



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 Pentrebaen
Waterhall Youth Centre
Pentrebane Road
Pentrebane
Cardiff
CF5 3PZ**

Date of inspection: April 2014

by

**Mr Eifiion 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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW..or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2014: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 02/05/2014

Context

Cylch Meithrin Pentrebaen meets in the Waterhall Youth Centre in Fairwater. It is a Welsh medium setting and draws children from Pentrebaen and Fairwater - two residential areas on the outskirts of the city of Cardiff. The children come from varied socio-economic backgrounds and is adjudged that this part of the city contains areas of social deprivation with a high rate of unemployment.

The setting is an educational provider as a member of the City of Cardiff Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership. It is also a registered member of Mudiad Meithrin. The setting is now managed by a newly elected voluntary committee.

The setting is open for 5 morning sessions each week during school term times. It is registered by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) to accommodate a maximum of 32 children. Currently there are 27 children on the register of whom 19 are 3 year olds and funded. The setting has provision to accommodate children with additional learning needs, though none of the present cohort have been identified as having such needs.

English is the language spoken in the homes of nearly all the children and during the inspection there were no children from an ethnic minority background.

The setting uses two adjacent rooms in the Youth Centre. These are multiuse rooms necessitating setting out and clearing away resources for each session. Use is also made of a hard surface and grassed outdoor areas immediately accessible from these rooms. The two rooms are of adequate size and approached via the main entrance to the centre and down two steps.

The setting is staffed by a recently appointed leader, a deputy leader, three assistants and a student in training. They are appropriately qualified and two are fluent Welsh speakers and the others are Welsh learners.

When children leave the setting most attend a Welsh medium primary school. Children attend the setting from age 2½ years and move on to the next phase of education between the ages of 3 and 4 years, depending on the receiving school admission arrangements.

The setting was last inspected by Estyn in November 2007. Some of the recommendations have not been addressed. The setting was inspected by CSSIW in September 2013, there were no major recommendations.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because of:

- children's wellbeing and the good personal relationships they develop;
- the care, support and guidance provided for the children.

The current performance of the setting is only adequate because of:

- the progress and standards of achievement of the children;
- the learning experiences provided for the children are not well matched to their needs;
- assessment procedures do not identify children's achievement, particularly their skill development;
- the provision for outside play is limited;
- the role and responsibilities of the staff are not clearly defined;
- the inadequate information provide for the parents and carers to support their children's learning.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the newly elected management committee is well structured and the chairman recognises what needs to be done;
- the financial situation has been resolved;
- the setting's leader is new to her post and anxious to provide the best possible provision for the children.

The prospects for improvement are only adequate because:

- self-evaluation has not clearly identified areas for development nor are they prioritised;
- there is no systematic staff appraisal in place;
- staff professional development has not been identified;
- staff performance is not monitored or evaluated;
- links with the receiving primary school are underdeveloped;
- some recommendations from the previous Estyn report have not been undertaken.

Recommendations

- R1. improve assessment procedures.
- R2. provide activities well matched to children's ability and prior attainment.
- R3. monitor and evaluate the current performance.
- R4. undertake regular staff appraisal so as to determine their professional development needs.
- R5. clearly define the role of staff and their responsibilities.
- R6. provide parents with details of how they can support their children's learning.
- R7. extend the self-evaluation procedures to identify areas for development and prioritise these in the setting's development planning.
- R8. develop close links with the receiving primary school.

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 progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Adequate
---	-----------------

Standards: Adequate

Most children of all abilities make satisfactory progress and achieve acceptable standards. Children's ability on entry to the setting is very variable but all make appropriate progress, particularly in terms of their personal and social development. The majority of the children are competent learners and are acquiring new knowledge, understanding and skills consistently. They make the best progress when working in small groups when their individual achievements can be recognised.

Most children are developing their self-esteem and many are sufficiently confident to converse with the inspector. These children's confidence enables them to express their likes and dislikes and to give reasons for their favourite play activities.

Most children's command of the Welsh language inhibits their free expression. They understand more than they can speak and react to instructions given by the staff. In many instances their understanding of the language is insufficient for them to follow and understand a story. However, many children understand basic questions asked by the practitioners and reply appropriately, for example during morning registration. In such instances a minority can describe the weather, such as "mae yn niwlog" and count the number of children present in Welsh. Practically all children enjoy singing and reciting Welsh songs and rhymes. The language is not used by children during spontaneous play but parents reported that children are beginning to use Welsh words at home.

Children's interest in books is very varied. A few children enjoy looking at a story book with an adult and take real interest in the story. A minority, when given books to look at, turn pages appropriately but in the majority of instances children show limited interest in books. Story time, with a large group, is ineffective in that many children soon show their disinterest and chat amongst themselves. This means that the few interested children are inhibited from taking an active part in the activity.

Many children experiment with mark-making and writing, for example in the "travel agent" activity area. A few children hold pencils and crayons competently, but many have limited skills.

Many children recognise and match shapes and, through play and practical experiences, match objects appropriately. These children count to 5 with a reasonable degree of accuracy. The majority of children use basic mathematical language, such as "tal a byr" when comparing height. Children use toy cash registers and are beginning to acquire some idea of the use of money.

