



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Penygroes
Memorial Hall
Waterloo Road
Ammanford
SA14 7PG**

Date of inspection: December 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

The Cylch Meithrin is located in the village of Penygroes. Penygroes is one of the former small mining communities in Carmarthenshire and is some four miles west of Ammanford. The nursery was originally established in 1975 and currently meets in the Memorial Hall.

It is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accept up to 17 children aged between 2 and 4 years.

The setting meets five mornings a week and four afternoons (not Friday) for 39 weeks of the year.

Currently there are 32 children on the register, of whom 14 are aged three years. All three year olds are funded by the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnerships.

None of the current cohort are recognised as having additional learning needs (ALN) or come from an ethnic background.

Most children attending the nursery come from the village and are from homes where English is the predominant language spoken.

There are two members of staff. Both are suitably qualified and are experienced in working with young children. The leader has been in post since 2011 and is a qualified teacher.

The setting was previously inspected by the CSSIW in 2012 and by Estyn in December 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

Cylch Meithrin Penygroes's current performance is good because:

- nearly all children make good progress and achieve well during their time in the setting;
- all children are making good progress in acquiring the Welsh language, relative to their starting point;
- very good use is made of assessment results to identify the next steps in children's learning;
- learning experiences are of good quality and well matched to children's age and ability;
- the quality of relationships between practitioners and children is very good and based on mutual affection;
- effective arrangements are in place to encourage children to eat and drink healthily;
- the setting is a caring and supportive community where all children are treated fairly.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leader has a clear vision for developing the setting;
- both practitioners work together purposefully to ensure that children achieve the best possible standards;
- practitioners have a clear understanding of the setting's strengths and areas to be developed;
- the action plan has set clear targets for improvement and is well focused on improving children's achievements;
- the setting responds positively to advice provided by the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin;
- the setting provides good value for money.

Recommendations

R1. Continue to focus on children's Welsh language development so as to maintain the current high standards.

R2. When appropriate, provide parents with information as to what they can do to help their children improve.

R3. Continue to explore how a suitable outside provision can be made available so as to extend children's learning opportunities.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.'

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Nearly all children make good progress during their time in the setting and achieve well. These children persevere for significant periods of time and show satisfaction with their achievements. Nearly all children recall previous learning well and display good thinking skills, such as when relating different aspects of weather to the seasons of the year. Most children are capable of working independently and making choices. Children identified as moving to the primary school in the near future use their literacy and numeracy skills very well in their daily activities and are well prepared for the next phase of their education.

All children listen well to instructions and stories and respond appropriately. They carry out instructions promptly, such as clearing equipment and toys away and tidying up. All children join in enthusiastically in Welsh songs and rhymes. A good and notable feature is that many children converse in Welsh during play.

Many children handle writing implements confidently and correctly. The more able children write their name correctly with reasonably uniform letter formation. Other children outline letters, such as the letter "C" on laminated sheets using felt tipped pens.

All children enjoy looking at books and the majority, for example, can find the letter "C" in the texts of stories. Children enjoy stories and many children have good recall of stories they have heard previously.

Most children count by rote to 10 and backwards to zero. Many can count independently to 10 and most have a developing mathematical vocabulary, such as grouping objects in large and small categories. Most children recognise and name basic two-dimensional shapes including circles, triangles and squares. Children use money in their toy post office and many know the purpose of money. The singing of Welsh songs and rhymes helps children develop their numeracy skills, such as "Un, dau, tri banana".

All children play with digital toys and many handle hand held computers competently. They move screen icons and shapes purposefully and correctly.

Nearly all children's physical skills are developing well. They move in a variety of ways copying animal movements and all take part enthusiastically. Children's fine motor skills of cutting, gluing and painting are well advanced.

Children develop a good understanding of Welsh culture and traditions through celebrating festivals, such as St. David's Day. In such instances children dress appropriately, sample Welsh goods and come to appreciate Welsh symbols.

Wellbeing: Good

All children enjoy coming to the setting, they settle very quickly and are eager to participate in activities. Routines are well established and children know what is expected of them and they are happy to conform. Most children are motivated and fully engaged in their learning, particularly in adult-led focused activities.

Most children display high levels of self-esteem and have the confidence to work independently. They respond enthusiastically to adults questioning and enjoy discussions with adults. Questioning and discussion are used well to develop children's thinking and to improve their command of the Welsh language. Nearly all children show good attitudes to learning. Nearly all children behave very well, they are courteous and considerate, such as during snack time. They show tolerance and a willingness to share. All children understand the importance of cleanliness and of healthy eating and drinking.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

Learning experiences are of a high standard and well matched to children's age and ability. Planning is detailed and provides suitable levels of challenge for all children and successfully engages all children. Planning is done collaboratively and is based on children's interests and is sufficiently flexible to respond to local events. Planned activities provide a worthwhile coverage of all areas of learning and are well directed at children progressing towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes.

