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Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Llanddarog a Drefach
Drefach Cricket Club
Heol Cae Gwyn
Drefach
Llanelli
SA14 7BB**

Date of inspection: December 2014

by

**Dorothy Morris
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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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW..or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

Cylch Meithrin Llanddarog a Drefach meets in Drefach Cricket Club, near Cross Hands, Carmarthenshire. The setting is open four mornings and five afternoons a week during the school term.

The setting is registered to take up to 22 children per session. Currently, there are 59 children between two and four years of age on the register; 20 have funded early years education. During recent months, numbers have increased. About half of the children attending the setting come from homes where English is the main language spoken. There are a very few children with additional learning needs.

There are nine members of staff. The majority are suitably qualified and experienced in the care and education of young children. The leader has been in post since November 2013.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in September 2014 and by Estyn in March 2009

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is judged to be good because:

- most children make consistent progress and develop an appropriate range of literacy and numeracy skills;
- most children develop good attitudes to learning;
- practitioners succeed well in building children's confidence as learners;
- practitioners provide a range of experiences that gain children's interest and their active involvement in their learning;
- effective teaching encourages children to work independently and to experiment with new experiences; and
- children receive good care and support in a warm learning environment.

Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because:

- the leader's strong leadership provides a clear sense of purpose to the setting's work;
- the constructive use of practitioners' skills leads to effective teamwork;
- the management committee and its officers carry out their duties efficiently;
- the leader has a good understanding of the setting's strengths and the main areas for improvement;
- the leader introduces improvements successfully; and
- partnerships contribute constructively to the setting's work.

Recommendations

- R1 Develop children's Welsh oral skills further
- R2 Refine curriculum planning to ensure that activities match all children's learning needs consistently
- R3 Evaluate the effectiveness of the provision in more detail by focusing further on teaching and 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?

Good

Standards: Good

The majority of children listen well and respond accurately to instructions. A few children speak Welsh confidently using a range of appropriate vocabulary. Most children show a good understanding of adults' questions and comments but offer very brief responses orally. The majority of children sing a range of nursery rhymes and songs with enthusiasm, and generally accurately. Most children enjoy looking at books and understand that words and pictures convey meaning. Most children recognise their names in print. The majority of children use marking equipment purposefully to draw pictures, create shapes, and copy letters and words. They develop their understanding of some of the functions of writing effectively by sending greetings in the form of a post card and a letter to Santa.

Most children make correct use of their basic number skills in everyday activities. They recite numbers to ten and count up to five objects correctly on the whole. They sort and match objects by shape, size or colour well. They use mathematical terms, such as big, medium and small, correctly in practical activities. They sing different counting rhymes with good understanding. Most children recognise basic two-dimensional shapes and begin to understand the purpose of money through role-play in the shop.

Most children are competent users of basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills. For example, they can write their names on a letter to Santa with support, create pictures and move objects on the screen.

Most children make effective use of their problem solving skills when looking for different objects in the ice tray and planting bulbs in the garden. Most children develop sound physical skills. For example, they use cutting, painting and gluing tools with good control.

Wellbeing: Good

Children settle well in the setting and form effective relationships with other children and adults. The majority work together happily and persevere with their tasks for appropriate periods of time.

Children generally show great interest in the activities provided. Most are happy to make choices and become confident learners. Most children's behaviour is good. The majority are willing to share and take turns.

The majority of children have an appropriate awareness of the importance of healthy eating and exercise. They understand the importance of washing hands before eating snacks.

Children's personal and social skills develop well. They undertake responsibilities, such as 'helper of the day' and tidying up after activities, confidently. They participate fully in activities, such as concerts, that are organised for parents and the wider community.

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

Practitioners provide a range of broad and balanced activities across the six areas of learning. Planning is based on a series of suitable themes that reflect children's interests and stage of development. They include topics such as travel, the jungle and seasonal activities. There are a few opportunities for children to offer their ideas for activities. Activities are planned effectively to engage children's interest and secure their active involvement in learning. However, tasks do not always match the learning needs of children of different ages and ability fully.

Practitioners provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, there is constructive use of circle time and group work for children to listen to stories, recognise their names, learn songs and rhymes, and use their marking skills. There is effective use of the book area to enable children to enjoy looking at books. There are productive opportunities for children to count and discuss numbers, and to develop their understanding of mathematical elements, such as shape, during group and play activities. Meaningful experiences assist children to develop an appropriate range of ICT skills.

There are effective opportunities to develop children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of Wales, including celebrating St David's Day and St Dwynwen's Day. There is appropriate use of visits, such as to a farm park, and of the contribution of people, such as a nurse, minister and postman, to extend children's learning experiences.

Teaching: Good

Most practitioners have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Phase and of child development. They make effective use of a range of teaching methods. There is a good balance between activities chosen by the children and those that are led by practitioners. There are good opportunities for children to work independently and in small groups. Practitioners communicate effectively with children during activities and take every opportunity to extend their vocabulary.

There is effective use of different resources to support and sustain learning. For example, there is constructive use of a range of equipment, such as maps, globes, photographs and clothing, in the travel shop to promote children's communication skills through role-play. There is good use of story books to develop children's thinking and reasoning skills. An example is the use of the story of The Three Little Pigs to develop children's ability to sequence a story.

The practitioners know the children well and use appropriate procedures to assess and track their progress. They observe children's responses during activities consistently and record any significant developments clearly. The practitioners make suitable use of the information collected to identify general aspects or skills that need attention. The full use of the information acquired to plan the next steps in individual children's learning continues to develop.

