



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 Llanfechell
Llanfechell
Amlwch
Anglesey
LL68 0SA**

Date of inspection: June 2014

by

**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 Llanfechell is situated in Llanfechell community centre, and linked to Llanfechell primary school in the Anglesey local authority.

The playgroup is registered to take up to 20 children per session for four days per week. Children are admitted from the age of two and a half years. There are currently 12 children on roll, ranging in age from two and a half to four years. There are currently six three-year-olds receiving funded early years education in the setting, although not all were present during the inspection.

Although the language of the setting is Welsh, a majority of the children have English as their home language. There are currently no children with additional learning needs.

There are three permanent members of staff, including the playgroup leader. Two practitioners are employed on a part-time basis. All practitioners are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children. The playgroup leader has been in post since 1997.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) in December 2012 and by Estyn in October 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of Cylch Meithrin Llanfechell is good because:

- children enjoy their learning, and are eager to talk about what they do;
- the practitioners create a successful, supportive environment, and as a result children feel safe, secure and cared for;
- practitioners set consistent expectations of the children and their environment;
- learning experiences are exiting and motivating, particularly indoors; and
- practitioners provide effective opportunities to develop children's Welsh language skills.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement at the setting are good because:

- the leader and other practitioners are committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- leaders at the setting know what they do well and what they need to do to improve;
- effective teamwork and the positive ethos create a happy atmosphere for learning;
- members of the management committee are informed well and work effectively with the setting to improve outcomes for children; and
- all practitioners respond positively to appropriate support and use it effectively to improve their work.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that practitioners use the outdoor environment effectively to provide more focused opportunities to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills across all areas of learning
- R2 Ensure that targets for improvement focus more clearly on the outcomes for 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?	N/A
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Standards: N/A

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

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

The setting provides children with a wide range of stimulating and motivating learning experiences across all the Foundation Phase areas of learning within the confines of the building. However, the range of experiences it provides in the outdoor areas is more limited. There is an appropriate emphasis on play and learning through first-hand experiences in the setting. For example, children have the opportunity to buy and sell flowers in the shop, and are taking care of fruit and vegetables grown in the outdoor area. As a result, children enjoy their learning, and are eager to talk about what they do.

In the indoor area, the setting provides children with effective opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, children learn to recognise their names during circle and registration time, enjoy discussing books during snack-time and use a range of writing tools such as pencils and paint in the writing and paint areas. The shop provides good opportunities for children to use coins to buy and sell flowers and to count the number of flowers in the bunch. The setting provides a suitable range of games for children to match and count numbers to ten. There is suitable provision for developing children's skills in information and communication technology (ICT). Practitioners encourage children to think for themselves and provide suitable opportunities for them to act independently.

Practitioners generally plan appropriately to identify skills and opportunities to develop children's learning during day-to-day activities. However, they do not always formally identify the next steps in their learning.

Although the setting is a Welsh medium one, only a minority of the children speak Welsh at home. However, practitioners use Welsh effectively throughout the session to reinforce and develop the children's Welsh language skills. They provide regular opportunities for children to listen to and respond to instructions and commands in Welsh. Practitioners provide children with appropriate opportunities to sing a range of Welsh songs and rhymes and listen to short stories in Welsh. Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions through celebrating Dydd Santes Dwynwen and St David's Day.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a sound understanding of the Foundation Phase philosophy and use an appropriate range of strategies to ensure that children engage purposefully in activities and sustain interest in their learning. The practitioners create a successful, supportive environment and, as a result, children feel safe, secure and cared for.

Practitioners generally have high expectations of all children and use questioning skills well to extend children's learning. They are good language role models, particularly in their use of Welsh, and this develops children's oracy skills and vocabulary well.

Practitioners in the setting work well together. This ensures a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour and to intervening appropriately during children's play activities. They set consistent expectations of the children and their environment. There is generally a good balance between child-initiated and adult-directed activities, and practitioners encourage the children to be independent learners. Good examples of this include giving children the opportunity to pour their own milk at snack-time, getting ready to go outside and tidying away at the end of the session.

Practitioners observe and interact appropriately with children during activities to monitor and record their achievements in focus tasks and during free play activities. They use this information effectively to provide suitably challenging activities for many individuals. However, they do not always record the next steps for all the children in their planning.

Assessment booklets completed when children enter the setting provide a good baseline for assessment and reports to parents provide useful information about their child's progress. The 'llyfr trysor' provides a good on-going pictorial record of the progress children make in all areas of learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting promotes children's health and wellbeing appropriately. It provides suitable opportunities for children to access a good range of physical development activities. For example, daily outdoor sessions encourage children to use wheeled toys and to throw and catch equipment confidently.

