



*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 Talybont  
Ty Sbri  
Ysgol Gymunedol Talybont  
Talybont  
Ceredigion  
SY24 5HE**

**Date of inspection: 18-19 March, 2013**

**by**

**Dorothy Morris**

**for**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

**Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?**

**Key Question 2: How good is provision?**

**Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?**

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the setting's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court  
Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW

or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

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## Context

Cylch Meithrin Talybont was established over 40 years ago and is accommodated in a cabin on the site of the local community primary school. The building and learning facilities are of good quality.

The children who attend the setting come from the village and the surrounding rural area. The area is judged to be neither advantaged nor economically and socially disadvantaged.

The setting provides for children between two and four years of age. It is open for four mornings a week between 9.00 and 12.00 o'clock during school terms. During the inspection, there were eleven three year olds on the register and funded by Ceredigion Children's Partnership. English is the main language spoken in the homes of most of the children. Currently, there are a very few children with additional learning needs in attendance but no children from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Three lead practitioners provide for the children's learning. They are very experienced and most hold relevant qualifications in the education and care of young children. There is one other practitioner who supports children with additional learning needs.

The setting was last inspected by Estyn in February 2007 and by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales in June 2011.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- the children make consistent progress from their starting point;
- the children play an active part in their learning and enjoy the activities;
- nearly all the children demonstrate good attitudes to learning;
- the children are offered a wide range of relevant and interesting experiences;
- the teaching is good; and
- the setting provides a happy, caring and supportive environment for all the children.

## Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because of:

- the strong leadership of the lead practitioners;
- the effective teamwork;
- the practitioners' commitment to children's educational and personal development;
- the sense of purpose to develop the setting further;
- the appropriate improvement plan which is being implemented; and
- the strong links and highly effective collaboration with a range of partnerships.

## Recommendations

- R1 Extend children's Welsh literacy skills and their information and communication technology skills further.
- R2 Broaden the focus on developing children's learning skills in the setting's improvement plan.
- R3 Continue to develop the management committee's role in evaluation and forward planning processes.
- R4 Continue to improve the access to the outdoor learning area.

## What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>
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<b>Good</b>
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### Standards: Good

Nearly all the children listen well to the practitioners and to their peers. They enjoy listening to stories and to the discussions during circle time. A few individual children's ability to converse in Welsh is of a very good standard. They are confident to participate in an extended discussion with adults and demonstrate a secure grasp

of a wide range of appropriate vocabulary. The majority of the children who are learners understand greetings, instructions and questions in Welsh, but offer very brief oral responses. They speak freely in their mother tongue when role playing and collaborating in a range of activities. Nearly all the children know a good number of songs and rhymes and they recall them correctly. They understand that pictures and print convey meaning and recognise their names on labels. Many children have a developing knowledge of the letters of the alphabet. The majority of the children practise their early writing skills appropriately through making marks on paper, painting, colouring and drawing pictures.

Most children make appropriate use of their number skills in everyday activities. They understand mathematical terms, such as big and small, light and heavy, and use them correctly in their play. Nearly all the children count to at least ten and the majority can match symbols and numbers to at least five. They recognise and can name two dimensional and some three dimensional shapes correctly. Most children can sort a range of objects according to size, number and colour. Through imaginative play activities, they come to understand that money is required to buy goods in the shop and that a clock tells the time.

The majority of the children develop basic information and communication technology skills appropriately. With support, they can move objects on the screen, record observations and use a digital camera to take pictures. They are beginning to input instructions into programmable toys.

The majority of the children make effective use of their thinking and problem-solving skills in building activities with blocks, completing jigsaws and in investigative tasks in the outdoor area. They demonstrate good manipulative skills when using cutting, painting and pasting equipment. They make effective use of their creative skills to create pictures and colourful paintings. All the children enjoy participating in singing and music-making activities.

