



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 Cefnfaes Bethesda
Canolfan Cefnfaes
Bethesda
Gwynedd
LL57 3AG**

Date of inspection: January 2014

by

**Eifion R Morgan
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:

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 Cefnfaes is based in the Cefnfaes Centre in Bethesda, Gwynedd. The Cylch is long established and takes in children from the town and surrounding villages and rural communities. The Cylch has the use of three rooms in the Centre. The accommodation is warm and in a good decorative condition. It is registered by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accommodate a maximum of 20 children, and is administered by a voluntary committee on behalf of the Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership. This is a Welsh speaking community and the substantial majority of the children come from Welsh speaking homes. The Cylch reports that the locality is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged.

The Cylch accepts children following their second birthday and remain at the Cylch until the September following their third birthday when they move to one of the several local primary schools. This is a Welsh medium setting and all children continue their education through the medium of Welsh. The Cylch is open five mornings of the week during term time between 9.15 a.m. and 12.15 p.m. Currently there are 31 children on the register, of whom 10 are three year olds and funded.

The setting accepts children with additional learning needs and they receive support financed by Gwynedd Referral Scheme (Cynllyn Cyfeirio Gwynedd). There are no children from minority ethnic communities.

The staff comprise of 4 well qualified and experienced practitioners. They are all fluent Welsh speakers. The leader is in her third year in charge of the setting, and has assumed her role since the last inspection.

The setting was last inspected by Estyn in 2008 and the recommendations of that report have been addressed. The last CSSIW inspection was in 2011 and the minor issues addressed.

Summary

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

Current performance

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because of:

- the care, support and guidance the children have;
- the learning opportunities provided for the children, particularly to develop their language;
- the stimulating learning environment provided for the children;
- children's behaviour and attitude to learning;
- the effective teamwork of the staff focused on children's needs;
- the quality of leadership provided;
- the active and supportive management committee.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement

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

- the leader's management skills;
- the leader and staff's openness to new ideas;
- the support provided by the local authority support teacher in implementing change;
- the staff's commitment to providing the best provision for the children.

Recommendations

- A1. develop and refine assessment procedures.
- A2. plan work that is well matched to children's needs and that will challenge them.
- A3. address the shortcomings identified in the report.
- A4. continue to provide as much outdoor learning experiences as possible for the children.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

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

All children are progressing well and achieve good standards. Children undertake a wide range of tasks that strengthen and develop their learning. Children have a good recollection of their previous learning and are developing their thinking skills and applying them in new situations.

All children have well developed communication skills enabling them to express themselves succinctly. They listen attentively to the staff and carry out instructions willingly. In conversation with adults they use appropriate language and converse with each other in spontaneous play. Good language patterns are established. Children enjoy story time and show an interest in books. They follow stories and respond enthusiastically. Children particularly enjoy participating in action songs.

Most children experiment with mark making be it with chalk or making shapes in foam. They understand the purpose of writing such as making lists in their cafe.

Most children are developing good mathematical skills and use mathematical language as appropriate. They have good counting skills, counting accurately in most instances to 10. More able children can undertake simple subtraction problems without hesitation. In such instances, problem solving skills are well developed. However, aspects of mathematics, including e.g. problem solving and recognising patterns are underdeveloped. Children are familiar with basic digital technology such as mobile telephones and C.D. players but their knowledge and understanding of communications technology is limited.

All children enjoy creative work and use a good range of materials. Children sing tunefully and most children are well co-ordinated as shown by their active participation in physical activities.

This is a Welsh medium setting and most children are fluent Welsh speakers coming from Welsh speaking homes. The minority of on-Welsh speakers are making good progress and past records show that they will be able to pursue the next stage of their education through the medium of Welsh.

Overall most children persevere well with the tasks set out for them and during free choice activities. The outcomes of the parents' questionnaire and discussion with parents indicate a high level of satisfaction with the progress their children are making.

Wellbeing: Good

All children are keen to participate in learning and to be actively involved in all activities set out for them. Most children show their enthusiasm on arrival and their sense of enjoyment is apparent. All children are well behaved and show good attitudes, responding positively to suggestions of the staff. Good behaviour is rewarded. Children are learning to become independent learners and to take responsibility.

All children relate well to each other and are considerate. They co-operate well during free play and maintain their concentration on task for significant periods of time. Relationships between children and staff are very good and children's ideas and opinions are noted when planning the work and activities. A notable feature is children's high levels of self-esteem and confidence enabling them to talk confidently to an inspector.

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

Practitioners plan collaboratively and learning experiences successfully engage all children. Children's views are incorporated and the planning is sufficiently flexible to respond to children's ideas. Overall the learning experiences are well focused on encouraging children to progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. Staff are well aware of children's previous knowledge and understanding and the curriculum builds systematically on children's previous knowledge, understanding and skills.

Learning opportunities include good opportunities for children to experiment and to become confident explorers of their environment, such as during a visit to the local park. Children used a magnifying glass to observe the mini-beasts including observing slug movement. This suitably challenges children's ideas.

Good opportunities were planned for children to become independent learners such as collecting fruits and seeds and different leaves in autumn. This encourages their thinking skills and a better understanding of the world in which they live. Children also appreciate that all living things need to be treated with care.

Overall the planning to provide for the development of children's numeracy skills and knowledge of digital technology is insufficiently developed. Planning provides well for children to develop their cultural identity by celebrating Welsh festivals such as St. David's Day and partaking in local community activities. The study of other cultures extends their experiences.

