



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Hendy
Neuadd Yr Urdd
Heol Clayton
Yr Hendy
SA4 0UP**

Date of inspection: November 2015

by

**Mr Eifion R Morgan
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:

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

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Context

Grŵp Chwarae'r Hendy is located in the "Aelwyd yr Urdd" building in the village. Hendy is a small village some 5 miles from Llanelli on the main A4138 Pontardulais road. The setting is long established dating back to 1975 and is open on five mornings a week from 9 a.m. – 12 noon during school term time.

The setting is registered to accept up to 24 children, including those with additional learning needs, aged between two and a half and four years. Currently there are 22 children on the register of whom 15 are three year olds. Ten children are funded by the Early Years Partnership.

Most children are from homes where English is the language spoken, a few are from bilingual homes and a few are from ethnic backgrounds. Currently there are very few children identified as having additional learning needs or from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The setting is staffed by five qualified and experienced practitioners. The leader has been in post since 1998. She is assisted by her deputy, three members of staff and a student on training during the inspection. The work of the setting is overseen by a Management Committee. It is a member of the Mudiad Meithrin and achieved the award of Cylch Rhagorol in 2012.

The setting was last inspected by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales in June 2013 and by Estyn in October 2009.

Summary

The Setting's current performance	Good
The Setting's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The settings performance is good because:

- most children make good progress during their time in the setting;
- children's Welsh language skills are developing well;
- the quality of relationships between all practitioners and children is very good;
- effective arrangements are in place to encourage children to eat and drink healthily;
- the setting is a caring, supportive community where all children are treated fairly;
- parents are happy and appreciative of the approachability of the staff.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the staff are highly focused on ensuring that all children achieve the best standards possible;
- practitioners work together very well as a team with a clear sense of purpose;
- the partnership with the local authority support teacher is highly effective;
- practitioners are anxious to introduce current initiatives for the teaching of literacy and numeracy;
- the setting provides good value for money.

Recommendations

R1. Improve planning for children's learning to ensure that activities are well matched to children's needs and to challenge them.

R2. Develop assessment procedures that identify children's skill development and highlight the next steps in their learning.

R3. Review the resource provision so as to support the planning and teaching.

R4. Ensure that the sessions proceed at a good pace and that children are fully occupied.

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?

Good

Standards: Good

Many children achieve good standards during their time in the setting. Children's ability on entry is very variable with very few children having any knowledge of the Welsh language. However, they make good progress in line with their age, ability and stage of development. Most children show good recall of what they have learned previously. For example they know the words of rhymes they have sung previously, such as "Mynd ar y ceffyl".

Most children listen well to instructions and stories and respond appropriately, such as during registration. All children's understanding of the Welsh language is better than their ability to speak the language, as shown by their ability to recognise different colours, but only infrequently naming them without prompting. However, many children have a developing Welsh vocabulary, such as their ability to count in Welsh.

Children's listening skills are very variable in that a minority soon lose interest and become disruptive. Nearly all children are interested in books and can recall previous learning. They handle books carefully and talk confidently in their home language, for example naming characters in the story. Most children use a range of mark making tools with reasonable control. A minority can draw a letter of the alphabet in sand and many children can follow an outline using a felt tip pen.

Many children count in Welsh such as counting the children present at registration. Nearly all children participate enthusiastically in number songs, counting to ten for example "clap, clap, un, dau, tri". A majority of children recognise two dimensional shapes and can match them to larger shapes and identifying shapes when playing outside. These children use different shapes in their art construction work. A minority of children know the purpose of money as is illustrated by activities in the toy shop.

Most children are familiar with battery powered digital toys and cameras. Their information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developing well. Many children enjoy listening to stories in their listening area and a few work independently on hand held computers.

Most children are able to manipulate small objects well; they hold writing instruments appropriately and arrange different puzzle shapes correctly. There are suitable opportunities for children to develop their physical skills.

All children have opportunities to extend their knowledge of the Welsh culture and traditions. They celebrate St. David's Day with a concert, dress appropriately and prepare and taste Welsh foods, such as "Bara Brith".

Children's thinking and problem solving skills are generally underdeveloped.

Wellbeing: Good

All children enjoy coming to the setting and are eager to participate in activities set out for them. Children settle quickly and choose tasks independently.

Most children are motivated when interested in the learning. When motivated children persevere for reasonable amounts of time, as for example, matching shapes on the light table. However, when activities are not well matched to their ability and continue for too long, children lose interest. Most children take responsibility for tidying up at the end of activities and almost all take care when handling resources.

