



*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 Maesywaen  
Neuadd Maesywaen  
Rhyduchaf  
Gwynedd  
LL23 7SF**

**Date of inspection: July 2014**

**by**

**Wil Williams  
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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	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](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

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**Publication date: 16/04/2014**

## Context

Cylch Meithrin Maesywaen is a registered nursery that provides pre-school education for children of the Waen rural area. It meets in the Maesywaen community centre which is also used by other organisations during the week.

The setting admits children of all abilities and backgrounds. During the inspection, there were no children with additional learning needs or of ethnic origin at the setting. Welsh is the main language spoken at home by nearly all the children.

The setting provides two and a half hour sessions during four mornings a week for children between the ages of two and four years. Seventeen children are registered at the setting of whom six receive funding from the local authority.

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

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate Wales in January 2014 and by Estyn in October 2009.

## Summary

<b>The Setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The Setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The setting's performance is good because:

- nearly all make realistic progress in all areas of learning;
- standards in literacy and numeracy skills are good;
- all children enjoy their time at the setting;
- all children behave well and show concern and respect towards one another;
- teaching is consistently good;
- children are encouraged to experiment with new experiences;
- assessment outcomes are used effectively for future planning;
- there are appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking;
- the high quality of care, support and guidance; and
- the setting is an inclusive community.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the high quality of leadership and teamwork;
- there is a strong sense of purpose to the setting's work;
- there are secure arrangements for maintaining good practice and implementing change;
- the management committee fulfils its responsibilities thoroughly;
- partnership activities makes a strong contribution to children's achievements and wellbeing;
- the self-evaluation report is of good quality; and
- the setting provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

1. Take more account of the views of children in the setting's self-evaluation process.
2. Increase the resources for information and communications technology.

### 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?

Good

#### Standards: Good

Bearing in mind children's age and starting point when they first attend the setting, nearly all children achieve good standards and makes realistic progress in all areas of learning. Most children recall previous learning quickly and develop good thinking and problem solving skills as they work together on open-ended tasks. Most work to the best of their ability and persevere industriously for extended periods. As they carry out tasks, which they have chosen themselves, nearly all children experiment and investigate confidently. They are willing to take risks and make good progress towards becoming independent learners.

Standards in literacy skills are good. When they discuss with adults or participate in large group sessions, almost every child demonstrates good speaking and listening skills. Most express their ideas clearly, for example, when discussing the content of a story, and listen thoughtfully to contributions made by other children in the group. All children show a keen interest in storybooks and enjoy their content with or without an adult. All children handle books as a reader and most can list words beginning with a particular letter.

Almost all children use their numeracy skills confidently during their day-to-day activities and play. They all join in enthusiastically as a class to count numbers 1 to 10 together with the majority being able to count up to five objects dependably. Nearly all children record numbers by making marks and are beginning to understand the concept of 'one more than'. During role-play in the café, most children demonstrate an appropriate awareness of the purpose of money.

Although many children use computer programs confidently most do not make sufficient progress in their information communications technology (ICT) skills as they move through the setting.

#### Wellbeing: Good

All children say that they enjoy their time at the setting and have formed a close relationship with other children and the practitioners. The good behaviour of most of the children and the care they exhibit towards others is a prominent feature of the setting. Many children are considerate of the feelings of others in the setting. When undertaking specific activities or tasks of their own choice, all children co-operate well and are prepared to share resources with other children. According to their age and stage of development, most children display high levels of independence and are willing to persevere with one task for an extended period.

Almost every child is willing to undertake responsibilities such as those of 'helpwr y dydd' (Today's Helper) and self-registration. As they mature, most learn how to make more informed decisions about their learning.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Learning experiences: Good**

Learning experiences meet the needs and interests of all children well and encourage them to learn effectively and to make good progress across all areas of learning. Children's learning is based on detailed curricular plans which strongly reflect Foundation Phase principles and build systematically on children's current knowledge, understanding and skills. Practitioners use the indoor and outdoor areas imaginatively to inspire children's interest and to encourage them to experiment with new experiences. Children have numerous opportunities to lead their own learning and to develop as independent learners. They visit the local community regularly and learn much from visitors to the setting.

Provision for literacy, numeracy, thinking skills and problem solving is cohesive and firmly embedded in every child's learning experiences.

Children play an active role in the setting's recycling and energy conservation procedures. The setting promotes children's awareness of the culture, festivals and traditions of Wales very successfully and provides them with valuable opportunities to learn about their role as global citizens.

**Teaching: Good**

Practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and have a secure understanding of Foundation Phase requirements. They expect much from every child and plan tasks that respond to well to the abilities and needs of all children. Practitioners work effectively as a team and interact very well with children. Nearly all tasks include an appropriate level of challenge and place a strong emphasis on learning through play and on solving practical problems. Purposeful intervention and skilful questioning enable practitioners to challenge children's ideas and to move learning on. By joining in children's play, they are able to ensure that children gain the best possible advantage of what every activity has to offer. When rare instances of unacceptable behaviour or disputes between individuals occur, practitioners respond in a firm but sensitive manner.

