

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Maenclochog
Maenclochog Community Hall
SA66 7LB

Date of inspection: May 2026

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 Maenclochog

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Maenclochog
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Diane Mabe
Person in charge	Sarah Williams
Number of places	15
Age range of children	2-4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	1
Number of children funded for early education	1
Opening days / times	Monday to Thursday 8.45 – 12.45
Flying Start service	Yes
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	12/11/2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection	19/11/2018
Date(s) of this/these inspection visit(s)	12/05/2026

Summary

Theme	Rating
Welfare and Care	Good
Teaching, Learning and Development	Adequate
Leadership and Management	Poor

Non-compliance

The provider was notified that the setting is not in compliance with the Regulations. No notices were issued but these have been identified as areas for improvement and the RI/PiC should address them.

Recommendations

- R1 Continue to develop more effective systems to observe and assess children's progress and use them purposefully to inform planning
- R2 Ensure that self-evaluation and improvement planning activities lead more directly to improvements in the provision and children's learning experiences
- R3 Develop more effective partnerships with external organisations and partners to enrich children's experiences and opportunities
- R4 Strengthen the nappy changing system to safeguard children and practitioners

What happens next

Estyn's Chief Inspector and Care Inspectorate Wales' Chief Inspector believe that they should jointly follow-up on this setting. The setting will produce an action plan showing how it will implement the recommendations. Estyn and/or CIW will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Welfare and Care: Good

There is a happy and homely environment in the setting and there is a close and supportive relationship between children and practitioners. As a result, most children feel happy and confident when they arrive and go immediately to play with their friends or practitioners. Nearly all children have formed positive relationships with practitioners and know that they can approach them to ask for support or comfort when needed. For example, they stay close to familiar practitioners when moving from one area to another. Many children are familiar with the morning routine and transition between activities confidently. Despite this, the practice of taking all the children to the toilet at the same time puts unnecessary strain on some children that are uncertain. As a result, these periods are proving to be challenging for some children.

Most children make independent choices, and participate in play opportunities in their own time. When going up the climbing wall, they are confident to say that they do not need any help, knowing that practitioners will respect their opinion. Practitioners move around the areas in accordance with the children's choices and remain at hand to chat and join the children in their play when invited to do so. This creates a calm and relaxed environment where children socialise happily with each other, and immerse themselves in their play.

Practitioners know the children well, and collect information about their individual needs and likes before they start at the setting. They ensure that they meet children's individual needs, including those with additional learning needs. Practitioners treat all children with fairness and consistent care. They are very inclusive in ensuring equal opportunity for all and activities such as circle time and dancing contribute effectively to this.

Practitioners support children to develop sound social skills. They model positive behaviour, encourage children to share and remind them to be kind with their friends. They praise those who demonstrate positive practice such as taking turns to ride the bike. This leads to children who are eager to include their friends in their play, who consider the feelings of others and who start to form positive relationships with each other.

Teaching, Learning and Development: Adequate

Practitioners provide a lively and colourful environment where children enjoy learning through play and engage appropriately in purposeful activities. They offer a wide range of suitable experiences that encourage children to explore, make choices and develop their

skills in meaningful contexts. As a result, many children show good levels of independence when choosing resources and moving between activities. However, at times, practitioners do not take full advantage of opportunities to fully develop children's independence. The provision promotes children's social development effectively, and most children work well together when playing and are starting to understand the importance of sharing.

Practitioners support children's language development effectively by using the Welsh language regularly during daily activities and play opportunities. They use engaging resources, such as books and puppets, to generate children's interest. This enables children to develop their early verbal, listening and reading skills well. Children invite adults to share a story with them from a very young age. Practitioners express their enjoyment of books by continuing to read after the child has moved to another activity. Children are given regular opportunities to experiment with mark-making materials in the indoor and outdoor learning areas. As a result, many children develop appropriate early writing skills by using various resources to make marks when playing.

