



*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**

**Cylch Meithrin Drefach Felindre  
Neuadd Y Ddraig Goch  
Drefach Felindre  
Llandysul  
SA44 5UG**

**Date of inspection: February 2016**

**by**

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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:

<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

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## Context

Cylch Meithrin Drefach Felindre meets in Neuadd y Ddraig Goch, in the rural village of Drefach Felindre, near Newcastle Emlyn, Carmarthenshire. The setting is open five mornings a week during the school term.

The setting is registered to take up to 16 children per session. Currently, there are 18 children aged two and three years of age on the register. Eight children receive funded early years education. English is the main language spoken in the homes of about half the children. No children with additional learning needs have been identified by the setting in the current cohort.

There are three members of staff including a full-time leader and assistant leader, and a practitioner who works part-time. They are all experienced and suitably qualified in the education and care of young children. The leader has been in post since 1994.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in October 2014 and by Estyn in June 2010.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The setting has strengths that outweigh areas for improvement because:

- The majority of children make appropriate progress from their starting point
- Most children make effective use of their creative skills
- The majority of children have positive attitudes to learning and behave well
- The children are happy in the setting and feel safe in a warm environment
- Staff provide interesting activities for the children
- The relationship between staff and children is good

However:

- Children's information and communication technology skills (ICT) have not developed sufficiently
- The development of the majority of children's literacy and numeracy skills is uneven
- Planning does not ensure that children's skills are developed systematically across the areas of learning
- Children's skills, particularly those of the more able, are not extended consistently

### Prospects for improvement

The setting has strengths that outweigh areas for improvement because:

- The leader undertakes her role conscientiously
- Staff are hard working and committed to children's development and wellbeing
- Staff respond positively to advice which promotes improvements in aspects of provision
- The development plan includes suitable areas for attention
- There is effective use of grants to ensure additional resources

However:

- Self-evaluation does not give enough attention to monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning
- The management committee's strategic role is not fully established
- The implementation of the development plan is in its early stages
- Progress in addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection is slow

## Recommendations

- R1 Improve children's ICT skills and extend their literacy and mathematical skills
- R2 Strengthen planning to develop children's skills systematically across the areas of learning
- R3 Make greater use of assessment information to plan activities that extend children's learning consistently
- R4 Monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning in more detail
- R5 Establish further the strategic role of the management committee
- R6 Develop the outdoor learning area

### **What happens next?**

The setting will draw up an action plan that 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

#### Standards: Adequate

The children's range of skills when they start at the setting varies greatly. The majority of children listen well during circle time and small group activities. A few children who are fluent in Welsh demonstrate oral skills of a very good standard using correct language and appropriate vocabulary when discussing their work. Most of the children who are learning Welsh understand greetings, instructions and simple questions but very few respond orally. Many of the children's grasp of simple Welsh sentence patterns and basic vocabulary is not secure enough to help them. Most children know many songs and nursery rhymes and sing them enthusiastically. They show an interest in books and hold them correctly. Most children recognise their name in print and many recognise some basic letters of the alphabet. They develop appropriate marking skills and a few write their names with reasonable accuracy.

Nearly all the children recite numbers to ten correctly as a group. With support, the majority count objects up to three and a few children count larger numbers accurately. The majority understand the meaning of some mathematical terms, such as big and small, in practical situations. Most children can sort and match different patterns, such as stripes and dots, correctly. However, many children's knowledge of two dimensional shapes and the use of money is less developed. With support, the majority of children use basic ICT skills to record the names of objects and to create a simple pattern on the screen. Overall, children's ICT skills have not developed sufficiently.

Most children make good use of their creative skills to print, draw and paint. They handle and use small tools, such as paint brushes and scissors, with good control. Most children make appropriate use of basic investigative skills in building with large blocks. A few children use their problem solving skills confidently to complete jigsaw puzzles and board games. Overall, children's problem solving and investigative skills, particularly those of the more able children, are not extended enough.