Teaching: Good

All staff are well qualified and experienced and have a thorough knowledge of child development and an understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. Staff understand the different needs of children based on their ability and previous experiences. Staff share a common objective in that expectations are high of all children and that everyone has their specific needs.

There is a good balance between child-selected free play and adult-directed activities and children's needs are met flexibly. Children are well managed and staff themselves are good role models, including good language models. Questioning is well used to challenge children and staff have a good understanding of when to intervene in children's activities. Additional practitioner's time is used effectively.

Overall the quality of teaching impacts well on the learning, including the personal and social development of the children. However, there is insufficient focus on identifying children's individual abilities and preparing tasks well matched to their needs and stage of development.

Staff know their children well and are sensitive to their needs. Children's progress is tracked across all areas of learning but this has been rather time consuming and of limited use in the past. The assessment procedures introduced recently are much better focused on what individual children have achieved and on the next steps in their learning. Parents report that they are kept well informed about their children's learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Effective arrangements are in place to support children's health and wellbeing. Overall these arrangements make a significant contribution to children's wellbeing and effectively support their development, both academically and personally.

A notable feature of the setting is the happy and secure relationships that the children enjoy. They are self-confident and know when to ask for help or support. Relationships between children and between children and adults are good.

The setting identifies children's learning needs and has good procedures in place to meet their needs. Children with additional learning needs are well supported and the setting work collaboratively with other key agencies, such as the Gwynedd Referral Scheme.

Learning experiences promote children's development well including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children know the importance of recycling, such as using junk material in their activities. The setting is actively involved in cultural activities in the locality.

Safeguarding arrangements are well established. All staff have received recent training and the setting is a safe and secure environment. Doors are kept locked ensuring that no one can enter or leave unannounced.

The settings arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to all areas of learning. Children are respected as individuals and their individual characteristics recognised and respected. The setting is generously staffed with experienced and well qualified individuals. The setting is a stimulating learning environment with a generally ample supply of resources well matched to children's learning needs. The one exception is IT equipment.

Resources are conveniently stored and accessible. The setting does not have an outside area suitable for the children to use. Otherwise the accommodation is suitable and well used. The setting however, makes good use of the local community including the local library and park.

The accommodation is secure, no one can enter or leave unannounced.

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

The setting benefits from the sense of purpose that is provided by the leader and this promotes and sustains improvement. Expectations are high and the implementation of policies and initiatives are effective. Staff work well as a team and complement each other and this ensures that the setting is well focused on providing the best possible learning opportunities for the children.

Relationships are very good and contribute substantially to the sense of community evident in the setting. The management committee is very effective and has a sustained focus on achieving progress based on improving the provision where possible. Currently the outcomes are good.

Policies and initiatives, including those established locally, are implemented consistently.

Improving quality: Good

The Management Committee and staff know their setting well; areas for development are recognised and action taken has brought about change ensuring good practice.

Staff are open to new ideas and receptive to change. They make good use of training courses and share expertise.

The setting illustrates how improvements have taken place to the provision with the improvements in standards of children's achievement and wellbeing. Current self-evaluation procedures have been established and indicate clearly the assessment criteria and proposed improvements. This provides a good basis for future improvement.

Partnership working: Good

Partnership arrangements make a significant contribution to children's good progress, achievements and wellbeing. The staff take active steps to ensure they involve all parents and the pre-inspection questionnaire indicates strongly the support and satisfaction of all parents. Parents have regular access to the staff when bringing or collecting their children and staff are always available to meet with them. Parents are also involved as members of the management committee and monthly events are well supported.

Good links exist with the several primary schools that the children move onto. All children visit their receiving school towards the end of the summer term.

The setting is very appreciative of the strong support provided by the Local Authority advisory teacher and by the Mudiad Meithrin.

The setting has strong links with the community.

Resource management: Good

The staff are supported by regular professional development and good use is made of the training. The recently introduced assessment procedures are well designed to improve the learning experiences provided for the children.

The setting is a well-established professional learning community where staff share their expertise and support one another. In this way they share their professional knowledge. This impacts well on the quality of provision and children's progress and achievements.

Resources, including their accessibility and working areas are now effectively organised. They are well designed to support learning.

The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Yn dynodi'r meincnod – mae hwn yn gyfanswm o'r holl ymatebion hyd hyn ers mis Medi 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 yngwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	16	15 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffwrdd redinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	16	15 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhleolwr yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	16	16 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhleolwr ym gartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	16	16 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhleolwr yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	16	15 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		69%	26%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	16	15 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu'n dda.
		79%	18%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	16	16 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob pleolwr yn dda a gyda pharch.
		82%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	16	15 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caffiffy mhleolwr yn cael encouragement i iach a i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		73%	22%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	16	16 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhleolwr yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	14	11 79%	2 14%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhleolwr yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		64%	25%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	15	11 73%	3 20%	1 7%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhleolwr.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'ngryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'ngryf	Don't know Ddimyngwybod	
		63%	30%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	16	16 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwni'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problemau.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	16	15 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		62%	30%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	16	13 81%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhleintyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		71%	23%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	16	11 69%	4 25%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweiliadau.
		62%	31%	4%	0%		
The setting is well run.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael i redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion R Morgan	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.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	<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 partnership's conditions of registration.</p>
Foundation Phase	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.</p>
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
Local authority advisory teacher	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
Mudiad Meithrin	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.</p>

National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders 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.