During snack time, after an overlong wait, children behave well and treat each other sensibly. Responsibility is given to “helpwr y dydd”. Almost all children show good attitudes and exercise self-control well during snack time.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Adequate

Learning experiences: Adequate

Practitioners plan collaboratively on a weekly basis and lesson notes include reference to skill development. Plans incorporate a worthwhile range of interesting learning activities with appropriate emphasis on play and learning through first hand experiences. Such activities enable most children to make good progress across Foundation Phase areas of learning. However, planning does not ensure sufficiently differentiated work that caters for the needs of children of differing abilities.

Practitioners provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop their communication skills, particularly to develop their Welsh language. Children have valuable opportunities to sing a range of Welsh songs and rhymes and to extend their interest in books. The setting provides a comfortable reading area and a listening area for small groups of children. Many children have good listening skills but are too often disturbed by a minority of children whose listening skills are limited.

There are suitable opportunities for children to develop their mark making skills using a range of different media including chalk, felt tip pens and to make letter patterns in shaving soap and wet sand.

Planning for children’s numeracy skills is developing appropriately. Frequent opportunities are provided for children to count, such as counting the number of children at registration, counting objects in their toy shop and in stories. Planning includes worthwhile opportunities for children to sort and match objects and to use mathematical vocabulary including “large and small, full and empty”.

Children have valuable opportunities to use digital equipment, including hand held computers, digital cameras and listening equipment. With help from a member of staff children access computer screens and move icons on the screen.

Planning includes useful activities to develop children's creative skills and their fine motor skills during creative work. Physical activities in the classroom provide opportunities for children to refine some gross motor skills, such as walking, skipping and through partaking in action songs.

Good opportunities are planned for children to learn about Welsh culture and traditions, such as celebrating St. David's Day. Children dress appropriately and sample Welsh cooking. Children's understanding and knowledge of other cultures is enhanced through celebrating, for example, the Chinese New Year and Divali.

Visits and visitors enrich children's learning experiences successfully. Visits from the police, fire fighters and dentist, support children's understanding of people in the village that help them.

Teaching: Adequate

Positive and supportive working relationships between practitioners and children enable children to settle quickly on arrival at the setting and to feel safe and secure. Children know how to seek help and support and this effectively helps to develop their self-confidence. Children's behaviour is managed effectively.

Staff know the children well and are sensitive to their needs. Practitioners are experienced in working with young children and understand the Foundation Phase practice of children learning through play. There is an acceptable balance between child-selected and adult-led activities. However, activities, such as focused tasks, are insufficiently differentiated and are not well matched to children's age, ability and prior achievement. Consequently the more able are insufficiently challenged and the less able soon lose interest. Sessions, on occasions, lack pace and children have too many occasions when they are unoccupied. Large group activities, whilst initially holding children's interest, often lose their impact as a minority of children lose interest and become restless.

Practitioners know the children well and their ability. Useful records of children's work are kept in individual files and show children's progress. However, there is insufficient emphasis on identifying children's skill development and on identifying the next steps in children's learning.

The setting keeps parents appropriately informed about their child's progress through informal discussion and formal meetings.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Arrangements for children's care, support and guidance impact effectively on children's standards of achievement and wellbeing. Beneficial procedures are in place to encourage children to eat and drink healthily and to take regular exercise. For example children eat healthy snacks and have water or milk to drink. Regular physical activities, including music and movement activities successfully promote children's physical fitness.

Day-to-day activities promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development positively. Children's spiritual development is reinforced through prayers of thanks and visits to, for example, a garden of national importance that fosters children's wonder of the world in which they live.

A worthwhile range of learning experiences foster children's values, such as honesty, fairness and respect and promotes principles that help children distinguish right from wrong. Children are encouraged to take responsibility, such as helping to clear away and tidy the room. Relationships are good and children learn to share and take turns.

All children take part in singing performances in the locality and take part in St. David's Day concerts. The setting is an integral part of the local community and children, through visits and visitors, benefit from this link.

The setting provides a safe and caring environment where children feel comfortable and well supported. Practitioners are good role models and treat one another and children with respect. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

There are suitable arrangements in place to support children with additional learning needs and the setting accesses additional help from support agencies as necessary.

