



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 Llanuwchllyn
Y Neuadd Bentref
Llanuwchllyn
Gwynedd
LL23 7TT
United Kingdom**

Date of inspection: July 2014

by

Wil Williams

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 Llanuwchllyn is a registered setting that meets in the village hall at Llanuwchllyn. It provides Welsh medium pre-school education for the children of Llanuwchllyn and the surrounding rural area.

The setting admits children of all abilities and backgrounds to the session. There were no children with additional learning needs nor from ethnic minority groups attending the setting during the inspection. Nearly all the children speak Welsh as the main language at home.

The setting provides two and a half hour sessions during four afternoons of the week for children aged two and a half to four years. Most children attend the nursery class in the primary school in the morning and the setting during the afternoon. Four of the three-year-old children receive funding by the local authority.

Children are taught by two leaders and three practitioners who are appropriately qualified to teach the early years.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in March 2013 and by Estyn in November 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

Performance is good because:

- a variety of learning experiences motivate every child's interest and imagination;
- provision for developing children's literacy and numeracy skills is thorough;
- of the strong emphasis on learning through play and solving practical problems;
- practitioners have high expectations of every child;
- assessment outcomes are used purposefully for future planning;
- provision for promoting children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good;
- setting is an inclusive community which places a strong emphasis on developing tolerant attitudes; and
- there is an ample supply of good quality resources for all areas of learning.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leader has a clear vision for the setting's development;
- practitioners work effectively as a team;
- the management committee undertakes its responsibilities very conscientiously;
- self-evaluation is used effectively to improve standards and provision;
- a number of partners have a positive effect on children's standards and wellbeing;
- staff and resources are used effectively to promote children's learning; and
- the setting provides good value for money.

Recommendations

1. Provide better opportunities for children to learn more about other cultural traditions.
2. Ensure that the voice and opinions of children are regularly heard and valued.

What happens next?

The setting 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

By providing a good variety of learning experiences, practitioners successfully motivate every child's interest and imagination and ensure their engagement in learning. Learning experiences have been carefully planned in order to ensure that every area of learning in the Foundation Phase is given appropriate attention over a period of time. The curriculum is consequently broad, balanced and relevant to the children's age and abilities. The practice of planning the curriculum thematically leads to cohesive learning experiences which build systematically on children's previous skills and knowledge. A good example of this is the imaginative learning experiences that have emanated from the current theme on 'The Garden.

By using a variety of class organisation, practitioners ensure that there is an effective balance between child-selected activities and practitioner led focus tasks that concentrate on specific learning skills.

Provision for developing children's literacy and numeracy skills is thorough. Practitioners constantly encourage children to listen carefully to each other and adults and to contribute confidently during large group sessions. Practitioners' custom of participating in children's play provides them with valuable opportunities to chat informally with individuals and small groups of children. The variety of books in the reading corner attracts the interest of many children and provides them with good opportunities to act as readers. In the graphic area, children are encouraged to make marks for a purpose with a variety of materials which including felt pens and crayons, and to develop their motor skills.

Practitioners take advantage of every opportunity to develop children's numeracy skills, be it by counting together the number of children present or through singing number rhymes. Activities such as playing games with dices or counting the number of objects in the sand tray strengthen children's numeracy skills significantly.

Provision for developing children's information and communication technology skills (ICT) is appropriate.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and a secure understanding of Foundation Phase requirements. They have high expectations of every child across the whole range of ability and age. Through detailed joint planning,

practitioners successfully provide motivating and challenging experiences which ensure the engagement of all children. Tasks include appropriate levels of challenge and place strong emphasis on learning through play and solving practical problems. Through appropriate intervention and skilful questioning, children's ideas are challenged and learning is moved in. By joining in the play, practitioners are able to ensure that children take full advantage of what every activity has to offer. When there are rare cases of inappropriate behaviour or disputes between individuals, practitioners resolve them firmly and sensitively.

The encouragement children receive from practitioners to develop their own ideas and to follow their own learning paths, is a strength. A good example of this is was the way one group set about adapting the class shop as a pen for shearing sheep.

The close working relationship between adults and children ensures that members of staff are well aware of every child's personal and educational needs. Practitioners assess children regularly and comprehensively and record observations and assessments carefully to measure children's progress. Practitioners use assessment outcomes effectively for future planning. There are thorough arrangements for including parents in their children's assessments and ensuring that they have suitable information about their child's progress and how they can help them improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Practitioners ensure there is a warm and welcoming environment at the setting and that it meets the needs of every individual. The setting makes appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Provision for promoting children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. During their daily interaction with children, practitioners strongly emphasise the need for everyone to be kind to one another, to be honest and fair and to behave in a responsible manner. This greatly helps children in learning the difference between right and wrong. Regular opportunities for children through 'Helpwr y Dydd' (*Today's Helper*) to undertake responsibilities and to make their own choices about their learning, contribute substantially towards their personal and social development.

