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Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Cylch Meithrin Pencader  
Ysgol Gynradd Cae'r Felin  
Pencader  
SA39 9AA**

**Date of inspection: April 2015**

**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:

<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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## Context

Cylch Meithrin Pencader is a Welsh-medium voluntary setting that serves this area of north Carmarthenshire some three miles from Llandysul. It is registered with the Mudiad Meithrin and is currently located in Cae'r Felin primary school.

The setting is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accept up to 16 children per session and children are admitted from two and a half years of age. At present there are 18 on roll of whom 10 are three year olds. These three year old children are all funded. Children transfer to the primary school at the beginning of the term before their fourth birthday.

The setting meets on five mornings a week during school term time from 8.45a.m. until 11.45 a.m.

Children come from a wide rural area where the main language of the home is English in the majority of cases. A few come from Welsh speaking homes.

Two full time members of staff are employed. They are suitably qualified and experienced. The leader has been in post since September 2011.

The setting was last inspected by CSSIW in November 2014 and by Estyn in June 2009.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The setting has strengths that outweigh areas for improvement because:

- All children are happy to come to the setting and settle quickly.
- All children feel secure and are well cared for.
- Learning experiences interest the children and include a wide range of worthwhile experiences.
- Most children develop a high degree of self-confidence and independence.
- Accommodation, both indoors and outside is spacious, well maintained and attractive for children.
- All children are encouraged to be healthy; they have healthy snacks and take regular physical exercise.
- Relationships between adults and children are good.

However,

- Assessment does not give a clear picture of each child's achievement and progress.
- Planning does not provide activities well matched to children's age and ability and does not challenge them sufficiently.
- Most children's ability to use the Welsh language is poor.
- Provision for developing children's ICT skills is inadequate.
- A minority of children's listening skills are underdeveloped and behaviour of children as a group is not well managed.

### Prospects for improvement

The setting has strengths that outweigh areas for development because:

- The setting aims to ensure that all children are well cared for and supported.
- Practitioners treat all children equally and show them affection.
- Practitioners work well as a team and complement each other in the day-to-day running of the setting.

- The setting has produced a detailed self-evaluation document and identified areas for development.
- Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of the Foundation Phase requirements.

However,

- Planning for improvement does not prioritise targets.
- Self-evaluation does not focus well enough on standards that children achieve, as for example children's Welsh language.

## Recommendations

- R1. Improve its assessment procedures so as to clearly identify children's skills development, particularly their numeracy and communication skills.
- R2. Use the assessment results in planning so that activities are well matched to individual children's needs and ability and to provide them with suitable challenge.
- R3. Provide more opportunities for children to develop their Welsh language.
- R4. Improve the provision for developing children's ICT skills.
- R5. Review the management of children's behaviour.
- R6. Prioritise targets for improvement in the development plan.

### **What happens next?**

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the setting's progress.'

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

**Adequate**

#### **Standards: Adequate**

On entry many children have skills that are well below those expected of children of this age, especially in their language development. Over time most children make acceptable progress in learning although the Welsh language skills of many remain inadequate.

Most children initially sit and listen attentively during registration and many recognise their name on name plates. Others do so when prompted. A minority of children have limited listening skills and their behaviour affects other children's learning. Many children are confident and are keen to share their experiences. Most children respond well to practitioner led tasks and activities particularly in small group situations. Many approach a visitor with assurance and make conversation. In these instances about half of the children speak reasonably clearly, though mostly in English.

A few children show interest in books and enjoy looking at them with an adult. Many children enjoy nursery rhymes and songs and join in enthusiastically. A minority of children use a range of mark-making tools independently including pencil to draw and chalk on boards in the outside environment. These children hold pencils and chalk correctly and understand the purpose of writing. Nearly all children paint creatively using a range of colours which they mix appropriately.

Many children recite accurately by rote numbers to 10 and a few count independently to 10. About half of all children count accurately to four. A few children can use their knowledge of number correctly in actual situations as when counting cards and when playing with toys. A few recognise basic sums of money and know the use made of money. A few recognise simple two-dimensional shapes and show good knowledge of mathematical language including "big, small, tall and short".

Children use digital equipment, including digital cameras and voice recorders. However, their ICT skills are underdeveloped.

Many children show the ability to work independently and select items and activities that interest them. A minority show perseverance and commitment to their chosen activities. In most instances children are prepared to share equipment and take turns as when playing a game with dice.

Many work enthusiastically when interested. Many have well developed physical skills. They pedal and manoeuvre their tricycles skilfully and use small tools with good control.

There are very few children whose Welsh language skills are progressing satisfactorily and in the majority of children it is underdeveloped. A few children understand basic instructions and react positively. Most children come from homes where English is the predominant language spoken and these children's command of the Welsh language is very limited and in many instances virtually non-existent. Many children's Welsh vocabulary is limited to counting by rote and naming basic colours.

