



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 Glan Y Mor
Y Caban
Ger Ysgol Myfenydd
Llanrhystud
Ceredigion
SY23 5AT**

Date of inspection: January 2014

by

Eifion R Morgan

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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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW..or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Publication date: 20/02/2014

Context

Cylch Meithrin Glan y Mor is located next to Ysgol Myfenydd in Llanrhystud – a village almost equidistant between Aberystwyth and Aberaeron in Ceredigion. It has exclusive use of a purpose built portacabin with a well developed outside area that the children use. Currently there are 35 children on the register, of whom 26 are aged 3 years and funded by the Ceredigion Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The setting is registered by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accommodate a maximum of 20 children. Children come from Llanrhystud and the nearby village of Llannon and from the surrounding rural area. Very few children are from homes where Welsh is the predominant language spoken, although in several instances one parent is Welsh speaking.

Llanrhystud is a typical Welsh coastal village where families are neither socio-economically advantaged nor disadvantaged. There are no children from minority ethnic backgrounds and a few children have been identified with additional learning needs.

Children attend once they are 2½ years old and remain at the setting until the term following their fourth birthday. The Cylch operates 4 mornings and 4 afternoons of the week (Monday-Thursday) during school terms.

The setting is approached through the school grounds and two secure gates. Parents access the building via a small hallway where relevant information is posted for parents. The main room is spacious, warm and well maintained. It is suitably differentiated into activity areas in keeping with the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. There is a well resourced kitchen and children's toilets and washing facilities. The setting is staffed by two staff who assume joint leadership, together with a member of staff financed by the Cylch and the local authority to support children identified with additional learning needs. Another member of staff works during the afternoon sessions.

The setting was inspected by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in 2012. There were no recommendations. Estyn inspected the setting previously in 2008 and all recommendations have been satisfactorily 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 excellent because of:

- the care, support and guidance provided for the children;
- the partnership with parents and their support.

The current performance of the setting is good because of:

- the leaders and staff high expectations that are achieved in practice;
- the learning opportunities provided for the children;
- the children's progress and standards achieved overall and in particular their language development;
- the quality of teaching;
- the children's attitude and behaviour;
- the stimulating environment, both inside and outside, provided for the children.

Prospects for improvement

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

- the quality of leadership and management that is well focused on providing the best possible provision for children;
- the team spirit evident and the self-critical nature of the staff;
- the good use of time;
- the quality of self-evaluation;
- the well established track record of bringing about improvement;
- the support provided by members of the community;
- the support provided by the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin

Recommendations

R1. further refine its assessment procedures.

R2. use assessment results to guide planning.

R3. to inform parents how they can support their child's learning.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

Main findings

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

All children achieve good standards across all areas of learning especially in their ability to converse in Welsh. These children make good progress taking into account their “starting point”. Children, including those with additional learning needs are achieving well and making good progress overall.

Most children have well developed communication skills and are able to express their feelings and emotions. All children have good listening skills and respond promptly to instructions, such as when tidying up at the end of the session. They converse easily with each other and adults during both spontaneous and structured play.

All children enjoy listening to stories and are interested in books. They listen attentively to an adult telling them a story and many handle books carefully.

All children enjoy mark-making using a variety of media, including pencils, chalk and crayons. They know some of the purposes of writing, such as making lists of what they require. Overall, children’s knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language is developing well.

Most children’s numeracy skills are developing well. They understand basic mathematical ideas, such as “full, half full and empty” when playing in the sand pit and filling containers. All children count accurately to at least 15 (the number of children present at registration) in Welsh and recognise number in written form. More able children recognise and name simple two dimensional shapes and can relate these to everyday shapes, such as recognising that the capital letter “A” is a triangle. Children can repeat and match patterns, such as when threading a string with beads and follow a sequence of colours and shapes. Such activities are enhanced through play.

All children use digital technology devices, such as cameras and are competent users of the computer and i-pad. They recognise the different uses of switches and manoeuvre shapes and designs on the computer screen.

This is a Welsh medium setting and children are making good and very good progress in the language relative to their starting point. Transition arrangements enable them to pursue their primary and secondary education through the medium of Welsh.

Parent’s questionnaires indicate a high level of satisfaction with the progress their children are making.

Wellbeing: Good

All children show positive attitudes to learning and this is apparent as soon as they arrive. They are immediately involved in activities set out for them and work confidently, both individually and in small groups as the occasion demands. They show high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence and converse confidently with the inspector describing what they are doing. They willingly undertake tasks suggested to them and see the humorous side to the activity when the inspector cannot match what they are doing.

All children are highly motivated and have a positive attitude to new experiences, such as reflecting on ice melting. All children enjoy their time in the setting and a strength of the provision is the confidence and independence learners display.

