



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 Glyn Ceiriog
Canolfan Ceiriog Centre
Newroad
Glyn Ceiriog
Wrexham
LL20 7HE
United Kingdom**

Date of inspection: July 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 Glyn Ceiriog is a Welsh medium setting located in the Ceiriog Centre in Glyn Ceriog. This is a rural village in the Ceiriog valley some 6 miles from Chirk in North Wales.

The Cylch is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to admit a maximum of 17 children in any session. Children attend from aged two years old and move on to the next stage of their education in the September following their fourth birthday.

At present there are 18 children on role of whom eight are aged three years. All three year olds are funded.

The setting operates four sessions of two and a half hours per week during school term times. This is on Monday and Thursday afternoons (12.30 – 3 p.m.) and on Wednesday and Friday mornings (9 a.m. – 11.30 a.m.)

Most children come from homes where English is the predominant language spoken, although a few come from Welsh speaking homes and from an ethnic background. A few children have been identified as having additional learning needs.

There are two permanent members of staff and two part-time staff supporting children identified with additional learning needs. Both permanent staff are fairly recent appointments – the latest appointment only in post since Easter 2014 and the other since 2009. Both now share leadership roles.

The setting was inspected by CSSIW in August 2012. It has not been previously inspected by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- most children make good progress in their learning;
- children are happy, feel secure and settle quickly;
- standards of care, support and guidance for the children are consistently good;
- children's standards of wellbeing are high and all children are treated equally and with respect;
- many children have good listening skills and sing Welsh songs enthusiastically;
- practitioners provide a worthwhile range of learning experiences and activities for the children;
- relationships between adults and children are good.

However,

- assessment is not used sufficiently to provide a clear picture of each child's progress and to inform planning.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement of the setting are good because:

- practitioners work together very well and have a clear focus on providing the best provision for the children;
- the setting has a good track record of improvement;
- practitioners are self-critical and respond positively to advice to improve the provision;
- parents and the management committee are very supportive;
- the local authority support officer is very effective and provides valuable advice and suggestions for improvement.

However,

- planning for improvement is at an early stage of development.

Recommendations

- R1. develop a system for assessment that clearly identifies children's progress.
- R2. use assessment information to ensure that tasks are well matched to children's ability.
- R3. extend self-evaluation procedures to incorporate all aspects of the setting's work and formulate a detailed development plan for improvement.
- R4. extend the learning opportunities available for the children..

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

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

Most children make good progress in learning and achieve well. They demonstrate high levels of knowledge and understanding across most areas of learning in line with their ability and stage of development.

Many children have good listening skills and are enthusiastic singers of Welsh songs and nursery rhymes. They particularly like performing action songs and this is effective in developing their language. A majority of children find their names on place mats during snack time. Many children handle writing instruments and brushes correctly, such as when scribbling on a chalk board. They are beginning to realise some of the purposes of writing, such as labelling pots containing seeds they had planted.

Children talk confidently to adults and to each other, but very few children speak Welsh independently or spontaneously in their play. However, children's understanding of the language is developing well and many children respond positively to questions and instructions spoken by adults. A few children are fluent in the language and this reflects their Welsh speaking background.

Most children are developing good number skills and recite numbers to 10 and some beyond. Many children name simple two-dimensional shapes in Welsh and find representative shapes outside in the playground. Their mathematical language is developing to the extent of recognising, for example, "large and small" "empty and full".

Nearly all children have well developed physical skills. They pedal and manoeuvre tricycles and toy cars skilfully and with remarkable speed! Many children use small tools showing good control and persevere for substantial periods of time, such as when making their fruit kebabs. Their knowledge of the world around them is developing well through visits to the recently created wildlife area and visits to the local park.

Wellbeing: Good

All children enter the setting happily and settle in quickly to well established routines. The majority behave well, are polite and helpful to other children and adults. In the main, most children show good self-control particularly in adult-led activities where they share and take turns. However, a few children exhibit poor behaviour at times and this inhibits other children's progress.

Snack times are worthwhile social occasions when children find their place and with little prompting say please and thank you. During snack time children are patient and behave well enjoying the healthy snacks provided for them.

During free play children make choices, they use equipment sensibly and carefully. Many children are willing helpers when clearing away, however, a few are more reluctant to do so.

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

Practitioners plan collaboratively and provide a satisfactory range of activities for the children. Planning is based on a thematic approach and is sufficiently flexible to incorporate children's interests. There is sufficient emphasis on children learning through play and first hand experiences.

Planning provides children with appropriate opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Circle time is planned to encourage children to listen and respond. However, a minority of children's ability to listen is limited and their antisocial behaviour inhibits other children's progress.

Practitioners make good use of incidental Welsh through simple commands and instructions. Whilst many children understand they are not confident in using the language. Most children participate enthusiastically in singing a range of Welsh songs and nursery rhymes and this is beneficial in their learning of the language.

Planning incorporates good opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills, such as counting children present at registration. Children recognise simple shapes and planning enables them to search for similar shapes in the playground, such as recognising wheels as circles on their tricycles and windows being rectangular. There are too few opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills.

There are many opportunities for children to develop their thinking skills, such as when mixing paints or experimenting with sand and water. In such instances children have good opportunities to make choices in what they would like to do.

Small group and adult-led activities are appropriately planned and children respond positively, such as when making fruit kebabs for their picnic. There is however, insufficient emphasis on children's previous achievement and on identifying the next steps in individual children's learning. Overall, the planned activities are not well matched to children's ability and in some instances children misbehave when they lose interest.

