



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Rhuddlan
Ebenezer Chapel
Parliament Street
Rhuddlan
LL18 5AW**

Date of inspection: March 2017

by

**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

Cylch Meithrin Rhuddlan is a Welsh-medium setting. It meets in a room above the vestry of the Ebenezer Chapel in the town of Rhuddlan, in Denbighshire local authority. The setting is open four mornings a week between 9.00am and 11.30am, and there are three practitioners.

The setting's registration allows it to admit up to 16 children at any given time, and it admits children between two and three years old. There are currently two children who receive education funded by the local authority.

Nearly all children are from a white British background and a very few speak Welsh as their first language. There are currently no children with additional learning needs.

The leader began in her post in September 2001. The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in March 2015 and by Estyn in November 2010.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Practitioners plan challenging activities that motivate children to improve their work
- Provision for the Welsh language is effective
- All practitioners' robust teaching engages and stimulates the children
- Effective and consistent co-operation permeates the setting's day-to-day work
- The practitioners' tender care creates a purposeful and attractive learning environment
- Learning areas and resources engage pupils' interest and motivation both indoors and outdoors

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader uses relevant information about the setting to stimulate improvements in provision
- The setting's objectives, plans and policies focus directly on providing effective experiences for children
- A positive culture of self-evaluation and frequent improvements permeates the setting's work
- The leader makes effective use of external agencies, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin
- Practitioners are keen to benefit from relevant training
- The management committee ensures regular support
- It has purposeful partnerships with parents, carers and the local school

Recommendations

- R1 Embed the new planning process in the setting's day-to-day work
- R2 Improve the pace of presentations in plenary sessions
- R3 Use practitioners' assessments effectively to target the next steps in individual children's learning
- R4 Ensure that targets in the development plan derive directly from the self-evaluation process

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	n/a
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Standards:

Wellbeing:

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, the Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection to report on without identifying individual children.

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

The leader and practitioners work together frequently to provide exciting and interesting activities for children to develop as independent learners. They provide a useful curriculum and learning experiences that reflect the ethos of the Foundation Phase successfully. As a result, they motivate children to learn practically and to express their personal ideas to develop activities further. An effective example is the purposeful use of the outdoor area when looking for insects and role-playing independently in the Wendy house.

All practitioners improve experiences for children through regular discussions. They organise stimulating activities, which include opportunities to make marks and scribble shapes on a blackboard in the garden and make flowers out of play dough, colourful leaves and lollipop sticks. These kinds of activities build purposefully on children's enthusiasm as they apply themselves completely to focus tasks and learning through play.

The setting provides conscientiously to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills. Literacy and numeracy skills are evident in all areas of learning and challenge children to perform at their best each day. Good practical examples of this are the opportunities for children to trace farm animal shapes on paper and form imaginary buildings by joining together different shapes.

Practitioners target children's interests sensibly. Aspects of the planning process are relatively new and, as a result, planning does not target the next steps in children's learning wholly effectively. The link with the assessment process, to target and challenge individuals, is unclear at times in practitioners' records.

Provision to develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills is successful. The setting provides challenging opportunities to use a range of equipment such as cameras, compact disc players, recording equipment, electronic toys and tablet computers. Practitioners encourage the children regularly to use Welsh educational software to develop their sense of the language and their early ICT skills. As a result, children use the equipment confidently and meaningfully.

Practitioners focus appropriately on developing children's physical skills. They provide opportunities for them to climb on the adventure equipment, play actively and busily in the outdoor area and run over obstacles in the chapel hall. These activities develop children's physical skills purposefully.

The setting's provision to develop the Welsh language is very beneficial to the children. Practitioners are good language models. They support children sensibly, as most are only beginning to learn the language. Practitioners encourage children to use the language as much as possible through daily activities. They challenge children in Welsh regularly in the learning areas. Their thoughtful questioning motivates children to respond positively. Many children respond with familiar words and phrases soon after starting at the setting. They count, name colours and recognise shapes intelligently and confidently. As a result, most children's understanding of the language is developing effectively.

The setting promotes children's awareness of Welsh traditions, celebrations and culture successfully. These activities include celebrating St David's Day and St Dwynwen's Day, discussing the town's castle, cooking lobsouse and baking cakes.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits to enrich children's learning experiences. Experiences include trips to the castle, a farm, the library, the park to collect autumn leaves, and an estate agent. Visitors such as a nurse and officers from the emergency services teach children purposefully about the role of people in their community.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development. They are knowledgeable about the requirements of the Foundation Phase and work together effectively. All practitioners manage children's behaviour positively and safely. This encourages children's participation and enjoyment in daily activities successfully.

