



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 Sgêr  
Cornelly Children's Centre  
Greenfield Terrace  
North Cornelly  
Bridgend  
CF33 4LW**

**Date of inspection: April 2016**

**by**

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Reporting Inspector**

**for**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

**Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?**

**Key Question 2: How good is provision?**

**Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?**

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the setting's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

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

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## Context

Cylch Meithrin Y Sgêr is a Welsh-medium setting, located in Cornelly Children's Centre, in the Bridgend local authority. The setting opens for five days a week and it has six full time practitioners.

The setting's registration allows it to take up to 30 children in a session. It accepts two and three-year-old children. At the time of inspection, 10 children attended, all of them funded by the local authority at three-years-old. Flying Start funds a number of younger children at the setting.

Nearly all children are of white British origin and no children speak Welsh as their first language. Currently, there are very few children with additional learning needs.

The leader began her post in October 1996. The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in May 2015. Estyn last inspected the setting in June 2009.

## Summary

<b>The setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because of the:

- children's good progress in all areas of learning
- children's positive attitudes towards tasks
- children's responsible behaviour, indoors and outdoors
- well planned learning experiences
- stimulating teaching, which focuses well on the Foundation Phase outcomes
- effective support and care
- purposeful resources
- regular use of Welsh, which has a positive effect on how the children learn the language
- positive relationships between adults and children

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because of the:

- purposeful provision and the clear direction to the setting's work by the leader and deputy leader
- sensible self-evaluation systems that are generally accurate
- practitioners' positive and active attitudes towards development and training
- effective use of the local authority's support services
- committed work of the active and supportive management committee

## Recommendations

- R1 Refine the planning of focus tasks to challenge children according to their abilities
- R2 Use daily assessments to target the next steps in individual children's learning
- R3 Refine the process for identifying areas of improvement

### **What happens next?**

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

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### Standards: Good

Nearly all children make positive progress from their starting points by the end of their time at the setting. They make beneficial improvements in developing their literacy skills. Nearly all children discuss ideas with other children and adults confidently and they listen carefully to each other. For example, all children discuss the weather purposefully and the utensils needed to prepare fresh vegetables in the mud kitchen. They also offer sensible suggestions when discussing their responsibilities in groups and pairs. This is evident when using funnels and scoops to pour and collect water and bubbles in the network of tubing and piping attached to the building.

Nearly all children sit quietly and listen intently to stories read to them daily. They join in enthusiastically when discussing these stories and while singing songs and nursery rhymes. Many are eager to answer questions about what they are doing. A majority of children choose to look at books independently and these children hold books correctly and discuss the content sensibly, including characters and incidents in the story. Nearly all the children know what to do when given instructions in Welsh and a minority of children use Welsh without prompting.

Most children develop their early writing skills effectively through mark making using chalks and blackboards, water, paints and brushes. A few children are beginning to form the letters of the alphabet and numbers with support in recognisable forms, when handling pencils and crayons. A few are beginning to play read their own work and the work of others, which demonstrates a developing understanding of the purpose of writing.

Nearly all children develop sound numeracy skills. Many children count, identify and name numbers up to 10 confidently and a very few count up to 20 with an understanding that these are larger numbers. Nearly all children use a good range of mathematical language together whilst playing. For example, they describe buckets of sand as 'empty' and 'full' and different materials as 'long' and 'short' when squeezing, rolling, pulling and stretching dough. They also use numbers practically and successfully when discussing 'smaller than' and 'bigger than' when sorting shapes and 'up' and 'down' when climbing large apparatus outdoors. Many children compare two and three-dimensional shapes purposefully using a selection of magnetic blocks.

Nearly all children group different types of objects correctly by colour, size and shape. This includes using magnifying glasses, binoculars, colour fans and inspection pots in the outdoor area and through investigating differences between a selection of natural objects including cones, shells and wood.

Nearly all children use the computer and other information communication and technology (ICT) equipment effectively and confidently, such as an electronic tablet in the quiet room, electronic toys and cameras to study their hair and eye colour to create a pictorial graph.

