



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 Penrhyndeudraeth
Ysgol Gynradd Cefn Coch
Stryd Yr Ysgol
Penrhyndeudraeth
Gwynedd
LL48 6AE**

Date of inspection: May 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 date: 12/06/2014

Context

Cylch Meithrin Penrhyndeudraeth is a registered nursery setting established seven years ago in a demountable classroom at Ysgol Gynradd Cefn Coch. It provides pre-school education for the children of the village of Penrhyndeudraeth and the surrounding rural area.

Sixteen children aged two and a half to four years old attend the setting. Currently, nine children are aged three and receive funding by the local authority. The setting provides five two-hour sessions a week for 38 weeks a year. Almost every child is from a home where Welsh is the main language spoken. The setting admits children of all abilities and backgrounds. During the inspection, there were no funded children with additional learning needs or from ethnic backgrounds attending the setting.

Children are taught by a full time leader and four part time practitioners. They are all appropriately qualified to teach the early years.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate Wales in June 2012 and by Estyn in December 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

Current performance is good because:

- almost every child achieves good standards in literacy and numeracy;
- most children work to the best of their ability and make good progress towards becoming independent learners;
- all children say that they enjoy their time at the setting and trust the practitioners;
- learning experiences engage the interest and imagination of every child;
- provision for developing literacy and numeracy skills is thorough;
- teaching is consistently good and practitioners have a thorough understanding of every child's personal and educational needs;
- provision for promoting children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is secure; and
- there is a strong emphasis on developing positive values and attitudes.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- leadership is good and the setting's work has a strong sense of purpose;
- practitioners work very effectively as a team and share common values;
- members of the management committee provide strong support for the leader and parents;
- the leader and the practitioners are well aware of the setting's strengths and what needs to be improved;
- outcomes of self-evaluation have already led to improvements in the areas of learning;
- children benefit substantially from the strong partnership between the setting and the school; and
- the setting provides good value for money

Recommendations

- 1 Improve children's information and communication technology skills.
- 2 Establish more systematic arrangements for assessing and recording children's progress.
- 3 Delegate more managerial responsibilities to members of staff.

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, almost every child achieves good standards and makes realistic progress in all areas of learning. During whole group sessions, 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, almost 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 displays good speaking and listening skills. Most children express their ideas clearly, for example, when they discuss their favourite character in a story, and listen thoughtfully to contributions made by other children. 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 which start with a specific 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. Most children can place a number of teddies in a pot to correspond with their own age. Almost all of them record numbers by making marks and are beginning to understand the concept of 'one more than'. When they buying and selling goods in the 'garden centre shop', children develop an appropriate awareness of the purpose of money.

Although most of children are confident users of information and communication technology (ICT), the lack of appropriate equipment restricts their progress in this area.

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 participating in specific activities or tasks of their own choice, they work together well. In line with their ability and developmental stage, 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 Heddiw' (Today's Helper) and self-registration. As they develop in maturity, most learn how to make more informed decisions about their learning.

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

By providing a good variety of learning experiences both indoors and outside, practitioners successfully engage the interest and imagination of all children and ensure their commitment to learning. Learning experiences are appropriately planned to ensure that all Foundation Phase areas of learning are appropriately dealt with over a period. As a result, the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the children's age and abilities. The practice of teaching the curriculum thematically ensures learning experiences are cohesive and build systematically on children's previous skills and knowledge. The wide variety of imaginative learning experiences which have arisen out of the current theme, 'In the Garden' are a good example of this.

The setting makes effective use of the local community to enrich children's learning experiences. For example, children go for walks along nearby paths and visit some of the local shops to post letters or to buy goods.

There is an appropriate balance between activities chosen by the children themselves and those under the practitioners' guidance, which focus on teaching specific skills, such as making prints with flower petals and colourful paint. The willingness of practitioners to respond to children's ideas gives them valuable opportunities to follow different learning paths from those planned.

Provision for developing children's literacy and numeracy skills is thorough. Practitioners are constantly encouraging children to listen carefully to each other and adults and to contribute confidently during large group sessions. Practitioners join in children's play and this practice 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 of the children and provides good opportunities for them to behave like readers. In the graphics area, children are encouraged to make marks for a purpose with a range of materials such as felt pens and crayons and to develop their motor skills.

Children have memorised a substantial repertoire of number rhymes and are given good opportunities to use them for tasks they complete together, such as counting how many children are present in class.

