



*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 Bodawen  
Post Office Lane  
Denbigh  
LL16 3UN**

**Date of inspection: February 2015**

**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:

<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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court, Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**© Crown Copyright 2015: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.**

**Publication date: 06/03/2015**

## Context

Cylch Meithrin Bodawen is in Denbigh in the Denbighshire local authority. It is situated in a chapel schoolroom near the centre of the town.

The setting is registered to admit up to 26 children in each session from the ages of two and a half to three years old. At present, 15 three-year-old children attend the group, 13 of whom are funded by the local authority.

English is the main language of many of the children and a minority come from households in which one or two parents speak Welsh. Welsh is the main medium of teaching and learning at the nursery. At present, there are no children with additional learning needs.

The setting is open for five mornings and four afternoons a week.

The setting has two full-time and two part-time members of staff. They have appropriate qualifications that are associated with early years education. The leader took up her post in September 2003.

The group was last inspected by Estyn in February 2009 and by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in October 2013.

## 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:

- Most children's communication and numeracy skills develop well during their time in the setting
- There is a welcoming and happy ethos at the setting
- Children settle in quickly
- The setting provides a good range of stimulating learning experiences
- Practitioners make effective use of the space available and resources are of good quality
- The setting provides good quality care, support and guidance for the children

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Leaders want the best for the children and the setting
- Practitioners work together effectively as a team
- Leaders have a strong focus on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills
- Practitioners receive appropriate training and make good use of advice to improve outcomes for children
- The setting has a good range of effective partnerships

## Recommendations

- R1 Make sure that planning builds on children's prior learning and systematically develops skills
- R2 Use systems for assessment to raise standards through better identification of children's strengths and areas for improvement
- R3 Ensure that the issue that has an unfavourable effect on children's wellbeing is addressed
- R4 Improve opportunities for children to learn about sustainability

### **What happens next?**

The setting will draw up an action plan, which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

## Main findings

<b>How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
-------------------------------	-------------

### **Standards: Good**

During their time in the setting, most children make good progress in line with their age and stage of development.

Most children's communication skills are developing well. They make themselves understood consistently, by either word or gesture, for example when asking for help to put on an apron in the paint area. They listen and respond well during group activities and enjoy joining in with songs and rhymes. A majority hold simple conversations in their first language with their friends and adults. For example, they talk enthusiastically with each other in the home corner and during role-play in the pet shop area. Most children make worthwhile progress, from their starting points, in developing a knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language. They listen carefully and respond well to instructions given in Welsh. They are beginning to use simple words independently, for example feeding 'llaeth' to the animals in the role-play area. A very few children are able to speak appropriately at greater length.

Most children experiment with and enjoy mark-making and writing. For example, they make circles in shaving foam and write on the chalk boards in the shed outside. They develop a good understanding that writing has a purpose, for example through making notes from a telephone conversation in the office area. A minority of children make marks with growing control, for example when drawing pictures of their parents. A few more able children are beginning to write their names. A minority of children recognise their name above their coat peg in the mornings.

Most children count confidently in Welsh and English. For example, they count the number of moves made by a programmable toy. They participate well in learning number songs and rhymes, such as singing about the 'pump robin goch' in the outdoor area. Many children sort familiar objects according to colour or shape, such as sorting dinosaurs into different colour groups. Most children identify two-dimensional shapes correctly. For example, they recognise that their crackers at snack time are a square shape.

Many children have well-developed physical skills. They climb up the ladder to the slide and throw balls with increasing control towards a target. A few children are beginning to solve problems and to develop their thinking skills, such as working out how to use the latch on the outdoor shed and trying to guess what they can feel inside a feely box.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all children come into the setting happily, and settle quickly and willingly to their tasks. They have positive attitudes to their learning and show enjoyment and perseverance during the sessions. They form good relationships with the adults at the setting and with each other and are prepared to ask for help when needed.