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

The planned learning experiences successfully engage all children. Planning is meticulous and show clearly the learning intentions indicating the skills to be developed within the context of the theme selected. The planned activities show progression and continuity and incorporate children's ideas and interests. A holistic approach ensures that children come to appreciate how a topic can encompass all aspects of the work. This is well illustrated by the current topic (Y Gaeaf) incorporating stories such as "Robin Goch yn Chwilio am Dy"; ice thawing and melting; winter landscapes and descriptive words; clothes in winter and keeping warm; wall exhibitions and children's art work. The curriculum builds on children's existing knowledge, understanding and skills.

Planning is flexible enabling children's ideas to be followed up at any point and is well matched to the requirements of the Foundation Phase.

Relationships are excellent. Both staff and children show respect for each other and adults are aware of individual children's needs and expectations. The setting exudes a calm happy feeling where children show sufficient confidence to be independent learners. Overall, children successfully develop their thinking and creative skills. Outside activities enable them to have a very good understanding of the living world through growing and harvesting fruit and vegetables. They know that living things have to be treated with care and respect.

The setting provides children with a range of stimulating activities which interest them and successfully captures their imagination. Planning ensures a coherent curriculum providing progression and continuity in children's skill development. Whilst emphasis

is given to children's language development and this successfully develops children's communication skills in Welsh, there are well established programmes in place for the development of numeracy (Sensory mathematics) as well as other skills, including ICT.

Children are suitably challenged in both indoor and outdoor activities and they experiment with new experiences, such as running water down slopes.

Organised trips and visitors to the setting are further planned learning experiences. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their personal and cultural identity. They celebrate and learn about Welsh festivals, such as St. David's day. They dress appropriately, have Welsh foods and paint relevant icons. Children also took part in the Urdd Eisteddfod at Llanerchaeron. They take part in the annual Christmas concert in the village hall as well as the village carnival. Studies, for example, of the Chinese New Year, give them some ideas of other cultures.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a detailed understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Phase and a substantial experience of working with young children. They are well aware of children's differing needs and stages of development. Expectations of all children are high and staff are fully focused on ensuring that all children achieve their full potential whatever their ability. This is a notable strength of the setting and its provision.

Staff fully understand the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and in practice provide consistently good opportunities for children to learn through play and active involvement. There is a good balance between child-selected and adult-led or directed learning. Staff know when to intervene and when to leave children work independently. Questioning is used purposefully to challenge children and to develop their language. Staff are good language models using Welsh naturally in conversation and as a means of communication. Additional practitioners are used effectively and provide a noticeable improvement in children's progress.

Overall, staff provide a stimulating, challenging and exciting learning environment for the children that successfully encourages their involvement, participation and enjoyment.

Children are regularly assessed and observations of children's achievements dated and recorded on children's individual record sheets. This is a useful record and a measure of children's progress. However, it is not always sufficiently detailed in identifying individual children's skill development, neither is it sufficiently used in planning so as to identify the next steps in individual children's learning. Future activities are not always planned to meet children's individual needs.

Parents indicated their satisfaction with their children's progress and achievement but they were not always aware of what they could do to help them improve and to be partners in their learning, such as in language development.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

Outstanding arrangements are in place to support children's health and wellbeing and to support their learning.

The setting has appropriate policies and arrangements for promoting healthy living, to encourage children to act sustainably and to ensure children's wellbeing.

Parents are actively involved and are fully supportive and appreciative of the contribution made by the setting in ensuring their child's development.

Children show that they enjoy their time in the setting; there is a warm community feeling promoting a sense of wellbeing and belonging.

Children develop a sense of curiosity about the world in which they live and learn to care about living things. The setting is highly successful in fostering values, such as honesty and respect and enabling children to distinguish between right and wrong.

Children learn to take responsibility, to share and to show initiative, to follow simple rules of behaviour and to be responsible. A good and notable feature is the self-discipline these 3 year olds have acquired.

Children partake in local cultural activities, such as local shows and Eisteddfod which enhances their community spirit.

Safeguarding arrangements are well established and efficient. Risk assessment is undertaken as required and the setting is secure. Staff have attended relevant courses in child protection together with other courses such as First Aid. Staff are well aware of their responsibilities and the setting promotes safe practice. The setting's arrangements for safe guarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

An excellent and innovative aspect of the setting's provision is its procedures for supporting children suspected of having additional learning needs. Arrangements for supporting such children are in place. Such children have full access to all areas of the curriculum and, where necessary, have extra support financed by the setting and the local authority. This entails 1:1 quality support, regular target setting and reviews with full parental involvement. Specialist services are involved as necessary.

The provision has recently been extended and currently provides a highly effective and innovative provision involving a partnership between the setting, specialist services and parents.

Any parent who wishes to meet with specialist staff can do so confidentially in the Cylch. These meetings take place termly and provide opportunities for a parent (and child) to meet informally with specialists from the county in a relaxed non-threatening environment with which they are familiar. This also has the advantage of early intervention and remedial procedures can be put in place early in the child's development. Conversely, parents can be reassured if no action is necessary. Currently there has been a very favourable response from parents who appreciate what has been arranged for them.

The local authority is currently disseminating this practice and used by the authority staff as an example of an innovative initiative that other settings may adopt.