The curriculum builds systematically on children's previous achievement, particularly their skill development, and practitioners are highly effective in using every opportunity to extend children's thinking and problem solving skills.

Planning provides children with highly effective opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, children learn to recognise their names through self-registration. During the inspection, learning opportunities provided for highly imaginative opportunities for children to search for specific letters of the alphabet in their story books, based on a letter of the week. Planning also provides children with a holistic curriculum and encourages a highly creative attitude to learning.

Frequent opportunities are planned for children to participate in singing Welsh songs and rhymes to develop their language and numeracy skills. Children have regular and useful opportunities to develop their ICT skills. Planned learning opportunities provide worthwhile activities when children can work together co-operatively and form good relationships and tolerance.

The provision for developing children's Welsh language skills is highly effective. Both practitioners are fluent Welsh speakers and Welsh is the language of the setting. Children are, in the main, accomplished Welsh speakers and this is the result of efficient planning to develop their skills. The planning also provides for appropriate opportunities to learn about their Welsh culture and traditions through, for example, celebrating St. David's Day. Children learn about the traditional Welsh clothes and foods. Visitors and visits are well designed for children to learn about their locality and the world in which they live.

Teaching: Good

The quality of relationships between practitioners and all children is exceptionally good and based on mutual affection.

Both practitioners have high expectations of children and these expectations are very largely realised in practice. Children behave very well and react promptly and positively to suggestions and instructions. Practitioners know the children well and are sensitive to their needs.

Practitioners provide interesting activities for children well focused on their age and ability. This helps them achieve well and to make consistently good progress. Sessions proceed at a consistently appropriate pace which effectively keeps children well motivated. There is a good balance between child-initiated free play and activities led by adults. Practitioners use probing questions that are well designed to probe children's understanding and to develop their thinking skills. Practitioners know when to provide help for children.

Practitioners use praise effectively but not excessively; they are exemplary language role models and children are successfully developing very good language skills.

There are highly effective arrangements in place to assess children's achievements and to track their progress.

Practitioners observe children during their activities notably when engaged on focused tasks and record their achievements. This allows the next steps in children's learning to be effectively planned and ensures that future tasks are well matched to children's needs. The work is suitably differentiated and provides children with challenging activities. Skills, including literacy and numeracy, are developed systematically across all curricular areas. This is a highly effective way of moving children's learning forward to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase.

Staff provide parents with details of their children's progress but they do not regularly receive information as to how they can help their children improve. Details of children's achievements are given to the primary school to which children transfer.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting is a happy, inclusive community that gives high priority to children's wellbeing and safety. There is an extremely warm and welcoming atmosphere where staff create a homely and supportive environment. Highly effective opportunities are provided for children to reflect and discuss their feelings, to be tolerant and to respect each other. Each child is valued as an individual.

Effective arrangements are in place to support children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Experiences, such as Christmas celebrations and prayers at the end of the session, contribute successfully to children's spiritual development.

Learning experiences promote children's personal development very well and they appreciate the importance of such values as honesty and fairness. Children have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong.

Day-to-day activities are highly effective in developing a framework which establishes children's social development. Simple rules of behaviour are well established and accepted, resulting in a harmonious learning environment. Children learn to share, to take responsibility and to contribute to decision making. Children's views are skilfully incorporated when planning the curriculum. Children play an active part in local community activities.

Staff successfully convey to children an awareness of the importance of eating and drinking healthily. Children are given responsibility for serving foods and overall, snack times are effective social opportunities for children to converse and to take responsibilities. The setting is successful in inculcating in children the importance of cleanliness.

Children's understanding of sustainability is developing appropriately. Children recycle waste foods and collect waste paper separately.

The setting has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard children. Both members of staff have received appropriate training. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

There are no children present identified as having additional learning needs.

Learning environment: Good

The setting displays a warm, caring ethos where children feel safe and know where to obtain help if needed. Staff know the children well and show a pleasing degree of affection for each child.

Staff are well qualified in that the leader is a qualified teacher of young children and both are well experienced. They provide children with interesting and stimulating experiences which successfully capture children's attention.

The teaching room is well differentiated into learning areas – these are well resourced and children's work of a high standard is displayed. This provides an attractive and stimulating learning environment for the children.

The setting is also fortunate to have regular and daily use of a large hall adjacent to the main room. This provides an ideal area for physical play, such as using tricycles, and it also provides for activities such as "touching the rainbow" – multi sensory play activities and Jambori which helps children's numeracy development.

The setting is in the process of negotiating for a safe outside play area but, as yet, this is not available. However, children have a wide range of suitable visits such as to gardens, parks and the seaside which help them learn about the outside world. Visitors from the community, such as the local police are useful in developing children's knowledge of their community.