There is comprehensive provision to develop children's numeracy skills with practitioners taking advantage of every opportunity during sessions to count different toys and objects. Activities such as building with blocks or completing jigsaws make a good contribution to developing children's mathematical concepts.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have current knowledge of child development and a sound understanding of Foundation Phase requirements. They have high expectations of

every child and provide work which matches well with abilities and needs of all children. Practitioners collaborate effectively as a team and there is very good interaction between them and the children. Almost every task includes an appropriate challenge and places strong emphasis on learning through play and on solving practical problems. Through appropriate intervention and skilful questioning, children's ideas are challenged and learning is moved forward. By joining in the play, practitioners are able to ensure that children take full advantage of what every activity has to offer. On the rare occasions when there is inappropriate behaviour or disputes between individuals, practitioners resolve them firmly and sensitively.

Practitioners know the children very well and have a thorough knowledge of every child's personal and educational needs. The standard of the oral feedback given by staff to children about what they do greatly helps individuals to understand what they have achieved and what they need to do in order to improve. However, there are no systematic arrangements for recording practitioners' observations on a daily basis and this detracts from the effectiveness of assessment as a tool for future planning. There are appropriate arrangements for including parents in their children's assessments and for ensuring they have appropriate knowledge of their child's progress

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 Heddiw' to undertake responsibilities and to make their own choices about their learning, contribute substantially towards their personal and social development.

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 the activities provided. There is strong emphasis on

developing tolerant attitudes and on ensuring that children and staff are free from any harassment. The particularly interesting learning environment created and the opportunities for every child to develop positive values and attitudes are very prominent features of the setting.

There is a good supply of good quality resources in almost every area of learning and these are carefully matched to every individual's development and learning needs. The supply of ICT resources is limited and they do not offer children enough opportunities to develop a broad range of skills in this area. The classroom and the outside area are of sufficient size quality and are used effectively by children and adults.

The use the setting makes of the nearby playground and the local footpaths reinforce children's learning experiences significantly.

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

The leader successfully provides the setting's work with a strong sense of purpose and creates an ethos where children and staff feel appreciated. She conveys high expectations and has established clear aims and policies, which focus on children's needs. Sessions are effectively organised and managed in order to ensure the best possible support for children. Practitioners work very effectively as a team and share common values about learning, behaviour and relationships. They ensure that the Foundation Phase is successfully delivered. Although the roles of members of staff are clearly defined during sessions, there are no appropriate arrangements for delegating responsibilities to individuals. As a result, the leader's responsibilities are too onerous.

The setting has responded positively to national and local priorities, such as healthy eating and outdoor learning.

The Management Committee has established effective performance management systems for the leader and practitioners. As a result, there are agreed targets and improvements in teaching and provision.

The committee members fulfil their responsibilities very conscientiously and provide strong support for the leader and the children's parents.

Improving quality: Good

The leader and practitioners know the setting's strengths well and have a clear understanding of what they need to do ensure improvement. They are constantly self-evaluating and looking for ways to improve provision and to raise standards. Self-evaluation pays careful consideration to the views of parents but there are no corresponding arrangements for listening to the children's voice. 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.

The setting's self-evaluation report is of good quality and has resulted in useful improvement plans, which provide a clear sense of direction for the setting's work over the next two years. The attention paid recently to improving the continuous provision has enriched the learning areas substantially.

Partnership working: Good

The productive partnership that the setting has nurtured with a number of partners has a positive impact on children's standards and wellbeing. There is trust and clear communication between the setting and parents. Have regular opportunities to express views on the setting's work and practitioners are available at the beginning and end of every session. The leader ensures that parents have current knowledge about the setting's arrangements and their children's development.

The primary school is supportive of the setting's work and takes advantage of every opportunity to include nursery children in its programme of work. The close links between practitioners and Foundation Phase teachers ease the transition arrangements substantially and result in better continuity and progression in children's education.

The setting co-operates effectively with a good number of local authority support services in order to co-ordinate and deliver learning experiences and to ensure that there is appropriate support available for children and parents. The regular visits and professional advice of the support teacher enable the leader to update her knowledge and understanding and to introduce new initiatives

Resource management: Good

Staff and resources are very skilfully managed by the leader and the management committee and the setting is appropriately staffed. The staff's willingness to attend training reinforces the education and promotes good standards.

There is a strong culture of co-operation, and practitioners are very open to advice and new ideas. They share knowledge and good practice with one another and are willing to try out different ways of working.

The leader and the management committee have sound understanding of the setting's budget and they prioritise spending in line with its development needs. They evaluate spending decisions carefully to ensure that they have a direct impact on children's standards of achievement, progress and welfare.

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

Responses to discussions with children

Children say that they are happy in the setting and are confident to turn to any adult to ask for advice and support.

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	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.

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.