All children, in turn, show a good level of ability on their computer. Many handle the computer mouse competently to move screen icons.

The setting's aims and policy is that children will proceed to a Welsh medium infant school in most instances. The progress of many children is limited in terms of preparing them for the next stage in their education.

Wellbeing: Good

All children enjoy the activities set out for them and are well motivated. Most children show a high level of self-confidence, enabling them to engage in activities for sustained periods of time. They work individually and in small groups and have a positive attitude to new experiences. These children show good attitudes to learning. More able children think independently and are competent when undertaking tasks.

All children enjoy their time in the setting and relationships are good. Children's attitudes to learning and participation are best developed in small group activities when children can be encouraged to contribute.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Adequate
---	-----------------

Learning experiences: Adequate

Planning for children's learning experiences is done collaboratively and practitioners meet weekly to discuss future plans. Children's interests are taken into account and the curriculum reflects the Foundation Phase philosophy.

In the main, the planned learning experiences successfully engages most children and are focused on encouraging children's progress to meet the Foundation Phase outcomes across the 6 areas of learning. However, the focused tasks in particular, are not sufficiently differentiated for the different ability children and not well matched to children's needs. Consequently whilst some children become disinterested, others are not sufficiently challenged.

Planning for the six areas of learning incorporates reference to skills to be included. However, the planning does not indicate how skills are to be developed systematically and how skills are matched to children's ability.

There are good opportunities for children to make choices and to work together in small groups. Relationships are good and children respect each other. The majority of children have the confidence to become independent learners.

Children have opportunities to develop their creative skills and the outside provision provides some opportunities for physical play. Visits to the locality give children some opportunity to understand their community.

The setting provides a learning environment that immerses the children in the Welsh language. Two practitioners are fluent Welsh speakers and whilst the others are learners, their Welsh is adequate. The setting successfully promotes children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of the culture of Wales.

Teaching: Adequate

Practitioners have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase requirements and acceptable expectation for children's learning. The children are provided with acceptable learning experiences across most areas of the curriculum which generally interest children. Staff support children when necessary but do not always focus sufficiently on challenging children and ensuring that they "play with a purpose". Whilst practitioners are involved in planning there are no job descriptions to indicate staff's particular responsibilities.

In the main, there is a suitable balance between child-selected and adult-led activities. Overall, behaviour is well managed and practitioners are good language models with the fluent Welsh speakers taking a lead where necessary, such as storytelling.

The learning environment is adequate. Activity areas are set out each morning and provide for the requirements of the Foundation Phase overall. Provision for mark-making and writing, as well as activities to develop children's numeracy skills are less well developed.

The provision for outside play is rather sterile and is not well developed to stimulate, challenge and motivate children.

Children are regularly assessed and observations recorded in individual children's booklets ("Dyma fi"). This is a satisfactory record of children's progress but focuses insufficiently on children's skill development. The pictorial records are annotated but notes tend to be too descriptive. Whilst staff know the children well, the assessment records are insufficiently detailed to be used in planning future activities so as to meet the needs and interests of the children. The next stages in children's learning are not adequately planned so as to motivate and challenge children of all abilities.

Parents see examples of work done by the children. However, parents are not given sufficient information on what they can do to help children improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Effective arrangements are in place to ensure children's health and wellbeing and the arrangements contribute well to children's personal development. The setting fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect for each other. Children are reminded during registration of the Cylch's three principles of caring for themselves, friends and the setting.

The day-to-day workings of the setting promote principles that help children distinguish between right and wrong. Children are learning to make decisions such as selecting their favourite play activities.

Children understand and respond positively to simple rules of behaviour and they learn to take turns, to co-operate with each other and to share. Children learn to take responsibility, such as being “helpwr y dydd”. They learn to help, such as when clearing away toys at the end of the session.

Children learn about their own culture and that of other countries. Too little attention is given to encouraging children to act sustainably.

The setting is a warm, friendly learning community with little in the way of antisocial behaviour.

The setting is a safe environment for children. The entrance to the setting is kept locked so no one can enter or leave unannounced. Children are accompanied to the toilets when necessary. The outside play area is secure with a high metal fence surrounding the area.

Policies are in place and the staff are aware of established procedures to ensure children’s wellbeing. Child protection, including health and safety is well established. Practitioners are aware of their responsibilities. The setting’s arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to support children with additional learning needs. There is no child in the present cohort that has been identified as having such needs.

Learning environment: Adequate

The setting is adequately staffed and all are appropriately qualified and experienced to teach the Foundation Phase curriculum. The setting is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to all areas of the setting’s provision. Every effort is made to ensure that all children take an active part in activities.

The setting is a friendly, homely community that promotes a tolerant attitude free of any oppressive behaviour. The two teaching rooms are approached via two steps which makes it difficult to accommodate individuals with physical disabilities.

In the main, resources are appropriate and meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. Insufficient emphasis is given to ensure good facilities to develop children’s mark-making skills and some aspects of numeracy.

The outdoor area, whilst secure, is rather sterile and not well resourced to motivate, interest and challenge children. It is however, immediately accessible to children. The local environment is used so as to familiarise children with their locality.