Nearly all children's behaviour is good and they are very familiar with the setting's routines. Most children co-operate well with each other and they are learning to share and take turns suitably. They take good care of the resources at the setting, using them appropriately. Many children join in tidying up at the end of the session with adult help.

During snack time, nearly all children show that they are learning valuable social skills. They sit together happily, sharing and talking to each other. Most children develop useful independent skills. For example, they pour their own drinks and spread butter on crackers without adult support.

Most children choose play activities confidently and sustain concentration on a task well.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
---	-------------

### **Learning experiences: Good**

The setting provides children with a wide range of beneficial learning experiences, both indoors and outside. Practitioners meet together regularly to plan worthwhile activities across all Foundation Phase areas of learning that engage most learners. However, they do not evaluate planning well enough to build systematically on what children learn or to identify the next steps they need to take.

Welsh is the official language of the setting and practitioners work hard to develop children's communication skills. They make good use of opportunities to develop children's understanding and oral skills during regular routines, for example during snack time. They use songs and rhymes appropriately to help establish language patterns and vocabulary. Children learn about their Welsh heritage successfully when they dress up for St David's Day and sing traditional nursery rhymes.

Weekly plans provide worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their listening skills through specific games and opportunities to follow instructions, for example while programming an electronic toy. There are interesting opportunities to develop children's mark-making skills. Children have many opportunities to develop their language through imaginative role-play. Practitioners provide a cosy reading corner and change the books regularly to go with their theme. However, they do not provide children with enough opportunities to hear stories read to them.

The setting develops children's numeracy skills successfully by providing many opportunities for counting, sorting and matching. For example, they encourage children to count the number of moves made by a programmable toy and the number of 'robins' hidden in the outdoor area. They are beginning to develop children's thinking and problem solving skills appropriately. For example, practitioners encourage children to try to work out what is hiding inside a box.

### **Teaching: Adequate**

Practitioners are experienced and have an appropriate understanding of Foundation Phase requirements. The setting has well-established routines and, as a result, children feel safe and secure. Practitioners have positive working relationships with all children and manage behaviour competently.

Practitioners act as good language role models for the children. This supports children learning Welsh as a second language effectively, as well as extending the vocabulary of children with more understanding. Practitioners provide a stimulating and interesting environment both indoors and outside, which encourages children's involvement and enjoyment. They work together well as a team, and recent changes to the organisation of group time have improved opportunities for children to contribute and express their opinions. However, occasionally, group sessions are too long and, as a result, children lose interest. In addition, practitioners do not always allow children enough time to learn through following their own interests. Practitioners often question children to check their understanding. However, they are less successful in extending their thinking and making the most of opportunities to puzzle things out and learn for themselves.

The setting has recently introduced a new assessment system to help to identify children's needs, and to track individual children's progress. Practitioners use this information to feed into individual assessment books that record children's experience across all areas of learning. They are beginning to use these assessments to plan future activities that meet children's needs and interests. However, this is at a very early stage of development and its impact on the standards children achieve is too early to judge.

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

There are good arrangements in place to promote healthy living. Children have a nutritious snack and have many opportunities for physical exercise both indoors and outside.

The setting encourages children to build positive relationships with each other and fosters tolerance and respect successfully. There is daily contact with parents to feed back any concerns as they arise.

Practitioners encourage children to share and take turns and to take care of resources effectively. For example, all children are encouraged to help tidy up at the end of the session.

Learning experiences promote children's personal and social development well, including their spiritual, moral and cultural development. For example, children are encouraged to take part in a prayer to say thank you for their food. They are encouraged to become independent effectively, by trying to put on their own aprons and coats. Practitioners provide appropriate opportunities to learn about different cultures, for example celebrating Chinese New Year. However, practitioners do not provide enough opportunities for children to understand about sustainable development.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern. There are appropriate systems in place to support children with additional needs.