Practitioners have robust expectations for each child and challenge children consistently during focus and continuous tasks. Practitioners usually ensure that children are highly motivated. However, practitioners' presentations during plenary sessions are slow at times, which loses the focus of a few younger children.

Practitioners sense well when to intervene in children's experiences and play. Therefore, there is a positive effect on children's desire to improve their work. As a result, practitioners motivate children consistently to succeed. This can be seen as children persevere with magnifying glasses when researching insects and as they use rows of guttering to flow water.

Children are encouraged regularly by all practitioners to take part in various activities. They understand the importance of providing wide-ranging opportunities to learn through play. A good example of this is the opportunities for children to experiment independently by putting balls in a cylinder in number order. They also question children purposefully to develop their thinking skills and communication skills. This is done successfully when discussing shapes that are painted on pebbles on the nature table, deciding on the volume of buckets of sand and baking a cake with a partner in the mud kitchen.

Procedures for assessing and recording children's achievements are useful. Evidence corresponds correctly with individual children's outcomes by using the Foundation Phase profile, as they develop at the setting. All practitioners record daily assessments in the local authority's booklets regularly. They discuss sensibly with children what they need to do to improve their work during tasks. However, they do not use daily assessments consistently enough to target the next steps in individual children's learning.

The setting informs parents and carers effectively about their children's achievements. Daily dialogue between practitioners and parents and carers supports this. At the end of their time at the setting, useful information is available to parents about their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides valuable opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners use plenary sessions, such as snack time and story time, to foster these values. This ensures that children consider their peers' feelings intelligently, treat each other fairly and respect others.

Practitioners create a reflective environment by providing positive opportunities for children to think, discuss feelings, say thank you and pray. This can be seen as children settle down to listen to a story, say thank you for their food and share equipment both indoors and outdoors. As a result, children take turns politely when washing hands, pouring milk from jugs and lining up quietly to wash and dry their dishes at the end of snack time. This system provides valuable opportunities for each child to take responsibility during snack time.

There are efficient arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing, and the setting operates effective systems to promote eating and drinking healthily. As a result, children understand that fruit, vegetables and physical exercise contribute to a sensible lifestyle. Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to recycle paper, card, plastic goods and food. This develops children's understanding of sustainability successfully.

The setting uses positive behaviour strategies, which eliminate any kind of disruption or oppressive actions. The setting is a safe environment and the doors are locked. Although children need to walk along to road to reach the outdoor area, practitioners use guide ropes carefully to ensure that children are unable to wander from their care. Practitioners are also cautious when children arrive and when they are collected. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The setting records children's learning needs appropriately on entry to the setting and during their time there. Practitioners review children's progress regularly and identify their starting points conscientiously by following the Foundation Phase profile guidelines. By doing so, the setting targets children with additional learning needs effectively when necessary. Practitioners discuss these children with support agencies when the need arises in order to target their needs.

Learning environment: Good

Practitioners have a clear awareness of children's needs, and the setting is a wholly inclusive community. All children are given an equal opportunity to learn in the different areas and their individuality is recognised successfully. Practitioners challenge and support children from day-to-day in a positive and careful manner. An active example of this is dressing the children in fluorescent jackets and using a guide rope to move from the indoor area along the road to the outdoor area.

The leader and practitioners place a daily emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity. Therefore, the setting promotes a positive ethos through its daily activities and practitioners' enthusiastic attitudes. They teach children about different holidays and cultures of the world effectively. As a result, they celebrate the Chinese New Year each year, read African parables and discuss dolls from different cultures successfully.

The setting uses resources purposefully to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase and children's needs. A wide range of interesting resources is used effectively in continuous tasks, focus tasks and to enrich learning. Resources are at a practical level for all children, which promotes their sense of responsibility purposefully. The setting has sufficient ICT resources to develop children's skills successfully.

The building is of suitable quality, is maintained appropriately and is safe. Practitioners control children firmly and carefully on the stairs that lead to the first floor. The land that has been earmarked by the chapel for the use of the setting includes growing and planting areas, climbing equipment and quiet areas for reading and role-play. The setting uses this land creatively. The chapel hall is used sensibly for active activities such as running obstacle races, riding bicycles and twirling ribbons. Therefore, all areas that are available to them are used effectively. Practitioners also use facilities in the local area sensibly, such as the town, a nearby farm and public amenities.