**Wellbeing: Good**

All children are happy and confident learners. Nearly all of them have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, in relation to their age. Nearly all children wash their hands thoroughly before eating their snacks and drinking milk and water. They do so without much prompting. Nearly all children understand clearly that a healthy diet includes fruit and vegetables and that physical exercise keeps you fit. They understand that their hearts beat faster after riding bikes boisterously in the outdoor area.

Nearly all children have a good attitude towards learning. They participate enthusiastically in all experiences offered to them, both indoors and outdoors. Nearly all children listen well to one another and to practitioners. They behave well. They participate fully in all activities and concentrate and persevere for substantial periods. Most children make sensible decisions for themselves, which includes putting on and taking off their coats independently.

Nearly all children relate well to each other and to adults and visitors. They are polite and considerate of other people's needs and share resources voluntarily. Most children suggest ideas about what and how they will learn through discussions with the practitioners and through the planning of weekly activities. As a result, nearly all children show sound levels of motivation, engagement and concentration.

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

The setting provides a wide range of interesting activities for children across all areas of learning. The planning meets the philosophy of the Foundation Phase effectively and it is a thorough process. The practitioners discuss regularly how to plan the curriculum and they prepare activities daily. The curriculum generally builds well on children's previous knowledge and experiences. However, planned tasks do not always derive accurately from assessments to target the next steps in individual children's learning.

The planning affects the needs of most children sensibly, especially the tasks prepared for continuous and enrichment purposes. However, the planning of focus tasks does not always challenge every child according to their abilities.

The provision for children's literacy, communication and numeracy skills is coherent. It enhances children's learning experiences successfully. Early writing tasks and mental arithmetic activities stimulate children well. They affect standards well in all areas of learning. The provision for ICT is strong and the opportunities to use torches, a computer, an electronic tablet and other technological equipment are worthwhile and related directly to the planning of focus tasks. All adults communicate successfully with children in Welsh.

The practitioners use the indoor and outdoor environment imaginatively to encourage children to experiment with new experiences, which develops their independent thinking skills effectively. For example, through painting, experimenting with dough, building sand castles and role-playing in the indoor café and dressing up area. The setting uses the outdoor decking area imaginatively as a den that contains a selection of musical instruments. Practitioners allow children to move freely between the inside and the outside area, which encourages independent decision making purposefully.

Children visit places outside the setting such as the post office, the village in order to observe the work of the road safety officer, the local supermarket, the hardware shop, take-away restaurants, the nearby school and woodland areas. The practitioners plan these regular activities purposefully, providing children with beneficial opportunities to learn about their own community. The children also learn well from people who visit the setting, such as the fire service who attend with the fire engine, the postman, nurse, police liaison officer, a dental hygienist, re-cycling officers and experts with exotic animals.

The setting provides sound opportunities for children to develop their personal and cultural identity. They celebrate and learn successfully about Welsh festivals such as Saint David's day and Saint Dwynwen's day. They also research and discuss enthusiastically about other cultures, such as the Chinese New Year, Diwali and Holi.

### **Teaching: Good**

All practitioners have up to date information about child development and are knowledgeable about the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They have high expectations for all children and they challenge children constantly in most activities. The leader and practitioners have ensured a sensible balance between activities initiated by children and led by adults. They intervene purposefully in children's play and activities to stimulate and motivate the children. All practitioners are positive as children arrive and they continue with this enthusiasm throughout the session.

The system of sharing duties is established and efficient. Practitioners work effectively together and share information about children regularly. All practitioners are active and understand the importance of providing broad and interesting opportunities for children to learn through play and practical activities.

Practitioners manage children's behaviour positively, safely and effectively. They are enthusiastic language models themselves and provide an exciting environment inside and outside the building, which includes a quiet, sensory room for focus tasks. This encourages children's participation and enjoyment successfully in all activities. They use effective questioning to develop children's thinking and communication skills. A positive aspect is the willingness of practitioners to get the children to appreciate their own work and the work of other children regularly. The setting displays children's work effectively to promote their confidence and to promote pride in their work.