## **Learning environment: Good**

The setting provides a warm and friendly ethos where all are welcomed. It is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to the learning experiences provided.

The setting provides a wide range of interesting and varied resources that meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum successfully. Practitioners make good use of the space available, both indoors and outside. The indoor accommodation is secure and appropriately maintained. It is bright, welcoming and well laid out. There are attractive displays of the children's work that include explanations of some of the skills they are developing. The setting has two outdoor areas that practitioners use well to help children develop skills successfully. The outdoor area is well laid out and includes many resources to interest the children. However, there is no opportunity for children to grow their own plants. An issue that has an unfavourable effect on children's wellbeing was drawn to the attention of the management committee at the time of the inspection.

Following a recommendation in the last inspection report, the setting now makes more use of the local environment. For example, practitioners take small groups of children on worthwhile visits to the local castle, library and pet shop. As a result, children are becoming more aware of their local area.

<b>How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
--	-------------

## **Leadership: Good**

The setting leader and her deputy manage the setting well. They share responsibilities effectively and ensure that all staff are aware of their roles. The leader directs practitioners appropriately to ensure that the setting runs smoothly. Practitioners work together successfully as a team and support one another to ensure that they look after the children well and that children make suitable progress in the setting.

The management committee meets regularly and carries out its duties effectively. The leader and her deputy build sound relationships with parents and carers. As a result, parents and carers are happy to bring their children to the setting and feel confident that the leader will address any concerns that they may have appropriately.

There are appropriate processes in place to manage the performance of practitioners. The committee and the leader use these to identify training needs and to ensure the wellbeing of all staff members. This enables practitioners to undertake their work effectively.

The setting pays good attention to local and national priorities and there is a strong focus on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Leaders make satisfactory use of a range of evidence to evaluate what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. They identify suitable priorities to work towards and plan how to carry these out effectively. They reflect on their practice during regular meetings and make changes to improve the provision and to reflect children's interests. For example, practitioners recently divided the children into two smaller groups for 'Together Time' in order to make sure that they all had an opportunity to contribute. Practitioners are strongly committed to achieving the best outcomes for the children.

They are open to new ideas and respond positively to advice from the local authority. They have welcomed the local authority's monitoring reports and used the information from these successfully to help them to improve their provision. This has been particularly useful in helping them to develop their good quality indoor learning environment.

The setting leader has made effective use of visits to other settings to view good practice. Ideas from these visits are having a positive impact on children's standards of achievement, particularly in developing their social and independent skills.

The setting has made satisfactory progress towards meeting the recommendations from the previous inspection.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting has a good range of effective partnerships. These partnerships impact positively on children's standards and wellbeing and on the quality of provision.

Partnerships with parents are strong. Practitioners keep them well informed about their children's experiences and progress through a regular newsletter, notices, signs and photographs in the entrance area. Parents appreciate the regular opportunity for informal information sharing about their children as they arrive and leave the setting.

The setting has strong links with a local primary school. Teaching staff visit the setting each summer to get to know the children before they move on to school. This promotes smooth transition for children from the setting to the next stage in their education. A senior teacher from the school has recently taken on the role of link teacher as part of the local authority pilot. This is strengthening the transition links and giving practitioners further opportunities to glean useful advice.

The constructive partnership with the local authority's advisory teacher has led to significant improvements over time. Training provided by the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin has resulted in improvements in standards and provision.

### **Resource management: Good**

The setting makes good use of staffing and resources to support the delivery of the Foundation Phase effectively.

Practitioners access an effective range of suitable training to support their professional development. They implement advice from training to improve outcomes for children.

The leader and officers of the current committee have a clear understanding of the budget, and they prioritise spending decisions in line with the setting's needs. They have effective processes for keeping spending under review.

In view of the positive outcomes achieved by the children, the setting provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

Derbyniwyd llai na 10 ymateb. Ni chaiff unrhyw ddata ei ddangos.

## 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.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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"> <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 childminders 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.