The children's personal skills develop well. All the children are familiar with the structure of the session and they confidently accept responsibilities such as 'the daily helper' and tidying up after activities.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

All the children settle well at the setting and quickly become familiar with the setting's routines. They form very good relationships with the adults and are ready to ask for support. They behave well.

Nearly all the children exhibit good attitudes to learning. They work diligently on a task for a suitable amount of time and play happily together. Most children respond positively to activities and undertake new experiences confidently. All the children make good progress in their ability to work independently.

Many children have an appropriate awareness of the importance of physical exercise and of healthy eating. They demonstrate a good understanding of personal hygiene. Most can dress themselves for outdoor activities.

The children's social skills and awareness develop well through the daily activities and through activities that stem from the close partnership with the school and the community. Attendance levels are good.

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

The practitioners make constructive use of the local education authority's planning frameworks which reflect the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The curriculum is planned within themes and topics that are appropriate to the children's ages and stage of development. The practitioners meet weekly to discuss and plan the week's activities. This ensures the effective use of the practitioners' time and skills and of the physical resources available in the setting. There is constant use of the outdoor learning area which greatly enhances children's experiences.

Overall, the provision offers purposeful opportunities to develop children's communication, numeracy and broader skills through the learning experiences provided. However, there is insufficient provision at times to extend children's information and communication technology skills consistently.

Welsh is the natural medium of the setting's life and work. The practitioners offer language models of a good standard. During group sessions, there are regular opportunities for children to listen to stories, talk about their activities, participate in role play, join in singing sessions and use their marking skills. The children are effectively introduced to Welsh traditions and celebrations through activities such as celebrating St David's Day and Santes Dwynwen's Day. There is appropriate use of the community for visits and of the contribution of visitors, such as the dentist and the police, to the themes being studied.

There are appropriate opportunities for children to learn about the cultures and traditions of other people through activities such as celebrating the Chinese New Year and learning about life in Vietnam through the setting's support for a child who lives there.

There are purposeful activities to develop children's understanding of the importance of caring for the environment and all living things. They include caring for the chickens, growing plants and vegetables, and learning about recycling. The children have good opportunities to taste and cook the vegetables grown as part of their activities, for example, making 'cawl' for the St David's Day celebrations.

**Teaching: Good**

The practitioners are fully aware of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They make effective use of different teaching methods and succeed in keeping a suitable balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by the children. They follow children's play choices effectively and offer purposeful support and guidance which extends the learning. They also offer children many opportunities to work independently and encourage them to make their own choices and decisions. In the

best practice, the use of group work which has been planned with a specific aim extends children's skills consistently. Activities are thoroughly prepared and there is constructive use of resources to support the teaching and learning.

The practitioners communicate constantly with the children and take advantage of every opportunity to develop their vocabulary and to support the Welsh learners to become more confident in using the language in their play.

The practitioners have a thorough knowledge of their children's achievements and progress. They observe the children carefully during activities and record relevant observations. These observations provide a clear picture of children's achievements in the six areas of learning. The use of the information gathered in planning the next steps in children's learning is developing. Parents are regularly informed of their children's development through informal discussion and appropriate written reports. Suitable transfer forms are completed for the primary schools.

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

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. The induction arrangements ensure that children settle quickly at the setting. Children are encouraged to eat healthily, to look after their personal hygiene and to behave appropriately.

There are appropriate arrangements to support children with additional learning needs. Children's needs are identified early and relevant support is provided. There are clear lines of communication with key agencies and services.

The setting has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding. Staff have received training and they are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Relevant learning experiences promote children's personal development effectively, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners collaborate carefully to promote important values such as care, friendship and respect. They treat all children equally and encourage them to work together, share and to help others. Experiences such as circle time, thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations and saying prayers, contribute to children's spiritual and moral development. The opportunities to take part in concerts for parents, for example, further promote their social skills.

The staff supervise children well at all times. All the children are provided with regular opportunities to use the outdoor learning area but the entrance does not promote easy access.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The setting is an inclusive community where children receive equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. The practitioners succeed well in creating a warm, welcoming environment for the children.