The practitioners include children in assessing their own learning and discuss sensibly with children what they need to do to improve their work during tasks. The deputy leader uses diagnostic tests effectively to target the needs of specific children.



Overall, practitioners assess the next steps in children's learning well. However, daily assessments do not always target the next steps in individual children's learning with enough rigour. The practitioners record observations and assessments diligently to measure children's progress from well-established start points.

All practitioners complete children's personal records conscientiously and the setting informs parents and carers well about their children's achievements. The information is available to them at any time through the setting's effective open door policy.

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

Effective arrangements exist to support the health and wellbeing of children. These arrangements contribute well to the development and general welfare of children and support their learning effectively. The setting offers positive opportunities to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children. For example, practitioners use puppets sensibly to focus on individual's morals and to consider each other's feelings. Therefore, they foster values such as honesty, fairness and respect successfully.

Worthwhile opportunities are available for children to reflect, discuss feelings, say thank you and pray daily. This is evident as they take turns politely when eating snacks and drinking milk and water around the dining table. They prepare the tables sensibly with plates and cups and assist each other well when serving snacks and drinks. The setting has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to re-cycle paper, cardboard, plastic and food. This begins to develop their understanding of sustainability effectively.

The setting uses positive behaviour strategies, which eliminate any form of harassment or oppressive behaviour. Children are happy and safe in the company of adults at the setting and they often ask for help and support. All practitioners have suitable qualifications and experience and the ratio of adults to children is very favourable. Practitioners' expertise is used well when teaching and supervising activities. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. The setting is a safe environment and the practitioners take good care of children when they arrive and when they are collected.

The setting records children's learning needs well when they join and during their time at the setting. The deputy leader uses diagnostic tests effectively to target children's needs accurately. The setting reviews children's progress regularly and the identification of children's start points at the setting is particularly thorough. Therefore, the setting targets children well with additional support. The practitioners discuss these with appropriate agencies when the need arises. The deputy leader is the additional learning needs co-ordinator and she is very familiar with the procedures necessary to support children.

## **Learning environment: Good**

The setting is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to all areas of learning and equipment. Practitioners know the children well and their individuality is recognised. Every child participates in an interesting and varied curriculum inside the building and outdoors. The setting promotes a positive ethos through its daily activities and through the approaches adopted by practitioners. Everyone places a clear emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity. Practitioners use dolls, puppets and specific stories from around the world and about different cultures to achieve this successfully.

The setting uses its resources purposefully inside the building and in the outdoor area to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase and children's needs. Children are encouraged constantly to move freely around the areas of learning and to participate in various activities. The resources are accessible to all children, which promotes their sense of responsibility well. Continuous activities, focus tasks and opportunities to enrich learning share resources effectively.

The setting grows plants in pots and growing areas, which teaches children about plant growth effectively. The setting organises its outdoor resources efficiently and rotates the experiences to match the planned tasks sensibly. The building is of a suitable quality, safe and well maintained.

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

The leader has a positive sense of purpose, which promotes and sustains improvements at the setting. She manages the teaching and learning well, and her expectations are high. The leader ensures that practitioners understand their roles fully and they work together cohesively as a team. They use the guidance of outside agencies such as the local authority sensibly. This practice ensures the best use of practitioners' expertise and it challenges the practitioners to improve in positive, sensible and supportive ways. The management committee appraises and monitors the management practices of the setting regularly and rigorously. Its role is well developed and its practices are effective. The small group of people on the committee are supportive and their work challenges the setting to improve further.

The leader and practitioners plan purposefully to provide interesting experiences for the children. Relationships with children, parents and carers and the management committee are positive. The leader uses relevant information about the setting consistently and she has a sustainable focus on ensuring progress against the setting's priorities. The development plan is a useful document. There are clear priorities for improvement identified through regular self-evaluation procedures, which are generally accurate. There are good processes in place to ensure that resources are available to meet the development plan's targets.