Visits to the wildlife area enrich children's experiences of the world around them. There are good opportunities for children to learn about recycling and waste food is regularly composted.

Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions through celebrating St. David's day and by partaking in a Cylch concert.

Teaching: Adequate

The setting has well-established routines to ensure that children feel welcomed and secure. Parents/carers and their children are met by a member of staff at the beginning of each session. There are positive relationships between practitioners and children based on mutual affection.

Practitioners use a range of strategies to motivate children and, in the main these are successful in maintaining children's interest. However, when activities are not well matched to children's ability a few children lose interest and misbehave.

Available resources are used appropriately to enhance learning and children have opportunities to make choices. In some instances, the lack of resources, for example for ICT, limits the choices available for the children.

There is a good emphasis on learning through play and firsthand experiences and overall children are well supported by adults. Children identified with additional learning needs are given appropriate help and integrated into all class activities.

Assessment is at an early stage of development. Individual assessment records are maintained through notes and photographs and these are made available to parents at the end of the year. Parents value this record. However, the setting does not regularly and consistently assess individual children's progress or use assessment records effectively to plan activities that consolidate and extend children's 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.

This is a happy community where children are made to feel welcome, safe and shown affection. Children are valued as individuals and their views respected. Day-to-day activities, such as visits to the wildlife area encourage children's curiosity about the world in which they live.

Children learn to distinguish between right and wrong as well as the importance of truth and honesty. Practitioners lead by example and by their actions show children how to respect and help each other.

There are worthwhile opportunities for children to learn about the traditions and culture of Wales. They celebrate St. David's day, dressing appropriately, sampling traditional Welsh foods and through a Cylch concert.

The setting identifies children that need additional learning support successfully. Individual education plans are in place and parents are kept well informed. Staff provide good day-to-day support for these children. These children are well integrated into all activities.

Children are well aware of the importance of sustainability and recycling. Children save waste food and peelings for composting on a daily basis and a child takes responsibility for adding materials to the composting bin.

The setting has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard children and overall the arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting creates an inclusive and friendly ethos where all children are valued and respected. All have equal access to resources and all activities. There is an appropriate emphasis on celebrating diversity.

The setting has sufficient practitioners to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The recent appointment of a fluent Welsh speaker has made a significant improvement to children's language development.

The accommodation comprises a room at the back of the Community centre. The room is large and in good decorative order and opens directly to the tarmaced play area. The room is multipurpose and this necessitates clearing the room of equipment at the end of each session. However, staff ensure that it is ready for the children for each session and incorporating appropriate learning areas.

The setting also has use of a large hall during inclement weather. The setting has recently cleared part of an adjacent wildlife area which is used for visits and picnics. Overall, the children benefit from a good range of facilities which are well matched to their learning needs. Resources for developing children's ICT skills are limited.

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

The setting aims to ensure that all children are well cared for and receive equal attention. These aims are achieved in practice. Parents value the fact that practitioners are approachable and that their children enjoy their time at the setting.

A member of staff greets children on arrival and is available to talk with parents/carers. As a result relationships with parents/carers are good and a sense of community prevails.

The two practitioners share the leadership roles and this is working well enabling both to contribute ideas. Planning is firmly focused on providing the best possible provision for the children whilst ensuring their care and wellbeing. The recently appointed member of staff, apart from contributing ideas, is a fluent Welsh speaker and as such, a valuable and valued member of the team. Two additional members of staff support children with additional learning needs and their roles are well defined and effective.

There is an active management committee in place. They meet regularly, are well informed and support the running of the setting.

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to support the day-to-day running of the setting. Practitioners meet weekly to plan and discuss children's activities and this ensures that everyone knows their roles and responsibilities. The staff have attended relevant training courses provided by the authority and these are beginning to have a positive impact on the provision for the children.

The playgroup meets national and local priorities appropriately, such as implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum and encouraging healthy eating and drinking.

Improving quality: Adequate

A culture of self-evaluation and a willingness to improve is evident in the setting and recently this has resulted in improved provision for children. The work undertaken to ensure a good range of resources to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum has substantially improved the provision for children's learning. Resources for outside play are particularly good.

The setting takes into account the views of children and consults with parents. The setting has benefited substantially from the advice and suggestions of the local authority support officer and staff from the Mudiad Meithrin. However, planning for improvement is at an early stage of development. The self-evaluation document does not cover all aspects of the setting's work and targets for improvement are not prioritised and success criteria not specified.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a suitable range of partnerships that improve the quality of provision and outcomes for the children.

The setting takes active steps to involve parents in its work and this impacts well on children's wellbeing and progress.

Parents are provided with an informative welcome pack and are invited to accompany their children to the setting. Parents are free to visit the setting and to ensure that their children settle down. Parents and carers meet a member of the staff when they bring and collect their child from the setting. This is an ideal opportunity to discuss any aspect of the provision. Parents assist with fund raising which provides additional resources for the children.

The setting has links with the receiving primary school but these are underdeveloped at present.

The setting has benefited substantially from the support provided by the local authority advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin. This support has been effective in improving the provision for the children.

Resource management: Good

The setting has appropriately trained staff who are effectively deployed. Leaders are working together very well and both provide ideas and support one another.

Practitioners make good use of training provided by the local authority and this is having a worthwhile effect on children's learning. Staff share ideas well and are self-critical. They seek every opportunity to develop and improve their practice.

Spending is kept under review by the management committee.

In view of the positive outcomes for children and the satisfaction of parents, 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

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 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>

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.