There is an appropriate number of practitioners with extensive experience of working with young children. There is effective use of their skills in sharing responsibilities.

The accommodation and facilities are of good quality and the space available is used fully by arranging activity areas around the room. The displays of samples of children's work contribute to creating an attractive environment.

Overall, there are sufficient resources that are used effectively to support the learning in the classroom and the outside learning area. The resources are accessible to the children which promotes independent learning. However, the range and quantity of information and communication technology resources are more limited. The practitioners make imaginative use of the outdoor learning area to provide a wide range of purposeful activities which offer children very good opportunities to develop their physical, investigative and creative skills.

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

The lead practitioners are a hard working team and demonstrate a strong commitment to children's education and wellbeing. They share a common vision regarding values and expectations. Through regular discussion and close collaboration they establish a clear structure for each session which ensures that activities run smoothly and effectively. Suitable policies and procedures are implemented appropriately.

The responsible person is a regular visitor and offers the setting good support. A more established system is developing in relation to contributing to the evaluation processes. The management committee is very supportive and meets regularly. Its role in self-evaluation processes and in forward planning continues to develop. The setting has an appropriate system for appraising the work of the practitioners.

The setting gives appropriate consideration to national and local priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum, promoting children's Welsh language skills and establishing effective links with the local primary schools.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The lead practitioners have a secure understanding of the setting's strengths and of some areas for improvement. The well established system of regular staff meetings and joint planning leads to improvements in the experiences offered to children.

The practitioners have conducted a balanced evaluation of the provision and noted their findings clearly in the self-evaluation report. The resulting improvement plan identifies relevant areas for attention including providing children with more experiences of using information and communication technology and of encouraging members of the management committee to attend relevant training. The plan includes a timetable, lists costs and allocates responsibilities. The plan offers suitable guidance on developing the setting further but the focus on developing children's skills is too narrow.



Aspects of the provision are regularly monitored by the local authority advisory teacher. Areas for development are agreed and effective strategies are put in place that are improving the provision. Parents' views are sought appropriately through discussion and questionnaires. Aspects of the provision are discussed further with the Mudiad Meithrin officer.

The practitioners attend relevant courses on a range of aspects relating to children's education and care and they make effective use of the training, such as the use of the outdoor learning area to offer children productive experiences.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting works very effectively with a range of partners who contribute productively to the quality of provision and to children's development.

The setting has a sound partnership with parents and this was confirmed during the inspection. Parents receive relevant information through booklets, newsletters and the notice board in the foyer. Parents appreciate the setting's open door policy and the regular opportunities to meet with the practitioners.

The valuable links with the primary school offer regular opportunities for practitioners and staff to discuss, share resources, and for the children to use the learning facilities such as the hall. There is effective collaboration in preparing a concert for the local area, sports events and St David's day activities. There are also close links with other schools in the locality. This promotes a smooth transition for children to the next stage in their education.

The strong partnership with the school's governing body, local agencies and organisations ensures regular practical and financial support. With this generous support, an outdoor learning area has been created, for example, which is an asset for the setting. The provision is enriched significantly by the weekly visits of a member of the community who provides musical activities of a high standard for the children.

The constructive partnership with the management committee, the local authority advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin officer supports the setting's work further.

### **Resource management: Good**

Resources are used and managed effectively. Staffing levels are appropriate to present the curriculum and to provide for children's wellbeing and development. The practitioners are deployed and used effectively. On the whole, the setting has a sufficient supply of resources and full use is made of them. The accommodation and outdoor area are well-maintained.

The lead practitioners and the officers of the management committee have a clear understanding of the budget and prioritise spending appropriately according to the setting's needs. There is regular use of fundraising events and of grants to supplement resources. The setting offers good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received.

### Responses to discussions with the children

The children state that they are happy in the setting and enjoy playing with their friends and taking part in all the activities.

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

Dorothy Morris

Reporting Inspector

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