



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 Gellilydan
Y Bwthyn,
Ysgol Edmwnd Prys
Gellilydan
Blaenau Ffestiniog
LL41 4DY**

Date of inspection: June 2013

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 Gellilydan was established in 1992 when it met in the village hall. However, since 2009 it has occupied a classroom in Ysgol Edmwnd Prys – a Welsh medium primary school in the small rural village of Gellilydan in Gwynedd.

The Cylch is a Welsh medium one, although non-Welsh speakers are welcomed. Currently most children are from Welsh speaking families. Every child attending at present comes from the village or from the surrounding rural community. None are from a different ethnic community. The Cylch describes the area as neither privileged nor particularly disadvantaged socio-economically. There are a few children identified as having, or who potentially have additional educational needs and are under close scrutiny. In such instances local specialist help is available. The one child currently recognised as having additional learning needs (ALN) due to a hearing problem receives 1:1 support on the two sessions she attends.

The Cylch has use of outside facilities, including a small tarmaced area and a grassed area immediately adjacent and having a direct access from the teaching room. The Cylch also uses other school facilities including the canteen for lunch and the outside play facilities. The Cylch also use the Foundation Phase toilets and hand washing facilities. This provides the Cylch with a safe, secure area within the locked school facilities.

The Cylch operates between 11 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. on five days of the week in term time. Children can start at the Cylch from the age of 2½ years and move on to their next stage of education in the September following their 3rd birthday.

The Cylch is registered by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accommodate a maximum of 12 children. Currently there are 12 children on the register, although not all children attend daily. Three of the current children are aged 3 years and receive funding from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

The current leader took over in April 2013 and is assisted by a member of staff employed by the “Cam with Gam” play group and, on two mornings a week additional help is provided for a child with ALN.

The Cylch was last inspected by Estyn in 2006 and has subsequently moved into its current location. Staff appraisal, which was one of the recommendations, has not been undertaken since the new leader took over earlier this year.

The CSSIW inspected the Cylch most recently in November 2007. There were no recommendations.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the Cylch is good because:

- the nurturing and supportive ethos encourages children to become active learners;
- children develop good relationships and are sufficiently confident to work independently;
- children are learning to share and co-operate with each other;
- children are developing good language skills;
- staff have good questioning skills that encourage children's thinking skills;
- the provision for developing children's health and wellbeing;
- the accommodation, including the outside area, is a safe environment.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the recently appointed leader has identified areas for improvement in the self-evaluation document and has begun initiating change;
- staff work well as a team focusing on children's needs;
- of the close working relationships with the school;
- the Registered Person who is the Foundation Phase teacher is able to give good advice and support;
- the Cylch benefits also from the support provided by the local authority advisory teacher and from the support of the Mudiad Meithrin.

Recommendations

In order to improve the Cylch needs to:

R1. appraise the current provision with the aim of providing a greater variety of learning experiences for the children.

R2. develop assessment procedures that enable the next steps in children's learning to be identified.

R3. produce a development plan that identifies targets for improvement.

R4. visit other settings that show good practice and to continue staff's professional development.

What happens next?

The Cylch will form an action plan showing how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills 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**

Planning successfully engage all children and includes activities that capture children's imagination. Planning incorporates reference to the six areas of learning and encourages children to progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. The curriculum builds on children's existing knowledge, understanding and skills.

Learning activities encourage children to form relationships and several have a high level of self-confidence. Learning experiences enable them to develop their physical and creative skills and to learn about the living world.

All children are beginning to acquire key skills and the planning ensures the coherent skills across all areas of learning. Welsh language skills are developing well and most children have a good and growing vocabulary. The Welsh language is the medium of communication and children's knowledge and understanding of the traditions and celebrations of the Welsh culture are enhanced through celebrating festivals, such as St. David's Day.

Children have opportunities to grow seeds, to visit farms and to see how young animals are cared for and to begin an understanding of recycling, such as collecting paper and milk cartons for recycling.

Teaching: **Good**

Staff have a good and up-to-date understanding of child development and have an understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They have high expectations of all children and the planning incorporates a good balance between child-selected and adult-led activities. The easy access to the outside enables children to choose their activities, to work independently or in small groups. Staff are good language models and converse with the children in whatever activities that the children are involved. Questioning is used to good effect to encourage language and the children's thinking skills. Staff intervene appropriately and behaviour is good. Additional practitioners are used effectively.

