



**Arolygiaeth Gofal  
Cymru**  
Care Inspectorate  
**Wales**



**Estyn**

Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Cylch Meithrin Harlech**

**Ysgol Tanycastell  
Ffordd y Nant  
Harlech  
LL46 2UE**

**Date of inspection: February 2023**

**by**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)**

**and**

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

**This report is also available in Welsh.**

## About Cylch Meithrin Harlech

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Harlech
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Rhian Corps and Annwen Williams
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Catrin White
Number of places	18
Age range of children	2 – 4 years
Number of 3- and 4-year olds	6 (4 of these are Nursery Plus)
Number of children funded for early education	1
Opening days / times	09:00-15:00 Monday to Friday (term-time)
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service which provides the Welsh Language 'Active Offer'. It provides a service that anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of children who use or may use the service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	25/05/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	16/04/2013
Date(s) of this/these inspection visit(s)	08/02/2023

## **Non-compliance**

The provider was notified that the setting is not in compliance with the Regulations. No notices were issued but this has been identified as an area for improvement and the Registered Person should address it.

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Provide valuable opportunities for children to develop all their skills in the outdoor area
- R2 Address the issue of non-compliance identified during the inspection

## **What happens next**

The setting will produce an action plan showing how it will implement the recommendations.

## Main findings

### Well-being:

Children have a strong voice and they have valuable opportunities to voice their opinions. For example, they discuss toys and express a view on their favourites. They are included in decisions about their learning and play, including creating a small world dinosaur area in response to their requests. The children know that their feelings are regularly considered. In addition, practitioners respond sensibly to children's feelings as they sing 'sut wyt ti?' (how are you?).

Most children settle successfully, and feel safe in their environment. They have developed a close relationship with the practitioners and are happy to chat informally with visitors. For example, they are eager to show a vehicle and talk about changing the wheel. They greet each other affably and immediately go to play together happily in the areas. Almost all are familiar with the daily routines, and comply with procedures with ease, which gives them the assurance to cope with new experiences.

Most children are very well behaved and play successfully independently. They start playing together effectively, for example, two children discuss and decide to go the role play tent and look at a book together. Throughout their play activities, most engage fully, and show respect for their toys, the resources and each other. During group sessions, they sit in an organised fashion, listen to others and patiently wait their turn. Consequently, the children develop their social skills well.

Most children enjoy their play and learning activities. For example, they have a lot of fun playing hiding. They love saying 'bw' (boo) and laugh happily after doing so. Many children respond with great excitement when playing in the outdoor area. They use the equipment and develop their physical skills by balancing and walking along a route of wooden bridges. After reaching the end, they show great pride in their achievement.

Most children develop their independence skills well. After arriving in the morning, they put their water bottle on their picture. During the morning they help themselves to a drink and decide when to eat their snack. Almost all move around confidently and independently from one area to another, including the outdoor area. They take responsibility for helping to clean up and for their personal hygiene. For example, they wash their hands following instructions after going to the toilet or after nappy changing.

### Learning (only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):

There is no report on children's learning. This is because there was an insufficient number of three and four year olds present at the time of the inspection, not receiving funded education elsewhere, about whom we could report without identifying individual children.

### **Care and development:**

Practitioners focus constantly on keeping the children safe and healthy. They understand their roles and responsibilities very well and implement the setting's policies and procedures effectively to keep the children safe. They have up-to-date first aid certificates and ensure there are purposeful resources available. They have not had to administer medicine but they have a suitable policy and appropriate forms in place for record-keeping if needed. Practitioners follow appropriate procedures for recording accidents and injuries. They implement risk assessment systems and complete effective daily checks to identify and remove risks. Practitioners promote good practice in order to ensure that the children stay healthy and encourage healthy eating practices. All the practitioners are confident in how to respond should they have any concerns about a child's safety. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet the requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners follow the behaviour policy and set a good example of positive behaviour by taking advantage of every opportunity to praise the children. For example, children are constantly encouraged and praised for trying to dress themselves. They have a close and warm relationship with the children and treat them with care and respect. As a result, this encourages the children to behave well. Purposeful use is made of strategies to deal with any feelings of frustration and conflict among the children. They offer comfort where required but are adept in supporting the children to manage their feelings and join in activities.

Practitioners know the children well and respect their wishes and preferences. For example, they respond to children's requests to listen to a story. They respect children's choices and let them do things of their own accord. Practitioners promote the children's understanding of the importance of treating people of all cultural backgrounds with respect and tolerance. They also develop their understanding of celebrations such as Saint Dwynwen and the importance of charity work through fundraising. Practitioners ensure that the children have a good understanding of sustainability and recycling by giving them real life experiences. Practitioners respond well to individuals' needs and instruct children appropriately when necessary.

### **Teaching and assessment (only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):**

The practitioners' teaching supports the children to develop a wide range of useful skills, which has a positive impact on their knowledge and understanding. Practitioners work conscientiously for the benefit of the children. They provide effective opportunities to spark the children's interest by offering purposeful challenges, such as doing dolls' hair and planting flowers in the gardening area.

