



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 Eglwysbach
Ysgol Eglwysbach
Eglwysbach
Colwyn Bay
Conwy
LL28 5UD**

Date of inspection: June 2014

by

**Mr 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 Eglwysbach is a Welsh medium play group that meets in the school hall. Eglwysbach is a small rural village some 4 miles north of Llanrhwst in North Wales.

The setting is registered to accommodate a maximum of 15 children in any session. Currently there are 22 children on roll, including 7 three year olds who are funded to receive early years education. During the inspection only 5 three year olds were present. The setting reports that half the children come from homes where the predominant language is Welsh and a further 30% from homes where one parent is Welsh speaking. The other children come from English speaking backgrounds. Very few children have been identified with special learning needs. The setting meets 4 mornings of the week (not Monday) from 9 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. during term time.

There are two full time members of staff who share the leadership role and another member of staff in a supporting role. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced.

The setting was last inspected by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in 2013 and by Estyn in 2008.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:-

- children are happy and feel safe and secure;
- children settle quickly and are soon actively involved in activities set out for them;
- all children behave well and show good attitudes to their work;
- the planned learning experiences are broad and successfully motivate children;
- the teaching is good and practitioners support the children well in their activities;
- children are provided with good care and support that ensures their wellbeing;
- the setting is well integrated into the life of the feeder primary school and this facilitates the transfer of the children.

Prospects for improvement

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

- leaders provide a clear focus on providing the best provision for the children;
- procedures for self-evaluation are well established and have resulted in improvement;
- the setting has a good track record of improvement and clear guidelines for improvement;
- staff have attended local authority courses and the results have improved provision for the children;
- the setting benefits substantially from the support and advice provided by the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin officers.

Recommendations

R1. focus on identifying children's skill development, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

R2. use the results of assessment to plan the next steps in children's learning.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skill development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: **Good**

The setting provides a good range of learning experiences that successfully engage all children. Learning intentions are well focused on encouraging children to progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. There is an appropriate emphasis on children learning through first hand experiences both inside and outside the classroom. All children are well motivated and eager to try out new ideas.

The curriculum builds systematically on children's existing knowledge, understanding and skills with good emphasis on play. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. All children enjoy listening to stories; they have good listening skills and are eager to answer questions based on the story. There are good opportunities planned for children to look at books. Children take such opportunities enthusiastically selecting their favourite stories and handling books correctly. Writing opportunities, such as using chalk during outside play indicate that many children are able to form recognisable letters, as in their names.

Good opportunities are provided for children to count and to recognise number. During outside play children matched numbers from one to nine with a good degree of accuracy. Planning for ICT skills includes use of the computer mouse to find and match screen icons.

There are regularly planned activities to develop children's creative and physical skills and their knowledge of the world around them. In the time leading up to the inspection children had seen butterfly eggs develop, pupate and the adults freed, so appreciating the concept of life cycle.

Planning also includes adult-led focused activities which are designed to extend children's learning. Planned learning opportunities provide encouragement for children's personal development including their capacity for independent learning to develop their self-confidence and to form good relationships.

Children also have appropriate opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions through celebrating St. David's day.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Phase philosophy and use a suitable range of strategies to engage children's interest. Resources are well used to support the learning. Activities are well planned with a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led tasks and practitioners know when it is appropriate to intervene in children's learning.

Children's behaviour is well managed and questioning well used to develop their language and thinking.

Individual assessment booklets record children's skill development across the curriculum. There are also booklets illustrating individual children's work across the six areas of learning as identified by the Foundation Phase curriculum. The individual learning files are provided for parents at the end of the year and give them a good indication of what children have achieved.

Practitioners are well aware of children's achievements and progress and provide planned work based on their assessment of children. However, insufficient attention is given to identifying children's skill development and to use this information to plan the next stage in their learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting's provision for ensuring children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Day-to-day learning activities encourage children's personal and social development.

Activities undertaken in the rich and varied environment of the school and school visits develop children's curiosity about the world in which they live. The setting effectively promotes values such as honesty, fair play and concern for each other. Simple rules of behaviour are understood and acted on.

Children have a good understanding of some of the traditions and celebrations of Wales, such as St. David's day.

Children recycle waste paper and discarded foods as part of the school recycling activities.

The setting has good arrangements in place for supporting children identified as having special educational needs. Policies are in place and effective procedures undertaken. Extra help from the local authority support staff is available when required.

The setting has appropriate arrangements in place for safeguarding children. The setting is located within the school and benefits from the arrangements in place. The perimeter fence is secure and no one can enter or leave unannounced. Staff have attended relevant courses and are well aware of child protection issues. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where both boys and girls have equal access to all activities. Children are treated with respect; practitioners know the children well and are sensitive to their individual needs. Children's views and ideas are used when planning activities and this ensures their interest and motivation.

The setting is appropriately staffed with suitably qualified and experienced practitioners. The accommodation is well maintained. The room is used by the school at different times and this requires equipment to be stored away at the end of each session. However, activity areas are set out before children arrive. The setting is well resourced and resources well matched to the needs of the Foundation Phase curriculum.

The setting benefits from using the school's outdoors but more specifically have a designated area that they use. This is a large tarmaced area suitable for games, use of large toys and other play activities. This is a good learning environment.

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

The two practitioners share leadership responsibilities. They meet regularly on one afternoon a week to plan for the week ahead based on children's progress. This arrangement is working well. Leaders share a common aim of providing the best possible provision for the children. This is very largely achieved.

Leaders display a clear sense of purpose, a sense of enjoyment in their work and a pride in fulfilling their roles to the best of their ability. They support each other, fully accept their responsibilities and focus their attention on children's standards of achievement and wellbeing.

Leaders are appraised annually when training needs are identified and matched to the setting's targets for improvement. The leaders are self-critical and seek ways to improve. They are well supported by the management committee.

Improving quality: Good

Effective self-evaluation is a regular and thorough part of the life of the setting. The focus is on how well children are achieving and the quality of provision provided by the setting. Overall, leaders have a clear understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for development. Practitioners are open to new ideas and benefit from support provided by the local authority support staff.

Evidence is largely based on first-hand knowledge of the setting together with ideas and advice provided by the Local Authority and Mudiad Meithrin support officers. Parental questionnaires also provide support and alternative ideas for inclusion.

The self-evaluation document is detailed and feeds into the current development plan. The development plan identifies completion dates, responsible person and success criteria. There are well established monitoring and evaluating procedures in place. This is a highly effective practice.

Partnership working: Good

Partnership working makes a good and significant contribution to children's achievement and wellbeing.

The setting enjoys a close and highly effective relationship with Eglwysbach primary school. Children benefit from being in the same building since this greatly facilitates their transfer to the next stage of their education. They have opportunities to become familiar with the staff and with children who have previously transferred. This helps them settle in quickly to full time education.

Parental links are also strong. Parents have access to the staff whenever they want and parents are kept well informed of their child's progress.

The staff have also benefited from the help and advice provided by the local authority support teacher and the support of the Mudiad Meithrin.

Resource management: Good

The setting is staffed with appropriately trained and experienced practitioners. They divide their responsibilities appropriately making best use of their expertise. Both have attended appropriate training courses and share their ideas. They make good use of advice and suggestions for improvement. Both are self-analytical and are focused on providing the best provision for the children.

There is an efficient system for keeping spending under review with funds being allocated to established priorities. The management committee review spending.

In view of the outcomes achieved by children and the quality of the provision and leadership, the setting provides good value for money.

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

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| 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

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| 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 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> |

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| 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 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. |