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

The setting's objectives, plans and policies focus directly on providing effective experiences for children. This meets children's needs and celebrates their achievements successfully. The leader is experienced and manages a team of stable and dedicated practitioners firmly and fairly. She has high expectations of practitioners and children. She succeeds in motivating them to improve in sensible and supportive ways. The effect of this is that improvements are promoted and maintained successfully.

The leader uses relevant information about the setting to stimulate improvements in provision. Her vision ensures that teaching and learning are the main focus from day to day. The leader and her team focus conscientiously on national priorities, such as developing literacy and numeracy strategies and succeeding with the requirements of the Foundation Phase profile.

The leadership, which includes a management committee, ensures that provision for children is interesting and purposeful. The management committee ensures that practitioners understand their roles in full and work together as a team daily. Regular supervision and evaluation practices are well-established. This system ensures that the best use is made of practitioners' expertise through robust annual evaluations.

The management committee receives information about the setting's practices regularly from the leader. They meet to arrange activities and to monitor funding regularly. The management committee challenges the setting appropriately to conduct regular practices and develop areas that need to be improved further.

Improving quality: Good

The leader and management committee, under the guidance of the local authority, have established consistent arrangements to monitor children's outcomes and provision. As a result, a positive culture of self-evaluation and regular improvements permeates the setting's work.

Through effective co-operation, the information that is collected each year through the local authority's quantitative system, in addition to the management committee's evaluations, contribute appropriately to this practice. As a result, the setting has made meaningful improvements over time, such as refining the planning process recently and developing the outdoor area.

The setting's formal self-evaluation processes are developing suitably; for example, they consider the views of practitioners, parents and carers, the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin successfully. Therefore, the setting's development plan identifies suitable areas for improvement.

The leader and the management committee prioritise expenditure sensibly, in line with the actions for improvement that have been identified. They agree on targets with practitioners and implement changes jointly. However, targets in the development plan do not always derive directly from the setting's self-evaluation process. Although there are processes in place, the self-evaluation report does not include enough detail about why some areas need to be improved further.

All practitioners are keen to accept new ideas that are suggested by the local authority's advisory teachers and the link teacher from the nearby school. They act regularly on their advice. This leads to beneficial improvements, such as using the Foundation Phase profile to improve assessment practices and identify relevant starting points for children.

Partnership working: Good

The setting works successfully with partners to improve provision and children's outcomes. As a result, the setting has a range of effective strategic partnerships.

Practitioners take active steps to include parents and carers in the setting's life. Practitioners inform them regularly about all aspects of the setting's work. They are encouraged to express their opinion on issues to improve the setting through regular

questionnaires and discussions. These community links promote children's learning successfully. As a result, the setting receives beneficial support when bidding for equipment and relevant grants.

As the setting receives support from a teacher from the local school for one morning each fortnight, there is a positive link with the school. This supports the children's transition arrangements purposefully. Arrangements for transferring personal information and assessments are effective and beneficial to the children as they settle at the school.

The setting works successfully with external agencies, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. This reinforces the positive partnerships that exist. These organisations offer support by providing documentation and training effectively. Practitioners also work with and have links with a wide range of other partners. These include agencies that provide training in first aid, food hygiene courses, risk assessments, the Welsh language, Foundation Phase developments and child protection. These useful links make an important contribution to improving provision.

Resource management: Good

The leader and management committee aim consistently to improve all aspects of the setting's work. This is done by using practitioners intelligently and allocating resources effectively. They ensure that the setting has enough qualified practitioners by providing complete training.

Purposeful leadership practices enable practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge successfully. As a result, a positive learning community has been established, which has a culture of effective co-operation between practitioners and the setting's partners.

Performance management systems are efficient and ensure interesting learning experiences and positive teaching practices. The setting manages resources creatively to support learning. This includes use of the chapel's hall for physical activities and the outdoor areas to enquire, investigate and play actively.

The leader and management committee have a clear understanding of the budget and the challenges that have been associated with it for several years. They prioritise expenditure carefully and identify responsibilities and sensible timescales. Parents and carers also contribute regularly to the setting's funding through community fundraising events. They create regular improvements by discussing and funding improvement plans purposefully. The setting ensures that the use of funding has a direct effect on provision and children's outcomes.

The setting provides good value for money because of the effective provision and purposeful leadership.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fewer than 10 responses were received. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Nicholas Jones	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 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