Practitioners provide a complete curriculum and plan valuable and varied experiences for the children, both inside and outside the building. For example, there are opportunities to solve problems by building towers with three-dimensional shapes and letting water flow down guttering into appropriate bowls.

Practitioners plan valuable opportunities to develop the children's literacy and numeracy skills, particularly inside the building. As a result, the practitioners' teaching

challenges the children to make marks on clipboards in the home area and sort and count cars, dishes and cutlery purposefully. However, practitioners do not always provide purposeful opportunities for children to develop all their skills effectively in the outdoor area.

Practitioners concentrate well on improving the children's Welsh by repeating vocabulary and phrases regularly, and singing lively songs. Practitioners question children regularly, which has a positive impact on improving their cognitive skills and their desire to give things a go. They take advantage of purposeful conversations to observe and assess the children's progress and achievement, using their findings appropriately to plan the next steps in their learning. In addition, practitioners intervene sensibly during activities, which supports good independent learning among the children.

The provision to develop the children's digital skills offers constant challenges to improve their skills, such as controlling electronic vehicles and using apps on a tablet computer. In addition, practitioners encourage them to cooperate effectively by focusing on developing their physical and creative skills. For example, they are encouraged to crawl through tunnels, print colourful patterns with their hands and role play.

Practitioners place a positive emphasis on developing children's spiritual, moral and social skills. They promote Welsh culture well by celebrating Saint David's Day and singing traditional rhymes regularly. In addition, they celebrate diversity successfully by reading stories about other people's experiences around the world and studying customs such as Chinese New Year.

The practitioners provide valuable information for parents and carers about the children's achievements. This is done via social media, oral discussions and a progress booklet, which is available during and at the end of their time at the setting. Transition arrangements for the children are robust.

### **Environment:**

Practitioners follow effective procedures to check and keep the environment safe. A detailed record is kept of visitors and the setting has valid public liability insurance. Practitioners practise fire drills so that the children can familiarise themselves with these arrangements. They prioritise risk assessment in all areas as well as in specific activities. Practitioners supervise children well across all areas of the setting.

Practitioners ensure there is a friendly and homely atmosphere. They promote this by displaying the children's art work and photographs. For example, a family tree has a prominent place and the children thoroughly enjoy referring to it. Practitioners respond well to individuals' development by displaying their birthdays and pictures of their adventures at home with the Cylch's special toy, Doti. The children love referring to them, and as a result, this contributes to the children's sense of belonging.

Practitioners ensure a good quality environment. Practitioners arrange the play and learning areas purposefully. For example, there are opportunities for children to grow vegetables and then sell them in the nearby role play shop. Resources are kept at a low level to enable the children to choose independently and follow their individual

interests. As a result, the children are starting to get used to reaching for and returning equipment to the appropriate places on their own. Leaders have developed the resources in the outdoor area and ensure that children have full access to the area in all types of weather. Leaders ensure that the environment respects children's privacy and offers them opportunities to develop independent skills. Leaders provide a good range of purposeful resources to teach children about the world around them and about wider society.

### **Leadership and management:**

Leaders ensure that the setting's leadership strategies are effective and focus purposefully on improving the provision and children's outcomes. Their vision is clear and they promote purposeful cooperation among practitioners. Consequently, leaders and practitioners work together successfully as a team to support the children's learning and development well.

Leaders follow safe, robust and timely recruitment processes. They set sensible expectations of each other and of practitioners through thorough performance management processes. As a result, leaders support practitioners to maintaining high standards and work effectively as a team. Leaders enable practitioners to attend appropriate training to improve their skills and care practices. Consequently, practitioners are conscientious, eager to succeed and to act on advice given by leaders and support agencies.

Leaders focus on introducing ongoing improvements to further develop the setting's practices. They operate robust self-evaluation procedures, which lead to valid targets for improvement. Consequently, they identify the setting's strengths and matters for improvement well. For example, recently, they have focused on using the local area and Harlech town well, to raise the children's awareness of their roots. However, leaders do not always inform Care Inspectorate Wales about specific events and changes with the correct timescales.

Leaders ensure full consideration is given to the views of everyone associated with the setting. They conduct purposeful discussions with all stakeholders, such as support agencies, to improve the provision and children's experiences. For example, they act on advice to develop planning and assessment practices, to better follow children's interests. In addition, they conduct regular discussions with parents and carers via social media and meaningful conversations at the gate.

Leaders ensure there is successful pastoral care for the children. The productive relationship with the school prepares the children effectively for the next step in their education. In addition, leaders have formed a range of strong partnerships locally, which offer the children pleasant experiences. For example, the children frequent a local cafe and visit the forest and the town's castle.

The leaders allocate resources successfully. They make good use of grants to maintain the building and ensure there is purposeful provision, such as replacing the setting's flooring. Additionally, they fund various resources wisely, such as a reading shed and the sensory area.

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (<http://careinspectorate.wales>) ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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