The practitioners receive relevant and effective training, which has a strong impact on the quality of provision. The leader ensures that nearly all children's outcomes are good. The leader and practitioners implement the policies and initiatives efficiently, including those that meet local and national priorities, such as providing for the Foundation Phase and the literacy and numeracy framework.

### **Improving quality: Good**

A positive culture of self-evaluation pervades all the setting's work. The self-evaluation takes account of the views of parents and carers, the local authority and the wider community. This is beneficial to the development of the setting. The management committee and leader clearly demonstrate how they have improved the provision over time, by adopting different strategies and accepting valuable advice from others. This includes using diagnostic tests to target children's needs well.

All the practitioners are knowledgeable about the setting's current work. The leader and the management committee have established consistent procedures to monitor children's standards and the provision. Working together effectively on a daily basis achieves this. The leader quality assures the setting's work conscientiously and the other practitioners share their ideas with her sensibly. The management committee uses funding efficiently for resources and very efficient staffing ratios.

The areas for development are recognised well such as the need to include literacy and numeracy skills into the planning. The leader and the management committee take steps to maintain effective practice and implement changes successfully. The self-evaluation's findings to promote improvements generally link well with the targets in the development plan. However, there are inconsistencies in a very small number of areas.

Practitioners are open to new ideas and are willing to experiment with different ways of working. For example, they have adopted the national model for identifying the start point of every child. The practitioners are very receptive to new ideas, suggested by the local authority's advisory teachers. This has a positive effect on children's learning and wellbeing.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting works strategically with partners to improve provision and children's standards and wellbeing. This is particularly evident through the setting's beneficial partnership with the local authority and the use of the Mudiad Meithrin for policies and administrative support. The positive relationship with the local authority's advisory teacher challenges leaders and the management committee sensibly to improve the setting's work.

The setting's partnership with the school's nursery class is successful. The setting uses community links effectively to support children's learning, which includes effective use of the local community and a wide range of visitors to the setting. Outside agencies support the setting with training, for example first aid training, food hygiene courses, Foundation Phase initiatives and safeguarding courses. This improves the practitioners' awareness of important and relevant issues when dealing with young children.

Practitioners take active steps to involve parents and carers in the setting's life. The setting regularly informs parents and carers about all aspects of the setting's work. They are encouraged to offer their own opinions on matters to improve the setting. The setting acts upon them to ensure that developments are effective.

**Resource management: Good**

The leadership is strong and it aims to improve all aspects of the setting's work continuously. It enables practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge successfully. The strategic planning supports the effective provision of all practitioners.

The leader and the management committee succeed in ensuring that the setting has enough qualified practitioners with appropriate training. This is a very positive aspect. Leaders use funding well to prioritise a high ratio of practitioners, who all have specific roles. The setting is a strong learning community, which has a culture of collaboration between practitioners and other partners involved with the setting. This includes strong links with the local authority's advisory team. Performance management systems are thorough and lead to improved teaching.

The setting manages its resources purposefully to support learning and to create improvements in the setting. The leader and the management committee have a clear understanding of the budget and they prioritise spending in line with their planned actions for improvement effectively. The setting ensures that the use of money has a direct impact on children's achievements and wellbeing. The setting provides the best standards of accommodation and resources possible within its budget.

The setting provides good value for money because of the children's successful outcomes, the practitioners' effective provision and the purposeful leadership.

## Appendix 1

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

#### **Responses to parent questionnaires**

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

## Appendix 2

### The Reporting Inspector

Mr 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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<p>These seven areas make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development, as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li> <li>• Language, literacy and communications skills</li> <li>• Mathematical development</li> <li>• Welsh language development</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of the world</li> <li>• Physical development</li> <li>• Creative development</li> </ul>
<b>CSSIW</b>	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	<p>This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings, which do not comply with the partnerships conditions of registration.</p>
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.</p>
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.</p>

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