Overall, this is excellent practice.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children whatever their background or ability have equal access to all the activities. Children's differing interests are recognised and the staff treat all children as individuals with their own characteristics and needs.

The setting is generously staffed with well qualified and experienced practitioners. They are experienced and have a detailed knowledge of the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The setting exhibits a homely atmosphere where children are shown affection. A tolerant attitude is prevalent with no evidence of oppressive behaviour or anti-social behaviour.

There is an ample supply of high quality resources well matched to the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and to children's development. Children with additional learning needs are well supported. The children benefit from a play and garden area adjacent to the main teaching room. Children have appropriate outdoor clothing and use the outside on a daily basis. There is no free access to the outside environment. Outside there are a range of moving and static equipment provided for the children. The raised beds are used for growing vegetables and fruit which are both used for displays in local horticultural shows and used for cooking. The setting benefits from the contribution of two local gardeners who oversee the provision.

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

The setting exhibits a strong sense of purpose focused on providing the best educational provision for the children. Leadership responsibilities are shared by two staff who work together very efficiently and complementing each other.

Leaders and staff work together well as a team and accept and fulfil their roles efficiently.

Time is well managed with little time being wasted. The team exhibit high expectations and have set challenging but realistic targets for themselves. These have been accomplished. A good and notable feature of the leadership style is their close working relationship with other agencies and parents.

Leaders work closely with the Management Committee. Regular meetings ensure the smooth running of the setting and enable all to be fully conversant with future activities.

Overall, the setting exhibits a positive ethos where everyone's contribution is valued. Clear aims are focused on children's needs and outcomes monitored and evaluated. National and local priorities such as implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum and Healthy Eating have been effectively implemented.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has a self-evaluative culture and a well established system of developmental planning. Staff have implemented the last inspection's recommendations and have continued to evaluate the provision. Staff are self-critical and take in the views of each other, parents, the management committee and local authority advisors.

Development plans are set against clear targets and success criteria identified. Matters are prioritised when necessary and the setting benefits from the support provided by members of the community.

The current setting is an example of good practice and reflects the care and attention given to identifying areas for development.

Partnership working: Excellent

Children's standards and particularly their wellbeing are substantially enhanced by the quality of partnership established. The excellent practice established involving regular meeting of parents with specialist staff from the local authority is very much appreciated by parents, has minimised their concerns about their child and provides specialist support where necessary. It also results in very much improved support for children and an early intervention. As has been mentioned (2.3) it is being disseminated by the local authority as an example of good practice.

Strong links exist with the local community and children play an active part in, for example the local Urdd eisteddfod, horticultural shows and carnivals. Individuals from the community support the setting, such as helping with the gardening.

Strong and worthwhile links exist with the adjacent primary school. Staff from the school visit the setting, children from the setting attend school concerts and visit before transfer. The Cylch also uses the school facilities. Overall, this facilitates the transfer of children.

The setting benefits substantially from the support and advice provided by officers from the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin.

Resource management: Good

Staff make good use of professional development courses and the teaching reflects some of the innovative ideas gained from such training. Staff are self-critical and support each other. There is a culture of evaluating each practitioner's contribution and a track record of sharing good practice. The impact of professional training is apparent in the work of the setting.

The setting is appropriately resourced and generously staffed. Staff are experienced and knowledgeable about the requirements of the Foundation Phase. Staff make the best use of their time and support each other.

This is a well-established learning community providing good quality provision across the setting. This results in the good achievement and progress children make.

It is effectively managed and resources well used. Overall, financial decisions are scrutinised by the management committee and the finance is in good order.

The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'ngryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'ngryf	Don't know Ddimyngwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	18	16 89%	2 11%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n foddlon â'r lleoliadyngyffredinol.
		80%	19%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	18	15 83%	3 17%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn 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.	18	18 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fymhlentyn gymorth i ymgartreftu'n dda pan ddechreuodd ym y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	18	16 89%	2 11%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	18	13 72%	4 22%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		70%	26%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	18	17 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r raddysgu yn dda.
		79%	18%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	18	17 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		82%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	18	11 61%	6 33%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Caiff fymhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		73%	22%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	18	16 89%	2 11%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	16	12 75%	3 19%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fymhlentyn yn cael gymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		64%	25%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed	17	10	5	2	0	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyso

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'ngryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'ngryf	Don't know Ddimyngwybod	
about my child's progress.		59%	29%	12%	0%		n am gynnyddfymhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	18	16 89%	2 11%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurusynglŷn â gofyncwestiwni'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problemau.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	18	10 56%	4 22%	1 6%	0 0%	3	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad a rhyngwyferdelio â chwynion.
		62%	30%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	17	15 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda a rhyngwyferdelio i'w rhoi'n ysgol.
		71%	23%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	18	14 78%	3 17%	1 6%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu euymweliadau.
		62%	30%	4%	0%		
The setting is well run.	18	17 94%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael i'w redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion Rees 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	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 2012.
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 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.