



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Y Garnedd
Ysgol Y Garnedd
Ffordd Penrhos
Bangor
LL57 2LX**

Date of inspection: July 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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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Context

Cylch Meithrin y Garnedd was established in 2003, and it is situated in a cabin on the grounds of Ysgol Gynradd y Garnedd on high ground on the outskirts of Bangor in Gwynedd. The setting is open five mornings and afternoons a week.

The setting is registered to admit up to 40 children between two-and-a-half and four years old. During the inspection, there were 22 three-year-old children on roll, 18 of whom receive funded early years education. Approximately half of the children come from homes in which Welsh is the main language. A very few children have additional learning needs, and a very few come from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The setting employs six full-time members of staff and one part-time member of staff. Both acting leaders were appointed in February 2017.

The setting was last inspected by Estyn in February 2010, and by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in May 2017.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Nearly all children make valuable progress during their time at the setting
- Most make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills in the Welsh language
- Most children develop numeracy skills successfully across the areas of learning
- Nearly all children are happy when they arrive at the setting and are eager to join in with activities
- Practitioners plan stimulating experiences jointly that engage children's interest successfully
- Provision to promote children's literacy and numeracy skills is a strong element of the setting's work
- All practitioners are good language models

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The two acting leaders have succeeded in maintaining the permanent leader's robust vision
- The leadership has a clear focus on maintaining high standards in terms of transferring the Welsh language and developing children's skills
- All practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities well and work together effectively
- The setting has a positive culture of self-evaluation, which is becoming a regular part of the setting's work
- The setting works effectively with a beneficial range of partners who contribute beneficially to children's standards and wellbeing
- Good co-operation with the school is particularly valuable to the setting
- The setting ensures a good supply of beneficial resources that meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase effectively

Recommendations

- R1 Improve children's ability to make decisions and contribute to what they learn
- R2 Ensure that all areas of continuous provision are available regularly and meet the needs of all children appropriately
- R3 Provide effective opportunities for children to learn about sustainability
- R4 Ensure beneficial opportunities for all practitioners to develop professionally by attending training and visiting other settings

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

Nearly all children make valuable progress during their time at the setting. They recall previous learning intelligently and apply their key skills in a variety of contexts effectively.

Most children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills in the Welsh language. Most listen carefully and follow instructions consistently, and show good understanding. They join in happily with songs and rhymes at the setting regularly. Many children speak confidently when playing with each other and familiar adults; for example, they use language that is suitable for their age and ability when buying and selling in the 'ice-cream shop'. Most show an interest in books and handle them correctly when enjoying their content in the reading corner. Many of the children concentrate attentively when listening to a story and join in enthusiastically at suitable times. Most of the children practice their mark-making skills confidently for different purposes; for example, they use felt pens skilfully to record the cost of ice-cream. A few more mature children are beginning to form the letters in their names correctly.

Most children develop literacy skills successfully across the areas of learning. Nearly all join in when singing number rhymes, and most recite numbers correctly to at least ten. A few children are able to recognise numerals and count objects up to at least five confidently and consistently. Many understand the purpose of money as they pay for goods in the ice-cream shop. When playing in the sand, they develop a sound understanding of different sizes and weights. When looking at books and handling them purposefully, many children recognise simple two-dimensional shapes correctly. They order and sort animals correctly when playing with the farm.

Many children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developing appropriately. A majority are able to handle a tablet computer confidently and a majority use the till purposefully in the role-play corner.

Most children develop robust physical skills. They handle small implements, such as pencils, shells and pegs, skilfully and run confidently around the school playground. Many develop their creative skills successfully. They experiment relevantly with different materials when making pictures and follow their imagination effectively when role-playing. Many children develop their thinking skills appropriately when responding to practitioners' careful questions, and persevere effectively in their play.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children are happy when they arrive at the setting and are keen to join in with the activities. They have a close relationship with practitioners, which ensures that they settle quickly. Nearly all children have a positive attitude towards learning and undertake activities enthusiastically. They persevere effectively to complete a

task, for example when creating an artistic flag to be placed on a sandcastle, or examining the shells on the discovery table. They behave well at the setting and work together regularly, by following instructions and the routine of the sessions consistently. In relevant situations, a few more mature children play together very purposefully and effectively, for example when playing the role of different members of the family in their imaginary play.

Throughout the session, nearly all children choose where to play confidently. They work successfully independently and alongside practitioners. However, they do not contribute ideas about how and what they learn in order to gain confidence when making decisions and to develop their own interests effectively.

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

Practitioners plan stimulating experiences jointly, which engage children's interest successfully. These are based on relevant themes, such as 'the seaside' and 'in the garden', for the children's range of ability and age. Weekly plans focus increasingly on developing children's specific skills systematically, and they deal with all areas of learning in the Foundation Phase successfully. Practitioners plan increasingly effectively to promote children's skills in the outdoor area. However, they do not ensure that the continuous provision is accessible enough and available regularly in order to meet all children's needs. Practitioners do not ensure regular enough opportunities for children to pursue their own interests when planning activities for them.

Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to develop an understanding of the world around them, and to treat every living thing with care and respect. For example, by going for regular walks in the local community, children are given natural opportunities to learn about the seasons and the lifecycle of flowers and living creatures. Practitioners provide purposeful opportunities for children to develop their physical, thinking and creative skills. These include sound opportunities to use the adventure equipment on the school grounds to extend their gross motor skills. On the whole, practitioners ensure plenty of opportunities for children to experiment and explore their environment confidently and independently.

Provision to promote children's literacy and numeracy skills is a strong element of the setting's work. Linked to the themes, practitioners introduce new vocabulary regularly. They select relevant books and ensure regular and varied opportunities to promote children's early writing skills across the areas of learning. Practitioners promote children's numeracy skills regularly in all parts of provision. A good example of this is the opportunity to count objects, identify numbers and understand the purpose of money in the ice-cream shop. Provision for ICT is developing appropriately.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners have a sound knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and child development. They have high expectations of each child and challenge them

purposefully to ensure that they make good progress. They provide valuable opportunities for children to learn through play and experiment actively both indoors and outdoors. All practitioners are good language models. They place a firm priority on establishing Welsh language patterns and extend children's vocabulary regularly. They make the most of every opportunity to converse naturally with children, and question them skilfully to extend their thinking skills. On the whole, they intervene sensitively to help children reach their next steps.

The setting has established robust daily routines that contribute effectively to children's standards of wellbeing and their ability to work independently. They manage children's behaviour positively by using consistent strategies that include praising children purposefully for their efforts.

Practitioners know the children and their needs well. They assess their starting point suitably by using the Foundation Phase Profile. All practitioners observe children and record their achievements regularly. They make appropriate use of this information when creating their weekly plans. They have evaluated the assessment procedure and are currently revising it to identify children's progress across the different areas of learning more clearly. The new system enables them to plan increasingly effectively for each child's next steps.

The setting ensures that parents are included effectively in their children's education. Practitioners share information informally each day by the setting's door. They also conduct a formal meeting to discuss their progress and provide a colourful report for parents to keep at the end of the year.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has robust arrangements for promoting hygiene, eating healthily and keeping fit. Practitioners encourage children to wash their hands before eating. They provide relevant opportunities for children to develop their social skills as they distribute dishes, wait their turn for fruit and a drink and talk to each other during snack time. Children go outside to the school playground each day to run around, which contributes effectively to their fitness and their understanding of the importance of keeping fit.

Learning experiences promote children's personal development beneficially, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners follow consistent guidelines to promote positive behaviour and model values such as honesty, respect and fairness effectively. They provide relevant opportunities for children to learn about Christian traditions, such as Christmas and Easter, and develop their sense of awe and wonder about nature beneficially by growing plants in the garden. By teaching children to put resources away at the end of each session, the setting provides valuable opportunities for them to treat property with responsibility and respect. However, practitioners do not plan effective enough activities in order to ensure that children learn about sustainability and the importance of protecting our world.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The setting has appropriate arrangements to support children with additional learning needs. The leaders communicates regularly with parents and works appropriately with external services and agencies. The setting has adopted a comprehensive policy recently and is beginning to act on it appropriately.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a welcoming and inclusive community in which all children have equal access to all activities. The familial ethos promotes respect and appreciation of the diversity of children's backgrounds successfully. Practitioners use positive praise to promote equality and, as a result, children treat each other thoughtfully.

The setting has succeeded in creating an attractive and stimulating learning environment in the cabin on the school grounds. The indoor environment has been arranged carefully to provide varied and stimulating experiences for children. However, not all areas of the continuous provision, for example play-dough and paint, are accessible enough and available regularly. This limits the opportunities for children to develop their own interests and practice the full range of skills regularly. Attractive displays celebrate children's work and develop their recognition of letters and numbers effectively.

Recently, practitioners have developed the outdoor area to provide beneficial experiences outdoors. They also make the most of the school playground and adventure area to extend children's physical skills. The setting provides a valuable range of interesting and appropriate resources that promote children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills successfully. It also provides natural resources, such as seaweed and shells, that ignite children's curiosity.

The setting makes good use of the local area to reinforce children's experiences; for example, it provides regular opportunities for children to walk to nearby fields.

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

The two acting leaders have succeeded in maintaining the setting's robust vision. They have shared their responsibilities effectively and have set high expectations for themselves and practitioners. They have a clear focus on maintaining high standards in terms of transferring the Welsh language and developing children's skills. They maintain a supportive environment in which children are well-behaved and enjoy learning. As a result of their recent work, in addition to the robust leadership over time, everyone does their best to ensure children's wellbeing and that they benefit from beneficial opportunities and experiences.

All practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities well and work together effectively. This contributes positively to the smooth running of the setting's activities. There is an appropriate performance management system. Recently, this has included effective opportunities for practitioners to develop professionally by evaluating the standard of teaching. This has had a particularly good effect on provision to extend children's thinking skills.

The leaders communicate effectively with the committee's officers and work together purposefully for the benefit of the setting. For example, the committee meets regularly to discuss expenditure and issues relating to maintaining the setting, in addition to fundraising methods. Alongside the leaders, they ensure that the setting's policies are all in place and are implemented consistently.

The setting gives valuable attention to local and national priorities and ensures that there is an effective focus on promoting children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

Improving quality: Good

In the short period of time that they have led the setting, the acting leaders have evaluated children's standards and the quality of provision regularly, and have built effectively on the previous system. Leaders and practitioners evaluate their day-to-day work instinctively and identify strengths and areas for improvement appropriately. As a result, a positive and successful culture of self-evaluation is embedded in the setting's work. This leads to purposeful and consistent improvements. For example, leaders have improved the standard of provision recently to develop children's early writing skills, by buying purposeful equipment to support this.

The setting makes beneficial use of the local authority's procedures to conduct a formal evaluation each year. This enables it to evaluate the setting's standards increasingly effectively through effective use of first-hand evidence. It seeks the views of all practitioners, parents and carers appropriately, and gives their comments suitable consideration. Self-evaluation findings contribute to a relevant development plan that identifies definite priorities. The process leads to beneficial improvements, for example developing provision to promote children's ICT skills. The plan includes a timetable and specific costs, and the names of those responsible for monitoring progress. However, targets are not always incisive enough to measure success completely effectively.

Partnership working: Good

The setting works effectively with a wide range of partners who contribute beneficially to children's standards and wellbeing. There is a good relationship between practitioners and children's parents. Parents value the standard of care for their children and their progress at the setting, particularly with their Welsh language skills and their personal and social skills. Practitioners communicate effectively with parents. They provide informal opportunities to discuss children's progress at the door regularly, and also share pictures of daily activities on social media. This enables them to play an active role in their children's education.

Good co-operation with the school is particularly valuable to the setting. Practitioners make the most of opportunities to observe and adopt the school's procedures, for example for managing behaviour. This ensures beneficial continuity and progression as children move from one setting to the other. Children benefit from regular use of the school playground to extend their physical skills. In addition, children and parents benefit from becoming a part of the school community before they begin their formal education.

The setting values support from the local authority teacher, and the setting has beneficial links with Mudiad Meithrin. It benefits from valuable partnerships with the local community, for example by visiting the mobile library to borrow books to support themes.

Resource management: Good

The setting makes efficient use of practitioners and resources to support teaching and learning. The setting has enough practitioners with appropriate qualifications and relevant experience of working with young children. Leaders ensure that all practitioners work effectively and make the best use of their experience and expertise.

The setting ensures a good supply of beneficial resources that respond to the requirements of the Foundation Phase effectively. These include good quality books, suitable wellingtons for going outdoors and relevant tablet computers.

The setting identifies practitioners' training needs effectively through successful performance management procedures. By reflecting on their own practice, practitioners are beginning to increase their skills. Practitioners have shared their good practice in recording assessments with practitioners from other settings. However, practitioners do not benefit from regular opportunities to develop professionally by attending training and visiting other settings.

The leaders and committee officers have a good understanding of the setting's financial situation. They manage expenditure effectively and work together to try to ensure appropriate funding for the setting.

Considering children's standards of wellbeing and language, numeracy and ICT skills, the standard of teaching, provision and leadership, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Denotes the benchmark – this is the total of all responses to date 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.	17	12 71%	5 29%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		79%	21%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	17	14 82%	3 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		84%	16%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	17	13 76%	3 18%	0 0%	1 6%	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	14%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	17	13 76%	4 24%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		81%	19%	0%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	17	10 59%	5 29%	1 6%	0 0%	1	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		71%	28%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	17	13 76%	3 18%	1 6%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		80%	19%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	17	11 65%	4 24%	1 6%	0 0%	1	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		83%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	17	13 76%	4 24%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		76%	23%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	17	14 82%	3 18%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		84%	15%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	16	9 56%	3 19%	1 6%	0 0%	3	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		72%	27%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	17	10 59%	5 29%	1 6%	0 0%	1	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	31%	5%	1%		

	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 feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	17	14 82%	2 12%	0 0%	1 6%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		80%	19%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	17	9 53%	6 35%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		65%	32%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	17	12 71%	5 29%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		73%	26%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	17	11 65%	6 35%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		63%	32%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	17	13 76%	3 18%	0 0%	1 6%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	18%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Sheila Margaret Birkhead

Reporting Inspector

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 three to seven 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 that 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