**Wellbeing: Good**

All children show that they enjoy coming to the setting. Nearly all are eager to participate in activities set out for them and settle quickly into well established routines. Most children behave well such as when playing independently or when engaged in small group activities. The majority respond quickly to instructions. All children are polite, courteous and considerate. They relate well to each other and are happy to play independently or in small groups, to take turns and to share play equipment. Children's good behaviour results in a calm, homely atmosphere especially when children are playing outside. When interested, many children sustain their concentration for considerable periods of time.

Snack time is a worthwhile social occasion. Children look forward to their healthy snack and are happy to sit quietly and talk to their peers and to staff. They are aware of good hygiene by washing their hands before food.

Most children's personal and social skills are developing well and parents report that children's general behaviour has improved. They are happy to take responsibilities, such as tidying up and putting their coats on before departing. They handle resources carefully and are keen to share their experiences with the inspector.

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

The setting provides the children with an interesting and worthwhile range of learning experiences. Practitioners collaborate in planning and activities take into account children's interests. There is an appropriate emphasis on play with children learning through first hand experiences. Learning experiences are appropriately focused on children progressing towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. Planning for whole class activities does not take sufficient account of children's different ages, and ability to listen. Planning documents show that the curriculum builds systematically on children's existing knowledge and understanding and skills. Learning opportunities provide children with opportunities to form relationships and to become confident independent learners. There are good opportunities for children to develop their physical and creative skills.



The setting provides children generally with appropriate opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills although opportunities to develop their Welsh language are limited and generally unsatisfactory. Children learn to recognise their name through self-registration each morning. Both practitioners make adequate use of incidental Welsh through simple instructions and commands, although both practitioners are not equally confident in speaking the language. There are regular opportunities for children to participate in singing a range of Welsh songs. There are sufficient and regular opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills through counting, sorting and grouping objects. Children's literacy and numeracy skills are developing appropriately through adult led activities. There are too few opportunities however to develop children's ICT skills. The outdoor environment is well used and the planning encourages children to develop their independence and to experiment with new ideas, such as making mud pies.

Planning for adult-led activities including focused tasks however does not sufficiently take into account children's different ages and abilities. The next steps in these children's learning are not adequately planned.

Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about the Welsh culture and traditions through celebrations, such as St. David's day and Santes Dwynwen and through visits to the locality. These provide worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their personal and cultural identity.

### **Teaching: Adequate**

The setting has well established routines that ensure that children settle quickly and are actively involved, both in the classroom and outside. Relationships between practitioners and children are good and based on mutual affection. Practitioners know the children well and are sensitive to their needs.

Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of the Foundation Phase and use a suitable range of strategies to engage children's interests and motivation, particularly during adult-led activities. Resources are used creatively to capture children's attention and activities involve children being actively involved, such as matching the size of toy cars to garage entrances. This also ensured that all children, in turn, were involved. In these instances children working in small groups are well managed and practitioners use questioning well to develop children's thinking skills.

There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. There are sufficient opportunities for children to select activities and to work independently and adults know when to intervene. Practitioners understand the importance of providing opportunities for children to learn through play and this forms an important part of each morning's activities.

Practitioners do not always match activities to children's ability and prior achievement. In these instances the more able children are not sufficiently challenged. The work is not sufficiently differentiated, as for example to develop children's Welsh language at an appropriate level.

Children are assessed regularly and their achievement is recorded. This includes photographic evidence of children's work across all areas of the curriculum. Practitioners know children's ability well but their achievement, in terms of skill development, is not noted on the photographic evidence. Individual children's skill development is noted following focused tasks and this provides a valuable record in terms of, for example children's numeracy skills. However, these records are not used sufficiently in planning the next steps in individual children's learning. Parents reported that they are happy with their children's progress.

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

There are effective arrangements in place to support children's health and wellbeing. Children are encouraged to eat healthily, to take care of their personal hygiene and to take exercise. Children react positively and act accordingly.

Learning experiences successfully foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences. Daily routines, such as snack time, provide valuable opportunities for children to develop important social skills, such as patience, sitting appropriately at the table and conversing with friends. It also teaches them to co-operate with their peers and to be independent. Day-to-day activities also successfully encourage important values, such as honesty, fairness, respect and a sense of right and wrong. Children treat resources with respect and tidy away carefully. Celebration of festivals, such as the Chinese New Year, help children to better understand the world they live in.

Effective arrangements are in place to enable children to begin to appreciate the importance of recycling materials. Waste food is saved for animal feed, waste paper is collected and children are aware of not letting taps run unnecessarily. Seeds and plants are grown in compost and this provides opportunities for children to learn to care for living things.

The setting is a safe, secure location. No person can enter unannounced and no children can leave without permission. Practitioners know who is to collect each child. The outside is surrounded by a secure metal fence and children are supervised at all times. Practitioners have attended relevant courses and are aware of the necessary procedures for child protection. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The setting has policies and adequate processes in place to support children with additional learning needs. Professional help is available if required. No child currently present has been identified with additional learning needs.

**Learning environment: Adequate**

The setting is a caring, inclusive and supportive community where all children are encouraged to treat each other fairly. All children have equal access to the setting's provision. Children feel happy and confident and are willing to share resources with each other and are sufficiently confident to talk with the inspector.

