



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 Mornant
Ysgol Cymraeg Mornant
Picton Road
Penyffordd
Flintshire
CH8 9JQ**

Date of inspection: May 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 Mornant is a Welsh medium setting based in a porta-cabin in the grounds of Ysgol Gymraeg Mornant in Penyffordd. Penyffordd is a small rural village some 7 miles from Holywell, North Wales. Children attending the Cylch come from the local and surrounding villages of Ffynnongrowy, Gwespyr, Talacre and Mostyn. The area is adjudged to be neither particularly prosperous nor disadvantaged and the children come from varied socio-economic backgrounds.

The setting is administered by a voluntary management committee and is an educational provider for the Flintshire Early Years Development and Childcare partnership. It is also a registered member of the Mudiad Meithrin.

All children come from English speaking homes, although in a few instances one parent may have some competence in the Welsh language. Currently there are no children from ethnic minority backgrounds, neither have any of the children been identified as having additional learning needs (ALN). The setting however has, in the past, provided for children with ALN. It provides Early Entitlement Care and has wheelchair access and disabled facilities.

The setting provides for children between 2½ and 4 years of age for five days of the week during school term times, from 11.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Funded children attend between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. The setting is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accommodate a maximum of 28 children at any one time. Currently there are 10 on the register, of whom 4 are funded.

The accommodation comprises a portacabin in the grounds of Ysgol Mornant. Overall, the facilities are very good. Children have immediate access to the outside activity area providing them with areas used for play with large toys, raised beds for planting and growing seeds and wet areas. There is a grassed area for play and a tarmaced area where children use large toys. The whole area is fenced ensuring complete safety. Facilities are shared with the school.

The portacabin is approached through the school yard and this provides greater security. The outside door is kept locked ensuring that no one can enter or leave unannounced. Immediately inside the door and leading from a corridor is a small room used for registration. It is carpeted and appropriately furnished. The corridor leads to the large teaching room. There is a kitchen to one end and toilets and wash facilities at the other end. The main room is appropriately designated with activity areas in keeping with the Foundation Phase philosophy. The walls are decorated with examples of the children's work. Notices displayed in the corridor provide useful information for parents.

The setting is staffed by two well qualified members of staff, both of whom have attended relevant courses.

The setting was inspected by CSSIW in March 2014 and the recommendations addressed.

The previous Estyn inspection was in October 2008 and the minor recommendations have been addressed.

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 of the

- planned learning experiences that successfully capture children's interest;
- learning opportunities encourage children to form good relationships and to show tolerance;
- good provision for developing the Welsh language and children's numeracy skills;
- good balance between child-selected and adult-led activities;
- setting's provision for ensuring children's health and wellbeing;
- warm, homely atmosphere apparent in the setting
- sense of purpose evident in the setting;
- links that exist with the local primary school.

The current performance of the setting is only adequate because the

- planned learning activities are not developed sufficiently systematically to ensure activities are well matched to children's ability and prior experiences;
- assessment results are not used sufficiently when planning future activities.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because the

- setting displays a sense of purpose focused on providing the best learning experiences for the children;
- staff work together well and are responsive to new ideas;
- staff attend training programmes and discuss and evaluate outcomes;
- setting is well supported by the Local Authority advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin.
- setting works closely with the primary school and has use of their facilities.

Recommendations

- R1. refine its planning for learning to ensure that children's skills in literacy and numeracy are developed systematically and progressively.
- R2. extend assessment procedures to identify children's skill development.
- R3. provide focused activities that are well matched to children's ability and challenge them.

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?

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skill 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: Adequate

The planned learning experiences are successful in capturing children's interest and ensure their active participation. Planning is sufficiently flexible enabling the teaching to respond to local events, such as a snow fall. Learning experiences make good use of the wide range of resources available at the setting including making good use of the local school's resources.

Overall, children are encouraged to progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. However, planning does not indicate clearly how children's knowledge, understanding and skills are being developed systematically and that activities are well matched to children's ability and prior experiences.

The learning opportunities provided for the children encourage them to form good relationships with each other and to show tolerance. Children are given good opportunities to experiment and to play independently and most are sufficiently confident to do so. Displays and records of children's work shows that the planning provides good opportunities to develop children's creative skills.

Children's learning experiences give them ample opportunities to understand and look after living things. They grow and look after seedlings and collect mini-beast from the adjacent woodland.

A good feature is the setting's success in developing children's communication and numeracy skills. Planning ensures that children's language and numeracy skill development is given priority across the curriculum and practitioners exploit opportunities, such as during registration, to develop these skills. The planning is less detailed on how such skills are to be developed progressively and systematically.

Particularly good provision is made to develop the Welsh language. Children come from English speaking homes but the setting is very successful in developing

children's Welsh language. Children are immersed in the language and the use of simple language patterns is beneficial in enabling the children to speak the language. Welsh words and phrases are displayed in the classroom. Most children understand questions and commands used by the staff and may respond using simple Welsh words and phrases. This provides a good basis on which to proceed to the next phase of their education in a Welsh medium primary school.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a good understanding of child development and the individual needs of children. They understand the requirements of the Foundation Phase, particularly the importance of providing opportunities for children to learn through play and active involvement. The staff plan a good balance between child-selected and adult-led or directed activities. Practitioners are sensitive to children's requirements and have a good understanding of when to intervene and when to let the child work independently.

