



*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 Y Felinheli  
Caban Clyd  
Ysgol Y Felinheli  
Y Felinheli  
Gwynedd  
LL56 4TZ**

**Date of inspection: July 2012**

**by**

**Nicholas Jones  
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

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](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2012: 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: 14/08/2012**

## About the cylch

Cylch Meithrin Y Felinheli is a Welsh medium cylch based in Ysgol Gynradd Y Felinheli, Y Felinheli, Gwynedd. All the children attending the cylch come from the village and the surrounding area. The area is recognised as being socially and economically privileged.

The cylch has been located in a cabin on the school site since 2008. The cylch shares the cabin and part of the outdoor area with the school.

The cylch reports that nearly all children come from homes where Welsh is spoken. The children represent the full range of ability and the cylch accepts children with additional learning needs.

No children in the current group are recognised as having additional learning needs. The cylch has received assistance from outside agencies to support children that have additional needs in the past. No children attending at present are from an ethnic minority background and no children come from socially disadvantaged homes.

The cylch is registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales for a maximum of 20 children and it accepts children from two and a half years old. There are currently up to 22 children attending the cylch at different times during the week. Ten of these are funded three year olds. The Mudiad Meithrin and the local authority support the cylch.

The leader has been in post since 2007. Two members of staff assist her on a full time basis. All the full time staff are suitably qualified.

An informative booklet provides parents and carers with details of the cylch. Parents and carers bring their children into the cylch and this provides for a meeting with the staff if needed. From Monday to Thursday, the cylch is open between 1.30pm and 3.30pm and 11am to 1pm on a Friday.

The management committee oversees the work of the cylch.

The cylch was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in 2011. Estyn has not previously inspected the cylch.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The current performance of the cylch is good because:

- nearly all children show progress and achieve well in all areas of learning;
- nearly all children enjoy learning and have positive attitudes to learning;
- nearly all children behave responsibly;
- learning experiences are planned well;
- all children are supported well and benefit from a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum;
- the teaching is effective and concentrates well on Foundation Phase outcomes;
- good resources are available, which includes the interesting outdoor area;
- adults speak Welsh very well and this has a positive effect on how children learn the language;
- the leadership and management are good;
- there is a good relationship between adults and children;
- there is a good relationship and good co-operation with the school that shares the site and the cabin; and
- the staff work effectively together, which contributes purposefully to the success of the cylch.

### Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leader and staff provide a clear direction for the work of the cylch;
- changes and developments over time show that the cylch has a good record of improving for the sake of the children;
- the leader and management committee are self evaluative, with clear targets and a purposeful development plan for improvements;
- the whole staff have a positive and active attitude towards development and training;
- good support links are used consistently and sensibly;
- the work of the management committee over a long period of time is very good; and
- the learning environment is stimulating.

## **Recommendations**

In order to improve, the cylch needs to:

- R1 ensure that daily assessments lead directly to individual children's targets; and
- R2 develop the planning of the areas of learning further to ensure that children are challenged appropriately in the focus tasks.

### **What happens next?**

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

## Main findings

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

### Standards: Good

The entry standards of nearly all children are good. Nearly all children achieve good standards and make good progress in all areas of learning considering their starting points. There is no significant difference in the standards of different groups of children in the cylch.

Nearly all children make positive progress in developing their literacy skills in the Welsh language. No children are reluctant to use the language and nearly all children have a good understanding of the language. Nearly all the children have well-developed listening skills. This is reflected when they consider their snacks and when they role-play with each other. Nearly all the children enjoy listening to a story and are eager to contribute to what is read to them.

Nearly all children answer questions enthusiastically, which illustrates clearly their developing understanding of the language. Most children respond sensibly to group discussions and count confidently with each other and adults. Very few children are shy when responding. Another good feature of their developing competence is that they respond with very little prompting to colours and numbers. Good examples of this are seen in the outdoor area when the children discuss ducks in the water and pictures on the clothes' line.

Many children choose to look at books independently. They hold books appropriately and study pictures and print with interest. They recognise the main characters in a story like Mrs Wishi-Washi and discuss the content of a story enthusiastically.

Most children are beginning to develop their writing skills and a notable feature of their early writing is that they understand the purpose of writing through practical tasks when they paint and create patterns with chalk. They, therefore, see the purpose of mark making and of their early writing. Around half the children are beginning to form recognisable letters of the alphabet and numbers independently.