Although the setting continuously promotes clear principles and values, opportunities for raising children's awareness of beliefs, attitudes, and social and cultural traditions found in Wales, are few.

There are appropriate arrangements at the setting for recycling and reducing waste.

Practitioners know children well and provide them with clear guidance during sessions. The leader knows how to access professional help if there is any concern about a child's welfare or development.

The effective induction arrangements help children to settle down quickly without any difficulties at the setting. Practitioners identify the individual learning needs of all children when they join the setting and ensure that these needs are met.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where every child has equal access to all areas of learning and activities provided. There is strong emphasis on developing tolerant attitudes and ensuring that children and members of staff are free from any harrassment. The interesting learning environment and the regular opportunities children have to develop positive values and attitudes are prominent features of the setting.

The setting has enough practitioners who possess sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach every aspect of the Foundation Phase curriculum. There is an ample supply of good quality resources in every area of learning, including ICT. These are carefully matched to every individual's development and learning needs. Practitioners make imaginative use of the outdoor areas to enrich children's learning experiences. Resources in the local community are used very purposefully to support learning in the classroom. The accommodation is of good quality and used extensively.

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

The leader successfully creates an ethos where children and staff feel appreciated. She has a clear vision for the setting, sets high expectations and challenges everyone to do their best and to take an active part in the setting's development. Consequently, there is a strong sense of purpose, which promotes and maintains improvements. Staff have shared values about learning, behaviour and relationships and make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.

The setting is managed effectively. Sessions run smoothly and all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. There are clear aims and policies which focus on children's needs and are understood and implemented by every practitioner.

There are appropriate systems for staff appraisal. These gives rise to agreed targets, particularly regarding further professional development needs.

Members of the management committee fulfil their duties conscientiously and effectively. They function in a constitutional manner and there is a close working relationship between them and the setting. They have an active role in the self-evaluation processes and planning for improvement.

The setting has responded positively to local and national priorities such as the Foundation Phase and assessment for learning. This has led to improvements in standards and provision.

Improving quality: Good

Leaders and practitioners know the setting's strengths well and have a clear understanding of what they need to do to ensure improvement. They are constantly self-evaluating and looking for ways to improve provision and to raise standards. Although self-evaluation pays careful consideration to the views of parents there are no similar arrangements for listening to the voice and views of children. The setting benefits substantially from the professional advice of the local authority support teacher with the leader and staff acting appropriately on any recommendations, which arise out of her visits. This ensures there are effective arrangements for maintaining good practice and for implementing change in areas, which need improving.

Priorities that become apparent through self evaluation are effectively incorporated in a purposeful development plan which clearly notes how the setting intends to implement changes. This has led to improvements in a number of aspects such as the continuous provision and the setting's processes for curriculum planning and assessment.

The school's self-evaluation report is of good quality portraying an honest and correct picture of the setting's strengths and aspects for improvement.

Partnership working: Good

Partnership activities make a good contribution to children's achievements and wellbeing. Parents are regularly informed about every aspect of the setting's work and the leader takes active steps to include them in the activities that are arranged. The parents' handbook provides useful information about the setting's policies and procedures and includes useful guidance for parents on how they can help their children at home.

The setting has good links with the primary school and clear arrangements for transferring children to the nursery class at the end of the academic year.

The close co-operation between the setting and the local authority support teacher makes a very positive contribution towards improving the quality of the provision and standards. Practitioners work together very effectively, share information about children and know whom to contact and when to do so if children need additional help.

The good links forged with establishments within the community, such as the village hall committee, have provided substantial benefits for the setting's children.

Resource management: Good

Staff and resources are managed very skilfully by the leader and the management committee ensuring that the setting runs smoothly and effectively. Practitioners receive strong support by a programme of continuous professional development provided mainly by the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin. This enables them to acquire new knowledge and skills and to deliver the Foundation Phase successfully.

The setting is developing well as a strong learning community. Practitioners are open to new ideas and are prepared to experiment with different ways of working and to share their knowledge with others within the setting.

The leader and the management committee have a thorough understanding of their budget and prioritise their spending in line with the setting's developmental needs. Financial decisions are carefully evaluated by the leader and the management committee to make sure that they have a positive effect on standards and children's progress and wellbeing.

The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholders' satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on parental questionnaires as only a small number of responses were received

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Wil Williams	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 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.