There is, in the main, an ample supply of good quality age appropriate resources for delivering the Foundation Phase curriculum successfully. Resources for providing children with sufficient opportunities to develop their ICT skills are limited.

The setting has sufficient practitioners – the leader is supported by her assistant and during the inspection there was a student on placement present. Practitioners are suitably qualified and experienced.

Practitioners work hard to create an exciting learning environment for children. The indoors is suitably differentiated into activity areas to support learning. Resources are easily accessible to children and the display of children's work is well used to enhance the learning environment. However, there is insufficient encouragement for children to use the indoors area and in particular to develop their communication and numeracy skills. Children are not sufficiently encouraged to use the reading corner, the writing table or the numeracy resources.

The accommodation is part of the primary school. It is well maintained with a large secure outside area. The outside is immediately accessible from the teaching room and enables children to play outside and to come indoors as they wish. Practitioners make good use of this space enabling children to broaden their experiences, such as water and play activities, growing plants and to develop their physical skills using wheeled toys. Children enjoy the free play in this area and activities are suitably planned to maximise children's skill development.

The outside area is safe and has a large soft play section, together with a grassed area for activities. Children are always well supervised and supported. There are occasional visits to the locality, including the local park.

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

The setting achieves its aims of ensuring that all children are well cared for, supported and respected as individuals. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring

children's wellbeing. Children are treated equally and are shown appropriate affection when necessary. Children are happy and eager to attend. Relationships between children and between children and practitioners are good and children know whom to approach if they need help.

Both practitioners are hard working and function well as a team. Both collaborate in planning and the learning experiences interest the children. The activities however are not sufficiently differentiated to take account of children's specific learning needs. Assessment tends to be descriptive and only occasionally identifies individual children's achievement, such as their numeracy skills. This information is not purposefully used in planning the next steps in children's learning. Children's differing ages and abilities are not sufficiently taken into account when planning group activities, such as story time when some children fail to listen even for short periods of time. Such antisocial behaviour disadvantages other children and does not encourage older and more able children to be actively involved and to acquire good listening skills.

The setting does not benefit from a strong and supportive management committee. The responsibility and accountability for smooth running of the setting are very largely dependent on the leader and her colleague. Parents, while appreciating the approachability of the setting's staff, do little to support the setting in practice. Practitioners are keen to improve the provision for the children and currently the outcomes for children are good in terms of their wellbeing and the care and support provided for them.

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to support the day-to-day running of the setting and these are implemented consistently. Procedures for staff appraisal meet requirements and practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Both practitioners have attended relevant training courses and these benefit the children.

The setting meets national and local priorities appropriately, such as implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum and encouraging healthy eating and taking appropriate exercise.

### **Improving quality: Adequate**

Practitioners work together closely sharing ideas and looking for ways to improve the provision. This has had a beneficial effect on children's wellbeing. Practitioners have developed snack time to be a good social occasion where children learn to take responsibility and to behave sensibly. This is a good example of how these children respond to well structured activities.

Practitioners know the setting well and the leader has produced a detailed and useful self-evaluation document identifying the setting's strengths and areas for

development. The source of evidence and action to be taken are highlighted although its link to the development plan is not always clear. In most instances the development plan highlights the proposed impact on children's standards but targets and proposed improvements are extensive and not prioritised.

The self-evaluation document has identified the need to improve the provision for developing children's Welsh language. How this is to be accomplished is not clear and this remains an ongoing need.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting occupies part of the primary school building with immediate access to the reception classroom. Children in the setting are familiar with the school staff and attend various school activities, such as school concerts. This makes transition to the reception class straight forward for the children.

Parents are appreciative of the setting's influence on their child's development, including their personal and social skills. They value the informal contact with staff and the information they receive before their child starts at the setting. However, parents contribute very little in terms of supporting the setting or being involved in supporting their child's learning, this, in spite of every encouragement to play an active part in their child's education.

Good links are in place with the local authority support teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin development officer. This is a useful source of advice and support but has had insufficient impact on children's achievement and progress.

Community partnerships are informal but enable children to develop their understanding of people that help them in the community. The leader is aware of help the local authority can provide if any child is recognised as requiring additional learning needs.

### **Resource management: Adequate**

The setting makes appropriate use of staff and resources to support the delivery of the Foundation Phase curriculum.

Resources are accessible to children. Children know where they are stored and many children were seen, during the inspection, searching and finding what they required during free play activities.

Practitioners have attended appropriate professional training courses and these have made a worthwhile contribution to the provision and children's achievement and wellbeing. Staff share their professional knowledge and this impacts well on the setting's provision for children's wellbeing. Strategies for meeting the needs of

children of differing abilities and for developing their Welsh language are underdeveloped.

There is an effective process in place for keeping spending under review and the budget is efficiently controlled.

Overall, in view of the outcomes achieved by children and the shortcomings identified, the setting is judged to provide adequate 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](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))



## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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>
<b>CSSIW</b>	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	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 partnerships conditions of registration.
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	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.
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	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.

<b>Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)</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 Day Nurseries Association (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.