Nearly all children are developing their numeracy skills well through the practical use of number, using mathematical language such as 'smaller than' or 'larger than', 'up' and 'down' and through using two and three-dimensional shapes. Nearly all children can group objects of different types by colour, size or shape.

Most children use electronic equipment effectively. They use digital cameras for recording and use the computer with confidence through controlling the necessary equipment. All children enjoy participating in music making in the specified area. They have a good awareness of a store of Welsh songs and nursery rhymes, which they sing enthusiastically.

Nearly all children are fully engaged in every activity and concentrate and persevere for significant periods of time. They make decisions and work well independently inside the building and in the outdoor area. Nearly all the children participate

enthusiastically in the wide range of activities provided for them, which successfully develops their creative skills and the knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

**Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all children, relative to their age, have a good understanding of how they can keep healthy. They know, for example, when they need to wash their hands and do so with little prompting. Nearly all children have the good knowledge that a healthy diet incorporates fruit and vegetables. They discuss and offer opinions on different fruits confidently, thinking clearly about their individual choices and their personal preferences.

Nearly all the children's attitude to learning is good. They show interest in their work and in the activities planned for them inside the building and in the outdoor area. Nearly all children sustain good concentration for significant periods of time and make decisions independently. This is seen when they listen attentively to a story and persevere with outdoor activities like creating and blowing bubbles.

All children relate well to each other, to adults and visitors. They are courteous and considerate and willing to share resources. They take their turn well as they wear their coats to leave the building. All children take a full part in the life and activities of the cylch through offering suggestions and challenges to adults. They have worthwhile opportunities to suggest their own ideas and these are, when possible, incorporated into the children's tasks and activities to stimulate the children further.

Community links draw the children's attention to people and animals, such as ambulance drivers, farmers, the postman and sheep dogs. All the children display a sense of belonging to their community, which they visit regularly through walks, the village carnival and visits to the beach. All the children are happy and feel that they are well cared for and free from any form of harassment.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
---	-------------

**Learning experiences: Good**

The curriculum is planned well to meet the philosophy of the Foundation Phase curriculum and to achieve the identified outcomes of children's learning. The curriculum builds effectively on children's previous knowledge and experiences and incorporates enriched opportunities for the development of skills across the curriculum.

Time is set aside weekly for staff to meet to plan the curriculum. This provides the children with useful and interesting activities. The curriculum is flexible and is matched appropriately to the children's interests. However, the planning of the areas of learning does not ensure that children are challenged appropriately in the focus tasks on every occasion.

There are worthwhile opportunities incorporated into the day-to-day working of the cylch for children to develop their self-confidence and to become independent

learners. Whilst specific activities are planned, the children have the freedom to select their own tasks and activities, especially in the outdoor area.

Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their basic and key skills of literacy, numeracy, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creativity. Welsh is the natural language of communication between adults and children on every occasion and a very effective aspect in the children's learning experiences. Through coherent opportunities, all children, whatever their background, display enjoyment in speaking the language.

The provision for developing the children's information technology skills is good and the staff consistently direct the children towards the use of technological resources. The children have many opportunities to develop their thinking skills through challenging activities like building with blocks and finding numbers in the sand. These activities focus on every area of learning in their turn.

The traditions and celebrations of the culture of Wales are given due emphasis, like the celebration of St. David's Day. Good opportunities are also provided for children to acquire knowledge and understanding of other cultures and traditions, such as during their study of the Chinese New Year. Such activities, which include tasting food and dressing up, help children to develop a good understanding of the wider world. It improves their awareness of age appropriate global citizenship effectively.

The purposeful provision includes opportunities for all children to develop respect for each other; opportunities to form good relationships with each other and with adults; and opportunities to become tolerant of each other. This is seen effectively when the children pour milk for each other and when they share large toys sensibly in the outdoor area.

All children have good opportunities to raise flowers and vegetables in the garden and in the flower growing areas around the cabin. They plant seeds and look after vegetables like carrots and potatoes. There are good opportunities available to recycle paper and waste food in specific bins in the cabin. This begins their understanding of plant growth and sustainability effectively.

### **Teaching: Good**

The staff have a good, practical knowledge of children's development and a clear understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. There is a very positive relationship between all the staff and the children.

The staff have high expectations of the children and these expectations are put into practice well. The staff have an active role in planning the curriculum and the best use is made of their expertise. However, when focus activities are introduced, there is not consistency and regular references to the learning objectives on every occasion.

