboards and pencils in several areas, whiteboards and felt tip pens are available, and there are patterns to copy in the sand and ice trays. As a result, most children's early writing skills develop well. Practitioners also provide valuable opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills, for example when painting, kneading dough and opening small pots of spice when cooking. They ensure that children are given beneficial opportunities to develop their gross motor skills successfully, for example by encouraging them to ride bicycles and move along balance trails.

Practitioners promote children's awareness of their Welsh identity suitably by providing appropriate activities and resources when celebrating important days for Welsh people. They also sing traditional songs and nursery rhymes regularly. Overall, practitioners provide suitable opportunities for children to learn about a few other cultures by tasting foods and wearing traditional clothing from different countries. They ensure that there are purposeful resources available that represent people from different backgrounds, but there are few opportunities for children to learn about equality.

Practitioners plan beneficial experiences to develop children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills. They intervene appropriately to encourage children to understand simple rules, such as sharing toys and taking turns. They make good use of their local area by visiting the park to observe and appreciate nature and by buying resources at the shop, such as vegetables to make soup. This means that children have an increasing understanding of their community and their local area.

Practitioners provide parents and carers with useful information about their children's achievements. This is done through social media, oral discussions and more formal meetings at the beginning and end of the children's time at the Cylch.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure that the setting is secure. Practitioners ensure that the main door and gate leading to the outdoor area are locked. As a result, visitors cannot access any part of the setting unless a practitioner allows them access.

Practitioners are vigilant when supervising children carefully to ensure their safety. They ensure that the children are safe by implementing a range of clear and comprehensive policies effectively. They identify and record risks effectively for the

setting and various activities, including going for a walk around the village, going to the local park and to the village shop to buy fruit and vegetables.

Leaders respond promptly to issues relating to the children's safety and any cases that arise. For example, they monitor and conduct fire drills regularly to ensure that children are familiar with the arrangements to be followed should there be a reason for them to leave the building urgently. Practitioners keep a register of all children and visitors who attend sessions and record their arrival and departure times thoroughly.

Leaders ensure a learning environment and purposeful play areas that provide valuable opportunities for children to work together and communicate both indoors and outdoors. Leaders ensure that the play environment, equipment, toys and resources are suitable for the children. Leaders organise the environment to ensure that children are able to move around the room and flow freely between indoors and outdoors. This enables children to make effective decisions about their play and learning.

The setting is neat and attractive and well maintained. Practitioners focus on creating a natural environment to create a close-knit and relaxing ethos. They ensure that resources ignite the children's curiosity effectively. Resources are kept at a practical level for the children, which ensures that they are able to reach them easily.

Practitioners use the displays purposefully to ensure that children develop a sense of belonging successfully. This is done by displaying their artwork on wall displays and on the room's windows. For example, they display examples of the children's Welsh flags, self-portraits and characters from the nativity.

Leadership and management: Good

The acting leader leads by example and succeeds in creating a caring, friendly and warm environment and ethos. Her high expectations ensure that everyone works together very effectively as a team. She has a clear vision based on ensuring that all children have the best possible start, in an inclusive atmosphere where they are immersed in the Welsh language and Welsh culture. With the support of her colleagues, the leader realises this vision successfully. She ensures that the statement of purpose is up-to-date and reflects the service successfully. The leader is very dedicated to her work and the whole team works together effectively for the benefit of the children in their care.

Leaders undertake their management duties successfully, including allocating funding sensibly and spending the early years pupil development grant effectively. They have a strong relationship with a range of stakeholders who support them effectively by providing relevant policies and training. Leaders ensure safe recruitment arrangements and update staff checks appropriately. Leaders undertake regular staff performance evaluation procedures and provide support and training in line with the needs and interests of individual staff.

With support, leaders conduct an effective range of self-evaluation activities. They listen to the input of parents regularly when considering their performance and identify the strengths of provision and elements that need to be developed further

accurately. Improvement priorities are divided into sensible steps and are evaluated regularly.

Leaders and practitioners have a close relationship with parents and carers, who appreciate the regular contact at the beginning and end of each session and the information shared over social media. Leaders arrange for a range of visitors to visit the setting to promote the children's care and well-being. For example, a member of the fire brigade teaches the children about the dangers of fire and the community dental service talks to them about the importance of brushing teeth regularly. They have an appropriate relationship with the school that shares the same site, and children visit the reception class three times before starting at the primary school to prepare them for the next stage in their education. Leaders and practitioners ensure that the children feel part of their local community. They often walk to the park and the village, for example when taking food they have collected to the food bank in the village hall.

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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