Practitioners treat every child with respect and are sensitive to their individual needs. They have high expectations of the children in terms of their personal and academic development.

A notable and good feature of the setting is that the staff are good language models. All conversation is in Welsh and the children come to realise that Welsh is the medium of communication. The setting is a stimulating and exciting environment for the children and they respond by active participation and enjoyment.

There are shortcomings in the setting's assessment procedures and the use made of them in planning. Children are regularly assessed and observations recorded in children's individual booklets "Dyma Fi". Practitioners know the children well, including their ability and interests. The work is planned accordingly to meet their interests. However, the recording of children's achievements tends to be descriptive and insufficiently focused on their skill development. (Pictorial records of children's work are not annotated). Assessment results are not used sufficiently when planning future activities so as to meet children's needs and enabling them to progress to the next steps in their learning.

Parents are aware of the activities undertaken by children and receive end of year reports on their achievement and wellbeing.

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.

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place and overall, arrangements encourage children to be healthy and to develop emotionally and physically.

Children enjoy their life at the setting and through a wide range of activities both inside and outside in the rich rural environment develop their sense of curiosity and wonder about the world in which they live.

The setting successfully fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect and day-to-day life in the setting that help children distinguish between right and wrong. They learn to take responsibility and understand simple rules of behaviour. The setting introduces children to the ideas of re-cycling and to act sustainably, such as when recycling paper, plastic bottles, containers and waste vegetable matter.

Children learn about the culture and traditions of Wales and other countries.

No child present has been identified with additional learning needs. The setting, however, has arrangements in place if needed.

The setting's safeguarding arrangements are good. The setting is within the school grounds and this gives added protection provided by the school's own safeguarding arrangements. The outside door to the cabin is kept locked ensuring that no one can enter or leave unannounced. Children are always supervised in the outside activity area. This area has a secure metal fence. Parents and carers are well known to the staff.

Overall, the arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting provides children with a warm, homely atmosphere where they are respected as individuals. All take a full part in all activities and are encouraged to broaden their experiences. Children are confident and know they have the full support of the staff. A tolerant atmosphere pervades the setting and there is a total lack of any form of oppressive behaviour. Children's achievements are celebrated and staff make good use of praise to raise children's self-confidence.

The setting is generously staffed with well qualified practitioners who have long experience of working with young children. The setting is suitably resourced with very good outside provision. The accommodation is ideally placed adjacent to the school so good use can be made of the facilities on offer. The rich local environment is well used to enhance children's learning.

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

The setting displays a sense of purpose focused on providing the best learning experiences for the children. Expectations of the children are high and relationships are very good. The setting provides a warm, friendly atmosphere where the needs of the children are paramount. There is a real sense of community and the children respond well. Staff work together very well and are keen to implement new ideas and to bring about improvements where possible.

The management committee is well informed and supportive of the setting. Staff are encouraged to attend relevant training courses and outcomes discussed and evaluated. Appraisal takes place annually and future targets agreed. There are very good links with parents who are very appreciative of the contribution of the setting to their child's development.

The setting has taken good account of national and local priorities, including developing the "Forest School" initiative.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners know the setting well and have substantial experience of working together. The setting has undertaken a self-evaluation exercise based on the local authority criteria for non-maintained settings. This consequently identified the many strengths of the setting and a few areas for development. The areas identified for development are realistic and focus on positive gains for the children. These are identified in the setting's development plan. Overall, the setting displays a self-critical ethos and has worked closely with the local authority support officer to bring about improvements. Self-evaluation takes into account the views expressed by parents and children. However, aspects for improvement are not prioritised but categorised under the three Estyn Key Questions.

Partnership working: Good

Partnership arrangements made a strong contribution to children's good achievement and wellbeing. A good and notable example of the impact of such partnership is the development of the outside provision for the children providing them with a very good learning environment.

The contribution of the local primary school also makes an important contribution to the setting's educational provision. This includes the use of some of the school's facilities and the professional support provided by the staff.

Parents receive regular updates on their child's progress as well as a detailed end of year report on both the personal and academic development of their child. They have an opportunity to respond – responses are invariably positive.

The setting has benefited greatly from the support provided by the local authority advisory teacher. She has provided the setting with a range of resources, helped with the organisation of resources and offered invaluable advice and support. The support officer from the Mudiad Meithrin has supported the Welsh language development.

All involved work well together, share information and focus on providing the best possible educational provision.

Resource management: Good

Resources are managed well and deployed effectively to support learning. The budget is well managed and spending is based on planned actions for improvement. This is an effective learning community based on the collaboration between partners. The staff undergo relevant training and implement new approaches to learning, such as the "Forest School" initiative. Staff are self-critical and reflect on their own practice and seek advice.

The setting's provision for outside education is particularly good and used efficiently. Children, as seen by their attitudes and confidence, are well used to being outside. They show their independence and work confidently, both individually and in small groups. This aspect is well used to support children's development. The setting deploys its resources well; very good use is made of outside help and has created a good learning environment for the children.

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	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.