Key Question 3:How good are leadership and management?	Adequate
---	-----------------

Leadership: Adequate

The current leader has been in post for just over 4 months. During this time she has ensured that the appropriate policies are in place and suitable procedures adopted. Staff are familiar with the requirements of the policies – as yet they have not been formally adopted by the management committee. The leader has communicated her vision for the setting focused on providing the best provision for the children and supporting them. The leader supports her staff and has created a positive ethos where staff and children feel valued. The setting has implemented National and local priorities such as adopting the Foundation Phase curriculum and healthy eating initiatives.

Effective links with parents and carers have been established. Parents and carers are fully supportive of the Cylch. Whilst parents and carers see the work their children have undertaken, they are not sufficiently involved in supporting their children's development.

Staff appraisal and performance management have not taken place regularly and targets for improvement have not been clearly identified. Monitoring and evaluating outcomes are not undertaken and individual staff responsibilities, in terms of job descriptions are not sufficiently detailed.

In the past the management of the setting has been unsatisfactory in terms of financial control. Over the last year or so the contribution of the Registered Person has been debatable since there was some confusion as to whom the Registered Person was. However, this has now been resolved by the CSSIW.

The recently appointed new management committee has very quickly accepted it's responsibilities and have put the required structure in place. The chair of the committee, in discussion, recognised the past problems and has put in place arrangements to remedy these deficiencies.

Improving quality: Adequate

The setting has recently undertaken a detailed self-evaluation focusing on the strengths of its provision. This is a recent undertaking but shows that the setting has a thorough understanding of what it does well and an acceptable understanding of children's progress and achievement.

However, areas for development are not clearly identified, neither have they been prioritised. Strategies for bringing about improvements have not been developed. Some priorities for improvement previously highlighted have not been undertaken, including those identified in the previous Estyn report.

The management committee, as yet, has not been consulted.

Partnership working: Adequate

Parents and carers are very supportive of the setting and this makes a worthwhile contribution to children's satisfactory achievement and good wellbeing. Practitioners take active steps to involve parents and carers and make themselves available to meet them in the mornings. Parents remarked on the approachability of the staff and the care and support they provide for their children.

Parents and carers have opportunities to see the work their children have done, including photographs of children taking part in the setting's activities, such as celebrating St. David's day. Parents and carers, in discussion, stated that they would like more information on what their children were currently doing so that they could help and support them at home.

The link with the local primary school is underdeveloped. The local authority advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin support the setting and provide advice and support.

Practitioners work well together and the key system ensures that each child is well cared for. When necessary additional support is available.

The setting makes relevant use of the community to support children's learning.

Resource management: Adequate

The setting is adequately resourced. Due to the rooms being multiuse it necessitates setting out and clearing away the activity areas daily. In the main, resources are appropriately used to support the learning.

Staff have attended some relevant professional courses but their requirements in order to acquire new skills and to develop innovative approaches to learning have not been identified. Some opportunities for staff to see other settings have taken place. There are insufficient opportunities for practitioners to evaluate the impact of professional learning on the children's learning.

The setting is appropriately staffed and staff suitably qualified. Appraisal and performance management has not taken place regularly.

Overall, the internal accommodation is appropriate with the outside having been identified as an area for development. The management committee, as yet, is not actively involved.

In judging value for money it needs to be borne in mind that the setting has been seriously mismanaged in the past. This has now been resolved but the consequences remained until recently when staff were not paid promptly for their services.

In view of the shortcomings identified in this report, the setting needs to be monitored by Estyn.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Yn dynodi'r meincnod – mae hwn yn gyfanswm o'r holl ymatebion hyd hyn ers mis Medi 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'ngryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'ngryf	Don't know Ddimyngwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	10	3 30%	7 70%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliadyngyffredinol.
		80%	19%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	10	5 50%	4 40%	1 10%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	10	6 60%	4 40%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fymhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	10	6 60%	4 40%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	10	4 40%	4 40%	2 20%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		70%	26%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	10	6 60%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r addysgu'n dda.
		79%	17%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		82%	15%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	10	6 60%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Caiff fymhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		73%	22%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	10	8 80%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	14%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	9	4 44%	3 33%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae fymhlentyn yn cael gymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		65%	24%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed	10	4	1	5	0	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyso

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'ngryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'ngryf	Don't know Ddimyngwybod	
about my child's progress.		40%	10%	50%	0%		n am gynnyddfymhlentyn.
		63%	29%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	10	5 50%	5 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwni'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problemau.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	10	6 60%	2 20%	2 20%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad a rhyngwyferdelio â chwynion.
		62%	29%	3%	0%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	10	4 40%	4 40%	1 10%	0 0%	1	Mae fymhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda a rhyngwyferdelio i yrru i'r ysgol.
		71%	23%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	10	4 40%	2 20%	3 30%	1 10%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweiliadau.
		62%	30%	4%	0%		
The setting is well run.	10	5 50%	5 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael i redeg yn dda.
		82%	16%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion R Morgan	Reporting Inspector
--------------------	---------------------

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 partnerships 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>

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.