Children are assessed regularly and comprehensively and the results recorded. This gives a good illustration of children's progress and as a reference of what children have enjoyed. However, insufficient attention is given to identifying the next steps in children's learning so that they are suitably challenged and where children's needs and interests are met. Parents receive regular informal reports on their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The Cylch's provision for developing children's health and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

The good range of learning opportunities planned for the children successfully develops their sense of curiosity about the world they live in. They learn the need to care for young animals from farm visits and they know that seedlings need water and sunlight to grow.

Day-to-day activities help foster children's values such as honesty, fairness and to distinguish between right and wrong. They understand the need to share and are beginning to understand the rules of behaviour.

The Cylch is sensitive to individual children's needs and staff are vigilant in providing support for those children with potential additional learning needs (ALN). Parents are always involved and professional support services consulted as required.

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to support safeguarding arrangements. A senior member of staff has the responsibility for dealing with child protection in the school and there is a close liaison with other staff. Staff have attended recent and relevant training courses and procedures reflect the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008.

The Cylch's arrangement for safeguarding children meets requirements and gives no cause for concern.

Children with ALN have full access to all areas of learning. There is a regular consultation with parents and additional support is well used. Outside specialist staff support the provision and such children have a special timetable as part of their Individual Educational Plans. Such plans are reviewed regularly and children's progress noted.

Learning environment: Good

The Cylch has a calm and supportive ethos that is fully inclusive, encouraging all children to take part. Staff value and respect the children who themselves display a good level of self-confidence. A tolerant attitude pervades the Cylch and all children and staff are free from harassment or any form of oppressive behaviour. Policies and procedures are in place to eliminate all forms of antisocial behaviour, to ensure equality and the safeguarding of children. Children with disabilities or additional learning needs do not suffer any unfavourable treatment and all children play a full, instructive part in the life of the Cylch.

The Cylch is generously staffed with practitioners who have relevant and appropriate qualifications and experience. Resources are suitable and sufficient to meet the needs of the Foundation Phase curriculum and to address the needs of the children.

The accommodation is very suitable to meet the needs of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The teaching room is well furnished and divided into appropriate areas. The outside is immediately accessible to the children and comprises areas of working to enhance children's development. It is used effectively. Children have access to the school grounds and visits further afield further enhance their learning.

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

Staff understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities. A sense of purpose is evident in the Cylch which promotes good standards. Staff share similar values based on providing the best provision for the children. The positive ethos apparent in the Cylch provides a good learning environment for the children. Children enjoy themselves and willingly participate; they are well managed and are actively involved. The leader is newly established and appraisal procedures are yet to be fully developed. Parents fully support their children's learning.

The Cylch works in conjunction with the school whose deputy head teacher is the Responsible Person. This teacher has responsibility for the Foundation Phase children, and she is well aware of the performance of the Cylch and is ideally placed to offer advice and suggestions to the leader of the Cylch.

Good account is taken of all relevant legislation and guidance. The Cylch has taken good account of national priorities in meeting the Foundation Phase requirements and local priorities including healthy eating.

Improving quality: Good

The Cylch's self-evaluation is a good, concise working document. It is realistic and highlights strengths and areas for improvement. The targets are focused on positive gains for the children and what has been put in place are well worthwhile. To date, insufficient attention has been put on the views of children and parents.

Self-evaluation information is well designed to bring about further improvements but these aspects are not prioritised, neither is there sufficient detail as to how they are to be undertaken. Overall, the Cylch has not produced a realistic development plan.

Staff have been engaged in professional development and this has impacted well on the educational provision, such as safeguarding arrangements. Further opportunities now need to be made available for staff to visit other learning communities, be involved in professional training and work closely with the school to evolve a developing curriculum.

Partnership working: Good

There is an outstanding relationship with the transfer school and the Foundation Phase teacher who is also the Responsible Person. This augers well for the future of the Cylch and will be a major factor in its development. Children benefit from the proximity of the school, knowing the older children and being familiar with their future teacher. This is a very good arrangement that facilitates their transfer to the next stage of their education.

Parents are very supportive of the Cylch and benefit from the feeling of trust and understanding that exists. The Local Authority support officer provides valuable advice and has been influential in improving children's learning experiences.

The 3 year old children benefit from the financial support offered by the EYDCP and the support of the Mudiad Meithrin. These are effective partnerships.

Resource management: Good

Staff are well deployed; each know and accept their roles. Resources are used to motivate children to learn and overall resources have impacted significantly on children's learning. The outdoors is well used to develop children's skills across all areas of learning.

The Cylch deploys its own resources effectively and provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Parents

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaire due to the small number of responses received (less than 10).

Children

Children, by their attitudes, show that they enjoy their time at the Cylch. They willingly take part in activities and are particularly enthusiastic in music and movement activities. They show a commendable degree of self-confidence and several spoke to a visitor.

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)

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.

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.