Practitioners provide resources and experiences that help children to develop an early understanding of numbers through play and singing familiar rhymes. In line with best practice, the adults join children in their activities, and take advantage of spontaneous opportunities to strengthen learning. For example, they use appropriate mathematical vocabulary such as “llawn” (full) and “gwag” (empty) and count spots on insects. However, practitioners do not always encourage children to solve problems effectively enough. They offer answers too quickly without pausing to give children time to consider ideas and find a resolution independently.

Children are given valuable opportunities to develop their creative and digital skills. The younger children enjoy experimenting with paint, chalk and crayons to create colourful artwork and role-play activities promote their creativity successfully. Practitioners also provide a good range of technical resources, including digital cameras, a laptop, keyboard and mobile phones. This helps children to develop an early understanding of how technology is a part of their daily lives and supports their understanding of the world around them.

The provision for developing the children's physical skills is strong. Dancing activities encourage children to move confidently to music and develop their coordination skills effectively. In the outdoor area, the younger children show enthusiasm and confidence when taking appropriate risks, for example when climbing over obstacles. These experiences support their physical development and confidence to take risks successfully.

In line with best practice, the adults join children in their activities in a sensitive manner and respond carefully to their interests. They are starting to show flexibility by adapting activities and following children's ideas. This meets the children's needs and enhances

their social, creative and physical skills. On the whole, practitioners use questions and feedback appropriately to support learning. However, at times, the use of closed questions limits opportunities for children to respond using extended sentences and to fully develop their verbal skills.

Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of the children and their progress. However, they do not record observations or use assessment information consistently enough to plan the next steps in their development. As a result, activities are not always sufficiently challenging to ensure all children are fully developing their skills.

Leadership and Management: Poor

Despite a challenging time of uncertainty, leaders and practitioners have shown resilience and strong determination to maintain and improve the provision. They work purposefully to create a caring environment that clearly emphasises children's welfare, safety and development through purposeful play. As a result, the setting nurtures a supportive ethos where staff work together purposefully and children feel safe, happy and valued.

Safeguarding children is a priority at the setting. Practitioners have appropriate arrangements in place to ensure children are healthy and safe, including ensuring that the premises are safe and secure and following suitable hygiene procedures. However, the nappy changing procedures do not safeguard practitioners and children effectively enough. Leaders operate safe recruitment systems. All practitioners have completed child safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities and the correct procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child.

Recent appointments to the management body have strengthened the strategic use of funding and grants. Leaders have invested sensibly in learning resources and environments that offer a wide variety of worthwhile experiences for children. On the whole, leaders take appropriate advantage of advice and feedback from external agencies to support improvements to the provision, including developing the outdoor area. However, leaders do not always prioritise the most important areas to improve children's outcomes or respond effectively enough to the advice received.

As a result of recent changes to the management body, practitioners have not received regular supervision during the last two years. This has led to a lack of formal support for practitioners in their roles and in making joint decisions. For these reasons, we have notified the provider that the setting is not in compliance with the Regulations. No notices were issued but these have been identified as areas for improvement and the Responsible Individual (RI) should address them.

Leaders are developing suitable self-evaluation processes and are starting to use their knowledge of the provision to identify strengths and areas for improvement. However, these arrangements are in their infancy and do not yet focus clearly enough on measuring the impact on children's progress and welfare. Additionally, leaders do not include the opinion of all stakeholders effectively enough in self-evaluation processes, as the voice of the child and the opinions of parents remain limited.

The setting maintains a positive relationship with parents and works appropriately with specialist agencies to support children's health, welfare and development. Useful information is shared with parents through informal chats and digital systems, and leaders contact speech and ALN services appropriately when additional support is required. However, links between the setting and the local community are limited which has an impact on opportunities for children to develop a strong sense of belonging to their community. Additionally, the transition partnerships with the local school have not been developed strongly enough for children to move confidently to the next step in their learning.

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 rating 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 Prysg (Welsh to English).

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