#### Wellbeing: Good

Children settle well in the setting at the beginning of the morning session and play happily with the equipment provided. They quickly become familiar with daily routines. The majority of children develop a positive attitude towards learning and behave well. They collaborate well with other children and are willing to share equipment and toys. Attendance levels are generally good.

The majority of children have a developing awareness of the importance of physical exercise and healthy eating. Most children are able to take responsibility for their own hygiene and understand the need to wash their hands especially before eating. Snack time is a social time with children chatting quietly with the staff and eating neatly.

Many children become increasingly confident in undertaking activities and approaching new experiences. Most concentrate for appropriate periods of time and are confident to ask for help if needed. Most are willing to take responsibility such as clearing up after activities and taking the role of 'the day's helper'.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Adequate**

Staff provide a range of interesting experiences across most areas of learning. The curriculum is organised around a series of themes that are suitable for the children's age range and stage of development. Staff welcome children's suggestions for additional activities.

Daily planning provides appropriate opportunities for children to use their literacy and numeracy skills. They include opportunities for children to listen to stories, look at books and sing songs and rhymes. There are some opportunities for children to count and talk about numbers during group activities, circle time and in their play. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to develop an appropriate range of ICT skills. Overall, planning does not ensure that children's skills develop systematically across the areas of learning.

Planning for activities led by staff note the skills to be developed clearly and outline the activities for different groups of children. However, planning does not always ensure that children of all abilities receive the appropriate challenge. For example, the skills of more able children are not extended consistently.

Valuable experiences successfully develop children's creative skills. There is suitable attention to developing children's skills in handling small tools including pencils, scissors and paint brushes in various tasks. While there are some productive opportunities for children to develop their investigative skills, such as cooking sessions and planting flowers, there is not enough attention to extending these skills.

Staff develop children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of Wales effectively through activities such as celebrating St David's Day and Santes Dwynwen's Day. There is some use of visits, such as to the local shops and the Wool Museum, to extend children's knowledge of their community. Occasionally, there is use of visitors from the community, such as the postmistress, to talk to the children.

### **Teaching: Adequate**

Staff have a sound knowledge of child development and the Foundation Phase. They make suitable use of a range of teaching methods and resources to guide the learning. On the whole, there is an appropriate balance between activities that are led by the staff and those chosen by the children.

Staff succeed in creating a happy and positive learning environment for children. They join in the activities enthusiastically and make constructive use of praise and encouragement to support the children's efforts. However, teaching does not always pay enough attention to extending children's skills such as their Welsh oral skills. The planning and organisation of children's independent play sessions is less developed. As a result, a few children lose interest in the activities.

Staff know the children well and can discuss their development in detail. They assess their progress appropriately through observation, and record significant aspects. The notes provide a well-ordered record of children's progress across the areas of learning. The use of the assessments in planning the next steps in children's learning is in its early stages.

Parents and carers receive relevant information about their children's development through informal discussion, detailed written reports and by receiving examples of their children's work. There are constructive opportunities for parents and children to visit the setting before starting and for all parents to attend 'open mornings' to discuss their children's development further.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The setting functions as a caring community. Daily routines are effective in promoting children's wellbeing. There are appropriate arrangements to encourage children to eat healthily and to exercise. For example, the staff make constructive use of snack time to develop children's awareness of the importance of healthy eating.

Staff promote important values, such as being polite and considerate, constantly. The opportunity to offer a prayer before leaving, Christmas celebrations and attending harvest celebrations with the local school contribute appropriately to children's spiritual and social development. In addition, participating in activities to raise money for good causes promotes children's knowledge of the importance of caring for others.

There are suitable opportunities to develop children's awareness of different cultures. Children celebrate the Chinese New Year and the Diwali festival through a range of interesting experiences including arts and crafts activities.

Although there are no children with additional learning needs in the current cohort, staff are aware of the necessary procedures and sources of support such as speech and language support services for children.

Opportunities to grow vegetables and flowers and undertake recycling activities promote children's awareness of the importance of caring for the environment appropriately. For example, they put food waste in the recycling box at snack time.

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



### **Learning environment: Good**

The setting is an inclusive community that treats all children equally. Staff consider and value children's diverse backgrounds and respond constructively.