The setting provides regular feedback to parents about their children's development through informal discussions and written reports each term.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. The practitioners are caring and supportive of all children. The setting has embarked on a programme of pre-school health education and gives good attention to developing children's awareness of the importance of caring for their teeth.

There are effective arrangements to support children with additional learning needs. They are planned carefully by an experienced co-ordinator. There are clear lines of communication with key agencies, such as speech therapists and child care services, to ensure appropriate support when needed.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and duly recorded.

Relevant experiences promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. There is purposeful use of daily activities to promote values such as the importance of considering others and being kind and courteous. Experiences, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations, and saying a prayer before snack, contribute effectively to children's spiritual development. There is good attention to developing children's awareness of the need to help those less fortunate by collecting money for good causes.

The children's awareness of the wider world is developed appropriately through learning about other people's cultures and celebrations such as the Chinese New Year. The use of activities, such as role-play in the setting's travel agency and discussing Santa's trip around the world, promote children's awareness further.

Purposeful activities develop children's understanding of the need to respect and care for the environment and all living things. They include growing plants and vegetables, recycling and composting.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. The practitioners develop a positive relationship with the children. They take appropriate account of children's differing backgrounds and needs.

The setting has enough practitioners with appropriate qualifications to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase. There is a good range of learning resources to support the teaching and learning.

Practitioners make full use of the hall by organising various activity areas around the room. The learning environment is enriched by displays linked to the current theme and by sharing children's work. There is no outdoor play area but the covered extension area provides appropriate opportunities for children to explore and practise their physical skills. The new garden area is a valuable resource for investigative activities. The building is clean and secure.

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

The leader leads by example and provides a strong sense of purpose to the setting's work. She creates a positive ethos and ensures that practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The practitioners work closely as a team and demonstrate a strong commitment to the education and welfare of the children. Policies and procedures are implemented carefully.

The setting's management committee offers practitioners good support. The committee meets regularly and keeps minutes of its discussions, which are the basis for further planning. The officers carry out their roles conscientiously and communicate regularly with each other. This promotes efficient team work on a wider level.

There is a suitable system to evaluate the work of practitioners and identify further professional development needs. The leader makes appropriate use of the information to plan a programme of further training for practitioners.

The setting gives appropriate consideration to national and local priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase, promoting children's literacy and numeracy skills, and encouraging healthy eating.

Improving quality: Good

The leader has a good understanding of the setting's strengths and the main areas for improvement. She monitors provision appropriately through observation, discussion with practitioners and evaluating children's progress. She introduces improvements effectively. For example, the modelling of suitable teaching approaches supports staff effectively to develop their knowledge of the Foundation Phase.

There is appropriate use of staff meetings to plan themes and introduce changes in the organisation of activities. However, the contribution of practitioners generally to the evaluation of aspects of teaching and learning is more uneven.

The setting gives due consideration to the views of children, parents and support agencies in planning and reviewing provision. The practitioners are open to new ideas and try different ways of working. The development of the new garden as a focus for a range of activities is an example.

The self-evaluation report provides a balanced picture of provision. The development plan derived from this identifies suitable areas for improvement. It includes clear targets, sets a time table, lists the resources required and places responsibilities. The plan is being implemented appropriately.

Aspects of provision are monitored constructively by the local authority link teacher. Areas for development are agreed and relevant strategies are implemented which are developing the provision. Aspects of provision are discussed further with the Mudiad Meithrin officer.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a number of partnerships that contribute effectively to the quality of provision and children's development. The aims and objectives of the setting are shared with partners.

There is a good relationship with parents and relevant information is provided to them through the notice board, meetings and newsletters. Parents appreciate the setting's open door policy and the daily opportunities to meet practitioners.

The close co-operation with the management committee, the local authority link teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin officer assists the setting's further development.

The constructive partnerships with the local primary schools promote a smooth transition for children to the next stage of their education. The links with the local community have an effective impact on children's personal and social development.

Resource management: Good

The setting is appropriately staffed and there is constructive use of practitioners' time and skills. There is effective use of individuals' interests in leading and supporting activities such as ICT, environmental and creative experiences. Practitioners use learning resources productively.

Most practitioners have received appropriate training on the requirements of the Foundation Phase and on aspects of child care and development. Arrangements for further professional development give due consideration to the needs of the children as well as the needs of practitioners.

The leader and officers of the management committee have a clear understanding of the budget, and expenditure is prioritised appropriately according to the needs of the setting. There is good use of fundraising initiatives and grants to supplement resources.

Given the quality of leadership, learning experiences and the care and support for children, the setting offers 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'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	18	11 61%	6 33%	1 6%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	18	12 67%	6 33%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn 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	14 78%	4 22%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	18	13 72%	5 28%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	18	13 72%	3 17%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		69%	27%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	18	14 78%	4 22%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		79%	18%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	18	13 72%	4 22%	0 0%	0 0%	1	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%	7 39%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caiff fy mhlentyn 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	13 72%	5 28%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	17	9 53%	6 35%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		65%	24%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	18	11 61%	4 22%	1 6%	0 0%	2	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	18	12 67%	6 33%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		80%	19%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	18	10 56%	4 22%	2 11%	0 0%	2	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.	18	11 61%	6 33%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		70%	24%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	18	12 67%	4 22%	1 6%	0 0%	1	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		61%	31%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	18	14 78%	4 22%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector –

Dorothy Morris	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.

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.