



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Arbeth
Bloomfield Community Centre
Northfield Road
Narberth
Pembrokeshire**

Date of inspection: 8 February, 2012

by

Dorothy Morris

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

Cylch Meithrin Arbeth was established in 1998. It is based in a large room in the Bloomfield Community Centre in the town of Narberth in Pembrokeshire. The children who attend the setting live in the town and the immediate area. The area is described as neither advantaged nor economically and socially disadvantaged.

The setting caters for children from the age of two and a half until the term prior to their fourth birthday. It is open between 9:15 and 11:45 in the morning for four sessions a week during term time. During the inspection, there were thirteen three year olds on the register. Most children come from homes where English is the main language spoken. At present there are no children from minority ethnic backgrounds or children with additional learning needs.

There are five members of staff. They are experienced and three hold relevant qualifications in the education and care of young children.

The setting was last inspected by Estyn in March 2006 and by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in July 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:

- the children make consistent progress from their starting points;
- the children are happy and enjoy the learning experiences provided;
- all the children demonstrate good attitudes and are very well behaved;
- an interesting curriculum is offered;
- the teaching is good overall;
- the children are offered good quality care in an inclusive environment; and
- there is a very good relationship between the children and the practitioners.

Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because of:

- the lead practitioner's effective leadership;
- the good teamwork;
- the readiness to develop and improve;
- the effective partnership with the management committee; and
- the good support from parents and the community.

Recommendations

In order to develop further, the setting needs to:

R1 improve children's information and communications technology (ICT) skills;

R2 extend the more able children's learning skills further;

R3 strengthen assessment processes and make greater use of the information collected to support the planning; and

R4 develop the self-evaluation and forward planning processes.

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. The progress made will be monitored by the local authority.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The children make consistent progress in their learning from their starting points. They work hard and acquire knowledge and appropriate skills across most of the areas of learning within the Foundation Phase curriculum.

The majority of children make increasing use of their thinking, communication and number skills in their work. Children's listening and concentration skills are good.

They all understand greetings and instructions and respond accurately. They understand a story read to them and the older children can recall some of the main events. They have a developing awareness of the sounds of the main letters in the alphabet and they enjoy looking at and handling books. They know a good number of songs and rhymes which they sing accurately. They use mark making tools purposefully in a range of media demonstrating a secure awareness of some of the purposes of writing.

The majority of children make appropriate use of their number skills in daily activities. Nearly all count to ten and use mathematical language, such as big and small, accurately in practical situations. They can create and follow a pattern correctly. They know the names of basic shapes and understand that money is needed to buy goods in the shop. Although the children make confident use of programmable toys, their general ICT skills are not developing sufficiently.

Children's personal and social skills are good. They make effective use of their thinking and decision making skills in mathematical and creative tasks. They demonstrate good use of fine motor skills when using tools to cut and glue.

Wellbeing: Good

The children demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They work conscientiously on their tasks and enjoy the range of activities provided. All children settle well into the setting and form good relationships with other children. They are happy and feel safe in the company of adults and are ready to ask for support and help.

Most children have a developing awareness of the importance of physical exercise and healthy eating. They understand the importance of washing their hands regularly and particularly before eating their snacks.

The setting works effectively as a close community which successfully promotes children's social awareness and skills. Children's standards of behaviour are very good. They play co-operatively and demonstrate an increasing ability to share resources and await their turn. The older children work relatively independently and undertake new experiences confidently.

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

The practitioners provide a range of relevant activities across most of the six areas of learning. Longer term planning is based on themes which are appropriate for the children's age range. There is suitable use of frameworks to plan the provision particularly for small group activities. The activities have clear objectives which are appropriately linked to the Foundation Phase curriculum.

The planning offers appropriate opportunities to develop children's thinking, communication and number skills through the provision. A range of activities and purposeful resources are provided to promote these skills. Nevertheless, there is insufficient provision to promote children's ICT skills consistently.

The practitioners make effective use of the internal and external environment to encourage children to experiment with new experiences. The opportunities to grow and care for plants and involvement in recycling activities promote their awareness of the importance of caring for the environment and all living things. The local authority pre-school health education programme is implemented successfully and the setting has achieved the second leaf.

There is good attention and consistent encouragement for children to use their Welsh communication skills in their learning and play. The practitioners communicate consistently with the children and introduce new vocabulary. The attention to reinforcing basic sentence patterns is more uneven. The practitioners develop children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of Wales effectively through activities which include celebrating St. David's day.

Appropriate opportunities are provided for children to learn about the culture and traditions of other people through activities such as celebrating the Chinese New Year. Activities, such as studying the clothes and costumes of people in other countries, contribute effectively to promoting children's awareness of the wider world.