Practitioners assess children regularly and comprehensively and record observations and assessments carefully to measure every individual's progress throughout his or her time at the setting. They use assessment outcomes very effectively for identifying children's individual needs and for planning future activities. Through open evenings, informal discussions with practitioners and by receiving an album of their children at work in the areas of learning, parents receive full and interesting information about their children's progress during their time in the setting.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

Effective arrangements for supporting children's health and welfare make a good contribution to children's general development and support their learning effectively. The setting makes appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. The daily experience children have of participating in physical activity makes a good contribution to raising their levels of fitness.

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 each other, and to be honest and fair. This greatly helps children in learning to differentiate between right and wrong. The regular opportunities children have through 'Helpwr y Dydd' (today's helper) to undertake responsibilities and to make their own choices about their learning contribute significantly towards their personal and social development.

Experiences such as celebrating St. David's Day and taking part in the 'Miri Mawr' performance, contribute substantially towards their cultural development.

There are effective arrangements for recycling and avoiding waste.

Effective induction arrangements help children to settle down quickly and without difficulty at the setting. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Practitioners know children well and provide them with clear guidance during sessions. They have a good understanding of how to gain access to professional help for children and parents. Children's learning needs are noted in detail and practitioners ensure that these needs are met.

### **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 on ensuring that children and members of staff are free from any harassment. The setting has enough practitioners who possess sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The interesting learning environment created and the opportunities all children have to develop positive values and attitudes are very prominent features of the setting.

With the exception of ICT, there is a good supply of good quality resources for all areas of learning which carefully match the development and learning needs of every individual. The setting makes regular and effective use of the outside area, particularly for developing children's physical skills. Practitioners make very purposeful use of resources and people in the community to enrich the curriculum and to support teaching in the classroom. The variety of interesting displays celebrates children's achievements very effectively and gives them a sense of ownership over the classroom. The accommodation is of good quality and is used extensively.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>
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<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

Through the leader's dedication and enthusiasm, the setting has succeeded in creating a particularly positive ethos where children and staff feel that they are appreciated. Practitioners share common values about learning, behaviour and relationships and collaborate very effectively to ensure that the Foundation Phase and other national priorities are implemented successfully. The strong sense of purpose at the setting promotes and maintains improvement effectively. Learning and teaching are well managed, and the setting's policies are implemented effectively. During sessions, members of staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, which they fulfil conscientiously. Very positive relationship with children and parents makes a strong contribution towards creating a sense of community.

The management committee is very knowledgeable about the setting's performance and fulfils its duties conscientiously. Committee officers consult and share information with parents regularly and contribute effectively towards the management of the setting. Committee officers have effective procedures for managing and evaluating staff performance. Appropriate performance management systems help staff to evaluate and improve their practice and to identify their professional needs.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Practitioners are well informed about the setting's strengths and aspects that need to be improved. Through the leader's encouragement, they self evaluate and seek ways of improving continuously. Secure arrangements have been established to maintain good practice and implement change in areas that need improving. Self evaluation pays careful consideration to the views of parents and the management committee, and benefits substantially from the professional advice of the local authority support teacher. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to express views about their learning experiences.

Practitioners can show how self-evaluation has led to improvements in planning and assessment.

The self evaluation report and improvement plan are of good quality and provide the setting with a clear sense of direction. The leader ensures that the priorities identified in the plan are systematically implemented during the year.

### **Partnership working: Good**

Partnership activities make a positive contribution to children's good achievements and welfare. Parents are regularly informed about every aspect of the setting's work and practitioners take active steps to include them in all the activities arranged. The parents' handbook provides useful information about the setting's policies and procedures.



The setting has close links with the local primary school and there are clear arrangements at the end of the school year for transferring children and assessment information.

Very good links with a number of establishments in the local community enrich children's learning experiences substantially and make a good contribution towards their personal and social development.

The practice of inviting local villagers to the setting to share their experiences and skills with children strengthens children's ties with the local community.

The close co-operation between the setting and the local authority support teacher contributes very positively towards improving provision and standards. Practitioners work together very effectively, share information about children and know whom to contact and when if children need additional support.

### **Resource management: Good**

Regular training sessions provided by the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin, give staff valuable opportunities to update their knowledge and skills. These were of great benefit to the setting during the process of amending its assessment arrangements in order to meet new local authority requirements.

The setting has an appropriate number of staff to teach the curriculum effectively. The setting uses staff time and experience, as well as learning resources, effectively to ensure that high quality care and provision are available for every child.

The setting's expertise in attracting grants from different sources has substantially increased the supply of resources for learning and, has consequently enriched children's learning experiences.

The management committee keeps a detailed account of the setting's financial situation in order to ensure that they manage expenditure carefully in accordance with the setting's development needs. Spending decisions are constantly evaluated to ensure they have a direct effect on children's progress and wellbeing.

Bearing in mind the good outcomes and children's continuous progress, 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](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

## Glossary of terms

<p><b>Areas of Learning</b></p>	<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"> <li>• personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li> <li>• language, literacy and communications skills</li> <li>• mathematical development</li> <li>• Welsh language development</li> <li>• knowledge and understanding of the world</li> <li>• physical development</li> <li>• creative development</li> </ul>
<p><b>CSSIW</b></p>	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
<p><b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b></p>	<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>
<p><b>Foundation Phase</b></p>	<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>
<p><b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b></p>	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
<p><b>Local authority advisory teacher</b></p>	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
<p><b>Mudiad Meithrin</b></p>	<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>

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<b>National Childminding Association (NCMA)</b>	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
<b>National (NDNA)</b>	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
<b>Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)</b>	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.