The system of sharing responsibilities is established, which means that the staff work together effectively and share information about children regularly.



There is a good balance between adult directed and child selected activities, both indoors and out of doors. All children are free to select from either independent or adult led activities. The staff do not interfere too much and they allow time for every child to solve any task independently.

Staff model language very effectively to the children's development levels and use questioning well to develop the children's thinking and communication skills. The staff encourage the children to evaluate when they discuss a story and role-play. The standard of the staff's Welsh is very good to the needs of the cylch. The staff provide a stimulating environment that successfully ensures every child's involvement and enjoyment. They are very positive when the children arrive and continue with this enthusiasm throughout the sessions.

On the whole, assessment procedures and the recording of children's achievements are completed efficiently. However, even though the assessments are in place and are completed thoroughly and efficiently; the daily assessments do not lead, with enough detail, directly to individual children's targets.

There are records of children's achievements available to parents at any time and they are discussed further in parents' evenings.

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

The cylch's provision for ensuring children's health and wellbeing is good. All the children enjoy their time at the cylch. On arrival, nearly all children show a sense of anticipation and are keen to get involved. They partake enthusiastically in the activities set out for them in the free playtime at the start of the session.

The broad curriculum develops and extends the children's experiences well. This includes visitors from the community like farmers, the postman and the ambulance service. The cylch also visits the community regularly through walks to the local beach, rambling along nature paths and visits to the businesses of the village and the surrounding area.

Follow-up work in the classroom shows the wide range of experiences that arise from their activities. Visits to the community and visitors to the cylch develop the children's knowledge and understanding of their own community effectively.

The cylch's provision for ensuring children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Values, such as honesty, fairness, respect and an understanding of what is right and wrong, are fostered through the day-to-day activities and accepted without question. The children have good opportunities to reflect, discuss feelings and pray.

All children know and accept the social norms of living together, sharing and accepting the views of others and being members of a community. Individual children, in turn, accept specific responsibilities, like tidying resources and equipment and preparing drinks and milk for others. This develops their self-esteem. The cylch is an organised unit, where children value each other and in turn, they are very much valued by the staff.

The children's cultural development is good, which incorporates Welsh customs and traditions and it extends to other cultures when the children celebrate the Chinese New Year.

The cylch's staff are vigilant in identifying children requiring specialist help. They make use of professional help and guidance effectively when necessary. Staff receive regular and appropriate training and everyone has specific responsibilities that are noted by the management committee.

The cylch has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

The cylch is secure, where the entrance door is locked and only opened by a member of staff, consequently, no one can enter or a child leave unaccompanied. A fence surrounds the cabin and its outside area, which is inside the school's boundary. The gate between the school's fields and the cylch's outside area is closed before the start of the session. Good care is taken when children are being collected to ensure they are in the care of their parents or of a known carer.

Regular reviews of children's progress ensure that any child suspected of requiring additional help, either academically or physically, is noted and progress is monitored closely. The management committee note that the cylch's leader is the additional learning needs co-ordinator. She is familiar with the necessary procedures for supporting such a child.

In the past, external agencies have been used for specific children and support has been provided for them according to their needs. At present, no children have additional learning needs.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The cylch, through the day-to-day activities and the approach adopted by the staff promotes a very positive ethos. Staff know the children well and their individuality is recognised, especially on a social level. All children have equal access to a stimulating curriculum, which is supported by an interesting and very useful outside area.

The homely atmosphere and the friendship of the staff ensures that a tolerant attitude pervades the cylch. The cylch employs positive behaviour strategies that successfully eliminate any form of harassment or oppressive behaviour. They follow the local authority's strategies effectively and develop this aspect well, which is noted in the improvement plan. All children enjoy equality of opportunity, with the girls and boys working together well on all types of tasks sensibly with each other.

The cylch's staff are well qualified and have good experience and there exists a very favourable adult to child ratio. Support staff are employed when the number of children rises to higher than expected to ensure the appropriate care and support. Staff expertise is used well both in planning with each other and when supervising activities inside and outside. The cylch uses its resources well to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and the needs of the children. The resources are accessible to the children, which promotes the children's sense of independence and responsibility. The resources are shared well between continuous

activities and focus tasks. There is a consistency to this process because the children know where to go to use the appropriate equipment to complete their tasks successfully.