The setting is secure, doors are kept locked and no one can enter or leave unannounced.

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

The leader has a clear vision for the setting that promotes and sustains improvement. Learning and teaching are managed very well and expectations of the children are high. The setting is highly effective in developing the children to their maximum potential, particularly their competence in the Welsh language.

Practitioners work very effectively as a team and complement each other skilfully. They respond imaginatively to advice and guidance provided by the local authority support teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin development officer. As a result, and through detailed planning, they provide children with stimulating experiences.

The chairperson of the management committee is a regular visitor and knows the setting well. She and her colleagues on the management committee are highly supportive of the setting and provide them with a useful feedback following their visits. The management committee meets regularly and receives regular reports from the setting's leader.

The chairperson is involved in individual performance management. Performance management leads to specific training and enable staff to extend their professional expertise with the consequent positive effect on children's achievements.

The leader ensures that all relevant policies and procedures are in place and the setting is vigilant in implementing national and local initiatives.

A good and notable feature of the setting is the highly effective relationships established with the parents of the children attending the setting. In discussion, parents valued the care and support their children received and the approachability of the staff. This contributes substantially to their children's wellbeing and standards achieved.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners work together closely, sharing ideas and finding ways to improve the provision on a day-to-day basis. Discussions lead to regular changes in practice that have a beneficial effect on children's standards and wellbeing. For example, practitioners identified that children had too few opportunities to develop their ICT skills. Accordingly hand held computers were purchased resulting in improvement in children's competence in using the technology.

The leader has conducted an accurate and detailed evaluation of the setting's work and has recorded this clearly and concisely in the self-evaluation report. The action plan is based on the outcomes of the self-evaluation undertaken and is clearly set out in terms of a timescale, responsibilities for implementation and success criteria. A notable and good feature of the action plan is that it is well focused on improving the outcomes for children.

The leader has taken into account feedback from children, parents and advisory staff in identifying strengths and areas for development.

The staff have made good use of professional development courses provided by the local authority and this improves provision for children's achievement and wellbeing. Practitioners are open to new ideas and such initiatives, such as the changes to the Foundation Phase curriculum, are implemented and established in the curriculum.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has established effective partnerships that successfully improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for the children.

There is a worthwhile and beneficial relationship with the parents. They are very supportive and contribute towards many activities, including raising money to improve provision. All parents and carers, in discussion, and in the replies to the questionnaires, expressed their satisfaction with the setting. They appreciated the approachability of the staff and the progress their children make in terms of their social development and language development.

The setting has valuable links with Ysgol Gynradd Penygroes. Over the years this has been a highly beneficial partnership and makes for a smooth transfer of children from the setting. Children, through visits, come to know the relevant teachers at the school. The school also receives reports on children's standards of achievement and a prior notice of any concerns.

The setting has benefited substantially from the advice and suggestions provided by the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin support staff. The setting has well established links with the support services who are contacted as needs arise.

Community partnerships, such as with the police, provide children with valuable insight and understanding of people who help them in the community. Visits to the locality and further afield extend children's experiences and knowledge of the world around them.

Resource management: Good

The setting is appropriately staffed with well qualified and experienced staff. The leader is a qualified teacher and her experience and professional training is having a highly significant effect on planning learning opportunities and consequently on the children's standards of achievement.

Practitioners work very well as a team and use their individual expertise very well and to good effect in delivering areas of the curriculum, such as storytelling.

Both practitioners access suitable training which ensures that they are up to date and are aware of current developments in the Foundation Phase development.

The leader has developed a good working relationship with the Memorial Hall Committee and this is beneficial allowing the use of the large spacious hall.

The leader and management have an appropriate understanding of their budget and spending priorities are focused on clear educational objectives.

In view of the high standards achieved by the children, their wellbeing and the stimulating learning opportunities provided for the children, the setting is judged to be providing good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

denotes the benchmark – this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	14	11 79%	3 21%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	14	11 79%	1 7%	2 14%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	14	12 86%	2 14%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhentyn gymorth I ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	14	11 79%	3 21%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		81%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	14	10 71%	4 29%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		72%	27%	0%	0%		
Teaching is good.	14	11 79%	3 21%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		81%	19%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	14	12 86%	2 14%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		84%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	12	9 75%	3 25%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Caiff fy mhentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corf yn rheolaidd.
		76%	23%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	14	12 86%	2 14%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	13	11 85%	2 15%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		72%	27%	1%	0%		

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	14	9 64%	2 14%	2 14%	1 7%	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	30%	6%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	14	10 71%	4 29%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	13	8 62%	5 38%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		66%	31%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	12	10 83%	2 17%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		74%	25%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	14	7 50%	5 36%	2 14%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		64%	32%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	14	10 71%	4 29%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

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.