Children have beneficial opportunities to learn about sustainable development. Appropriate bins are provided to collect paper and cardboard and waste food is recycled for composting.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a warm, inclusive community where good working relationships ensure that children feel valued. All children have equal access to all activities and areas of the curriculum. Practitioners encourage children to think of others and of other cultures and traditions.

The accommodation is secure and well maintained. The door is kept locked, ensuring that no one can leave or enter unannounced. The main room is spacious and children and adults enter via a hall that has notice boards providing useful information for parents and carers. The main room has adjacent facilities that are appropriate for this age of child. A range of attractive displays and photographs celebrate children's work and achievements well. Areas of learning are well defined and provide interesting working areas which have been recently improved. This needs to continue so that teaching resources are well matched to curricular needs.

The outdoor provision is limited essentially due to its size but the setting compensates by taking children on a good range of visits, both locally and further afield. Resources are age-specific and of good quality.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The setting is well managed. The leader has a clear vision for providing a good quality Welsh medium pre-school education for all children. This is highly beneficial and enables children to continue their education through the medium of Welsh. The leader is well supported by her deputy and staff. They work together very well as a team and during the inspection were effectively supported by a student on placement. All are focused on providing children with a caring and supportive environment, in particular developing their competence in the Welsh language. All practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities and support each other well. They have regular opportunities to contribute to planning the curriculum and to express their views.

There are appropriate processes in place to manage the performance of practitioners and to identify and support training needs. All staff are eager to take advantage of continuous professional development and strive to improve their performance. The Management Committee is well established and fully supportive of the setting. It is kept fully informed of the setting's activities and several members play an active role, such as in the Christmas concert.

The staff pay good attention to local and national priorities, such as developing children's healthy eating habits. The setting has identified developing children's literacy and numeracy skills as an ongoing focus for development.

Improving quality: Good

All practitioners work closely together sharing ideas and finding ways to improve provision on a day-to-day basis. They have benefited substantially from the support and advice provided by the local authority support teacher. Discussions lead to regular changes in practice that have a beneficial effect on children's wellbeing and standards of achievement. For example, practitioners have identified and improved the activity areas and this has provided better provision and improvement in children's independent learning.

The setting's strengths and areas for development have been clearly identified in the self-evaluation document. Areas identified for development appropriately focus on standards that children achieve and the quality of the provision and in particular developing their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, this in line with the new Foundation Phase guidance (2015)

The setting has a good track record of improving the provision and the learning environment. This has been done substantially as a result of the valuable and effective advice provided by the local authority advisory teacher. Changes to the internal provision and resources have improved the quality of the learning environment with the consequent beneficial effect on children's wellbeing and achievement.

The outdoor area, though limited in size, provides facilities for children to extend their learning.

The setting has made appropriate progress in addressing the recommendations of the previous report.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a good range of effective partnerships. These partnerships impact positively on children's wellbeing and enhance the quality of the learning environment.

There is a worthwhile partnership with parents and carers. Parents and carers value the quality of care and support provided by practitioners for their children. Practitioners are always available to meet parents and carers to discuss any problems that arise. In discussion, parents and carers indicated their complete satisfaction with the setting and the progress their children were making. Parents and carers reported on their children's developing personal and social development, their improved language skills and their eagerness to attend the setting. Parents are well informed of what their children are learning, particularly Welsh words and phrases. This is particularly beneficial where neither parent is Welsh speaking.

The setting liaises appropriately with the feeder primary schools. Children visit the primary schools for activities, such as at Christmas and this is a useful introduction for them.

The setting has beneficial partnerships with the community. Children make visits, such as to garden centres and local shops and visitors to the setting include fire fighters, police and dental nurse. This helps children to understand how the people in the community help them.

The partnership with the local authority support teacher is highly effective and has resulted in worthwhile and beneficial improvements. Support provided by the Mudiad Meithrin has been beneficial in improving children's standards in the Welsh language.

Resource management: Good

The setting is appropriately staffed with qualified and experienced practitioners. It is adequately resourced to support the teaching and children's learning. Practitioners are effectively deployed and staff are fully involved in planning and delivering the curriculum.

All practitioners access suitable training that meets their development needs appropriately. Practitioners are anxious to deliver the best possible curriculum for the children and make good use of training to improve the quality of their teaching and learning experiences offered to the children.

The leader and management committee have a clear understanding of the budget and spending is well directed at improving the provision for the children.

In view of the good outcomes achieved by the children, the high standards of care and wellbeing, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

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

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion R Morgan	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.wales)

Glossary of terms

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

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