The setting has enough suitably qualified and experienced staff to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase. On the whole, there are sufficient resources to support learning across most areas of learning. Resources for developing ICT are more limited.

The building offers facilities of adequate quality. The staff make full use of the limited space available by organising various activity areas around the room. The displays of samples of children's work contribute to creating a colourful environment. The room is used by many other organisations. As a result, staff are required to set up and clear equipment and resources at the beginning and end of each session. The hall provides appropriate facilities for a range of activities. The small outdoor area, however, has not been developed sufficiently to provide an effective learning area for children. The building and site are clean and safe.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
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### **Leadership: Adequate**

The leader demonstrates a strong commitment to her role. All staff share common values in promoting children's development and wellbeing. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and work hard as a team.

There is a clear structure to the daily sessions. Initial briefing discussions ensure that staff understand the main focus of the activities to be introduced. There is appropriate use of staff meetings to discuss aspects of provision and general issues. However, there is not enough attention to discussing children's progress and standards of achievement to influence teaching and learning consistently.

The management committee is supportive of the setting's work. Following a recent review of the organisation of the committee's work, members now meet more regularly and officers' responsibilities are clearer. The changes are constructive steps and are welcomed by the leader and officers. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact of the recent developments on the setting's work.

Relevant policies are being implemented appropriately. Arrangements to appraise the work of staff meet current requirements. The discussions succeed in promoting the staff's understanding of their role and responsibilities.

The setting gives appropriate consideration to national and local priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase, developing children's Welsh language skills and promoting healthy living.

### **Improving quality: Adequate**

Staff have an appropriate awareness of the setting's main strengths and give due consideration to the views of parents and carers, and of support agencies. There is

suitable use of the planning framework to identify skills that need further development and to record children's responses. However, there is insufficient use of self-evaluation to measure the effectiveness of aspects of provision such as teaching and learning.

The self-evaluation report provides a balanced view of the provision. There is suitable use of the information gathered to create a useful improvement plan. The plan includes appropriate targets, such as developing children's communication and numeracy skills, sets out a timetable and outlines the resources required. The implementation of the plan, however, is at an early stage.

The staff respond positively to advice. With the guidance of the local authority link teacher, there are constructive steps to develop group work to meet the range of learning needs. The arrangements are not fully embedded to promote children's achievements consistently.

The implementation of the recommendations of the last inspection report has been slow. Aspects of the development of children's Welsh language skills, their investigative and decision making skills, and the need to develop effective grouping strategies remain areas for further attention.

### **Partnership working: Good**

There is a good relationship between the setting, parents and carers. Staff provide information regularly both verbally and through newsletters, brochures and relevant documents.

There are valuable links with the local primary school. These include the use of the school's wildlife area for visits by children to observe nature through the seasons. Staff and children also benefit from opportunities to attend concerts and sports days with the school. There are appropriate transition links with the local school and other schools in the area which assist children to move smoothly to the next stage of their education. There is a useful partnership with the 'Ti a Fi' group which meets in the hall on a weekly basis.

The setting has beneficial links with the community. For example, links with local shops and organisations are used successfully to support activities to raise money for the setting and for good causes.

The constructive partnership with the education authority link teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin officer contributes productively to the setting's work through the sound advice and guidance provided.

### **Resource management: Adequate**

The setting is appropriately staffed. Overall, there is suitable use of staff time and experience, and of resources, to guide and support children's learning experiences.

Staff attend suitable courses that develop their understanding of the care and education of young children appropriately. Following recent training for example, they have started to introduce new ideas on promoting children's language skills.

There is suitable use of some visits to other settings to share experiences and to observe good practice.

The leader and management committee have a clear understanding of the budget. Spending decisions are appropriately prioritised according to the setting's needs. There is effective use of fund-raising initiatives and of grants to supplement resources. Given the quality of provision and children's standards of achievement, the setting offers adequate value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received was fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

Dorothy Morris	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](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

## 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>	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	<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>

<b>Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)</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 Day Nurseries Association (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.