Through discussions, practitioners effectively encourage children to take responsibility for their actions, share equipment and take care of resources. Children are encouraged to share and take turns, for example, when waiting to use the bikes outside and ensure everyone tidies up at the end of the session. As a result, everyone works well together. An appropriate range of learning experiences fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, such as the celebration of Chinese New Year. Children learn about the importance of caring for the environment well by growing fruit and vegetables in the outdoor area.

There are currently no children in the setting with additional learning needs. However, the setting has appropriate policies in place and practitioners know where they can access professional help for children and their families if required.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Appropriate policies are in place to promote safety and the management committee reviews them annually.

Learning environment: Adequate

The setting offers all children equal access to the curriculum. There is an appropriate emphasis on celebrating diversity and all children have equal access to the curriculum.

The accommodation and site are secure and maintained well. The setting does not have sole use of the internal teaching areas, and practitioners have to bring out and keep all resources daily. Despite this, practitioners make good use of the space they have. Attractive displays celebrate children's work and achievements well. Practitioners label these displays clearly to ensure that children see printed text every day. The setting has limited outdoor space. The outside area is safe, and is the main access to the community centre. The setting makes appropriate daily use of this area for physical development and has a small area where children grow and care for fruit and vegetables. However, the setting does not use the outdoor area well enough to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills across all the other areas of learning. There is appropriate access to the school field for sports days and other events.

Learning resources are of good quality and are easily accessible to the children during the session.

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

The experienced playgroup leader is enthusiastic and highly committed to fulfilling her role well. She works effectively with the other practitioners to ensure the best provision for the children. The leader works successfully with the management committee, and informs the members appropriately about the setting's progress and areas for development through meetings and their visits to the setting. Relationships with children, parents and carers and the feeder primary school are strong and contribute significantly to a sense of community.

There are appropriate processes in place through the management committee to manage the performance of staff. All practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities clearly. They are keen to develop their practice, work closely with other local settings and attend a wide range of appropriate training to improve the provision for the children.

The setting has implemented the Foundation Phase philosophy successfully. It is actively involved in the local authority's Healthy Pre-School Initiative, which has improved their provision for encouraging children's healthy lifestyles.

Improving quality: Adequate

All practitioners are clearly committed to improving quality. They work well together and have a clear focus on ensuring that learning experiences are exciting and motivating for children and to making sure that children are happy and ready to learn.

Leaders and other practitioners know the setting well. They have a good understanding of what they do well and what they need to do to improve. They make appropriate use of an annual self-evaluation process and are able to identify priorities for improvement. The setting makes appropriate use of questionnaires by parents and children to help identify what they do well and what they need to improve. However, targets for development are not always specific enough to describe clearly the actions needed and the outcomes they expect. Recording on-going progress and the outcomes of monitoring are inconsistent. Although planning for improvement is generally appropriate, it does not always focus sharply enough on how actions will benefit children.

Practitioners demonstrate a strong commitment to self-improvement. They attend training events, are open to new ideas and have responded positively to support from both the local authority advisory staff and the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin development officer.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a strong partnership with parents. Parents value the quality of the learning experiences provided and the level of care and concern that the practitioners show their children. Practitioners inform parents well about what their children are learning through the setting's noticeboard and information file, daily personal contact, letters and a comprehensive information booklet. The setting seeks the views of parents and provides them with good feedback on the outcomes of questionnaires.

The partnership between the setting and its feeder primary school, which is in the same building, is good and supports the transition from playgroup to school effectively. For example, children from the setting visit the school to share their work and the staff from the school visit the setting regularly. As a result, the setting prepares children well for their next stage of education.

Due to its very rural location, the setting has limited opportunities to engage with the community beyond the local primary school. The setting is beginning to establish links with a local allotment, for children to grow fruit and vegetables. Prior to its closure, the children used the local shop and post office effectively to post letters home and buy ingredients for baking.

The setting has sound partnership arrangements with the local authority and Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, which benefit the children well.

Resource management: Good

The setting has enough appropriately trained staff and deploys them effectively.

The management committee has appropriate systems to manage the practitioners in the setting and ensure that they receive an effective range of training. Practitioners share ideas well and make appropriate use of training and visits to other settings to develop and improve their practice and to improve provision for children.

Managers have good systems for keeping spending under review. They match spending well to the setting's priorities and objectives.

The setting successfully promotes activities that encourage children to learn and make good progress. As a result the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Derbyniwyd llai na 10 ymateb. Ni chaiff unrhyw ddata ei ddangos.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mrs Janet Elizabeth Rowlands	Arolygydd Cofnodol
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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.