Teaching: Good

The practitioners have a developing knowledge of the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and offer children learning experiences that gain their interest well. They use a range of teaching approaches and appropriate resources to support the learning. The practitioners work well as a team and offer children good support. They communicate effectively with children during small group and story time. Tasks, however, are not always sufficiently structured to extend children's learning, particularly the more able children.

The practitioners know the children well. They observe children's responses consistently during activities and regularly note any significant developments. The observations are collected and recorded appropriately across the six areas of learning. Nevertheless, the observations are not evaluated sufficiently to assist with planning the next stages in children's learning. Appropriate transfer forms are completed and forwarded to the primary school. Children take home samples of their work to share with their parents but the opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress are more informal.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. The setting is a caring community with a family atmosphere which contributes

significantly to children's wellbeing. The induction arrangements, alongside the daily contact with parents, ensure that children settle well into the setting. The practitioners succeed in creating a warm and welcoming environment.

There is good attention to promoting children's understanding of the importance of washing hands, using tools safely and behaving responsibly. The induction arrangements ensure that children settle well into the setting. The practitioners are caring and supportive of all the children.

There are suitable arrangements for supporting children with additional learning needs when required, and there are clear lines of communication with key agencies. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. Risk assessments are undertaken regularly.

Effective learning experiences promote children's personal development well and include their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Values, such as fairness and kindness, and an understanding of what is right and wrong, are fostered effectively through the curriculum and day-to-day activities.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where children receive equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. Appropriate attention is given to celebrating diversity. Practitioners consider and value children's different backgrounds.

The setting has an appropriate number of practitioners with relevant experience and qualifications to deliver the curriculum. There are sufficient resources which are used effectively to support the learning and teaching. The accommodation is well maintained and offers suitable facilities. There is regular use of the outside play area, which includes a garden, to offer children opportunities to investigate and play. The displays of children's work contribute to creating a colourful environment.

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

The setting is led effectively by an experienced leader. The practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities and work well as a team. They offer children a purposeful and organised environment. Appropriate policies are implemented.

The management committee offers the practitioners consistent and effective support, which promotes the further development of the setting. Members take a keen interest in the setting and work hard to raise additional funding. The committee meets regularly and the minutes are used as a basis for further planning. There is a

close working relationship between the setting leader and the officers. Appropriate procedures are in place to appraise the work of the practitioners and to agree on further professional development.

The practitioners give suitable attention to national and local priorities including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum, promoting children's Welsh language skills and implementing the local authority's pre-school health education programme.

Improving quality: Adequate

The practitioners have a general understanding of the setting's strengths. They hold regular discussions but the evaluation and forward planning processes are more informal in nature. The self-evaluation report completed prior to the inspection is a suitable starting point. The improvement plan is in a first draft form and identifies some relevant aspects for attention.

The provision is regularly monitored by the local authority link teacher. Areas for development are agreed and relevant strategies implemented. As part of the role, the chair of the management committee is a regular visitor and the committee also discuss aspects of provision in their meetings.

The practitioners attend suitable courses on aspects of the education and care of young children. They make effective use of the training received in aspects such as planning activities. There are some opportunities for practitioners to discuss and share ideas with other settings and practitioners during training days.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has clear aims and objectives which are shared by all the partners. There is a good partnership with parents and they are provided with relevant information through the notice board and newsletters. Practitioners are regularly available to meet parents at the beginning and end of each session.

The close partnership with the management committee provides a good basis for the further development of the setting. The close collaboration with the local authority link teacher and Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin officer leads to improvements in the setting's work.

There are close links with the local primary school through the headteacher's visits, and the setting makes use of school facilities for fund raising activities. The setting's links with the local Cylch Ti a Fi and the school promotes a smooth transition for children to the next stage in their education.

The setting has close links with the community. There is good use of the ready support of the Bloomfield Centre staff which facilitates the management of the

setting. There is successful use of the links with local agencies and organisations to support fund raising activities.

Resource management: Good

Resources are managed effectively. The setting is appropriately staffed and training opportunities provided. There are sufficient learning resources which are used effectively to support the learning.

The setting leader and treasurer have a good understanding of the budget and prioritise spending according to the setting's needs. Financial decisions are discussed by the committee and managed efficiently by the treasurer. Further funding is raised through the hard work of the management committee, parents, practitioners and the community. The setting offers good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received.

Responses to discussions with the children

The children are happy and at ease in the setting. They all join in the activities enthusiastically. They are ready to talk about their favourite activities and interests.

Appendix 2

Dorothy Morris

Reporting Inspector

Copies of the report Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

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	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	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 partnership's conditions of registration.
Foundation Phase	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.
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2013.
Local authority advisory teacher	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.
Mudiad Meithrin	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.
National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered child minders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National (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.

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