The local environment is used effectively through visits to nearby businesses and the local area. This contributes well to children's understanding of the world around them.

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

### **Leadership: Good**

The staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities and work together well as a team, sharing values, aims and objectives. The leader involves the staff, managers and representatives of outside agencies in planning. This practice ensures the best use of their expertise. The leader contributes actively through giving clear directions and by accepting advice when needed. This commitment leads to a sense of purpose to the work of the cylch. There is a positive ethos and a vision to provide the best possible experiences for the children.

The development plan notes effectively what needs to be done in order for the cylch to improve. It derives from the cylch's self-evaluation and its comprehensive annual report for the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales.

The leadership and staff are focused well on children's needs and the cylch successfully achieves this aim in practice. Staff receive relevant and appropriate training, which impacts well on the quality of provision. The management committee ensures that staff training is high on the agenda as they concentrate on improving provision.

Effective links with the parents and carers are in place. They are kept well informed of their children's achievements and progress and this helps them to support their children's learning. Not one parent suggests anything to improve provision in the questionnaires and they are very supportive of how the cylch is led.

There is a well-established management structure in place with a clear definition of duties. The leader and management committee delegate responsibilities effectively to others when needed to do so. The management committee leads very well and takes good account of legislation and relevant guidance. They are very thorough in their work and their management systems meet the legal requirements in full.

The cylch has taken good account of national priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum. It also makes very good use of opportunities to work with the local school, the Mudiad Meithrin and the local authority to ensure effective links.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The cylch self-evaluates well and blends effectively its annual report to the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales with its self-evaluation. They identify areas for

improvement, implementing them for the benefit of the children. These include financing human resources and equipment effectively, improving reading resources, raising staff awareness of positive behaviour strategies and developing further the links that exist with the community.

The areas for improvement are targeted effectively and concisely against relevant success criteria in the cylch's development plans. The development plans arise directly from the findings of the self-evaluation process and they are given priority in the development of the cylch. The leader and management committee discuss the process confidently, with clear understanding.

Staff have made good use of training opportunities and professional learning experiences under the guidance of the management committee, which include vocational qualifications. This impacts positively on children's learning and wellbeing.

### **Partnership working: Good**

Parents, in the questionnaire replies, comments and during discussions, express their total satisfaction with the cylch and appreciate very much the standards of care and the quality of education available. There is not one suggestion from any parent on how to improve the cylch in the large amount of questionnaires returned. They appreciate the open door policy and the opportunities they have to meet staff on a daily basis.

By the time the children leave the cylch, parents feel that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education in the school that shares the building and site. The links with the local school is very good, because they work effectively and consistently together.

The links and support provided by the Mudiad Meithrin and the local authority are good and regular notes are available of beneficial visits and discussions. The advice and suggestions support the cylch in moving forward and contribute to the good standards of provision.

### **Resource management: Good**

The cylch's staff teach well and work together effectively. The management committee is very supportive and targets improvements effectively through allocating money for important needs like human resources and stimulating equipment. The cylch is resourced well and they are used effectively to promote the aims of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The resources are also accessible to the children and this encourages independence and has a positive impact on their learning.

The cylch uses the building and the outdoor area very effectively and provides interesting experiences, which are planned well. The leader and committee lead effectively and use support agencies purposefully for the sake of the children. When considering the children's achievement and progress from their start points, the provision for the children and the quality of leadership; the cylch provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

Twenty-one parents and carers responded to the questionnaires. All the parents and carers are very positive about all of the cylch's work.

All strongly agree and agree that:

- overall, they are satisfied with the cylch;
- their children were helped to settle in well;
- there is a good range of activities including trips and visits;
- their children like the cylch;
- their children are making good progress;
- the teaching is good;
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect;
- their children are encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- their children are safe;
- their children receive appropriate additional support if needed;
- they understand the cylch's procedures for dealing with complaints;
- the cylch is well run;
- the children behave well;
- they are comfortable approaching the cylch with questions, suggestions or problems;
- that their child is well prepared for moving on to school; and
- they are kept well informed of their children's progress by the cylch.

These responses compare very favourably with national benchmark comparisons.

#### Responses to discussions with children

All children are happy in the cylch. Their enthusiasm is evident when they arrive and meet with their peers. Nearly all of them are self-confident from knowing that they are supported well and that they have interesting and challenging tasks.

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

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

<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.