



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

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Gwalchmai

**Ysgol Y Ffridd
Gwalchmai
LL65 4SG**

Date of inspection: May 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 Gwalchmai

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Gwalchmai
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Janet Evans and Anne Williams
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Janet Evans
Number of places	19
Age range of children	3-11 years old
Number of 3 and 4-year-old children	8
Number of children who receive funding for early education	8
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 9:00am-5:30pm
Flying Start service	Yes
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The service is working towards providing the Welsh language “active offer” and plans to become a bilingual service or is making a significant effort to promote the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	23/01/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	November 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	10/05/2023

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	Good
Learning (only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Good
Care and development	Good
Teaching and assessment (only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Non-compliance

The provider has been informed that the setting does not comply with the Regulations. No notice has been issued but these are identified as areas for improvement that should be given attention by the responsible person.

Information about all instances of non-compliance will be included in the Summary Report on Action and Improvement, which will be sent separately to the report by CIW.

Recommendations

R1 Ensure that practitioners make effective use of observations and assessments when planning the next steps in learning and play

R2 Address the areas of non-compliance

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Nearly all children feel completely at home at the setting. They enjoy attending and are completely happy on arrival. They have a strong and obvious sense of belonging and form strong relationships. They are very familiar with the setting's usual arrangements and comply maturely. For example, on arrival, children go confidently to join in with the morning registration routine. Nearly all children succeed in playing together happily.

Nearly all children show motivation and interest in their learning. They succeed in concentrating conscientiously for extended periods during play. Most children engage fully in group activities and persevere with tasks successfully. For example, they enjoy discovering which equipment is most suitable to create a picture of a face by using dough. They are very willing to share resources and work happily with other children in the learning areas.

Nearly all children express themselves very well and make appropriate choices and decisions about their play and learning. For example, they enjoy choosing to play outside and go to the mud kitchen to make a burger or a cup of coffee.

Nearly all children enjoy their play and learning very much. They concentrate and persevere well when undertaking tasks and enjoy experimenting with different equipment and materials. Children enjoy exceptionally good opportunities to develop independence, which enables them to do things for themselves successfully. For example, they enjoy building a block tower by using shaving foam as cement and succeed in placing it skilfully.

Nearly all children make suitable choices and express their views confidently about what they would like to do. For example, they decide to move from one area to another independently and put on their own aprons to paint across all areas of provision. As a result, nearly all children are confident learners and understand that they have a right to use their time to take part in a number of stimulating learning experiences.

Children feel that they are valued and they have a keen sense of security and belonging as practitioners celebrate their achievements. For example, there is a specific area for children to display their work so that everyone can look at it. This has a positive effect on children's confidence and well-being.

Most children develop their independence skills well. They wash their hands thoroughly without much prompting from practitioners, for example before having their snack or before brushing their teeth. This develops their awareness of the importance of hygiene successfully to maintain healthy and responsible lives.

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

Most children communicate clearly so that adults and other children understand them. They develop their vocabulary successfully by singing familiar Welsh nursery rhymes. Most children respond well to questions during plenary sessions and succeed in expressing their feelings and emotions appropriately. Most know a wide range of vocabulary. Children's spoken Welsh skills develop exceptionally well even though it is a second language for most of them. Nearly all show a good understanding when responding to instructions and questions from practitioners. For example, they discuss the most suitable equipment and paint colour to make the flowers in the creative area.

Most children make sensible decisions about what is most suitable to wear to work outside. This has a positive effect on their development.

A majority of children succeed in making early marks effectively by using a variety of media such as paint, crayons, pencils and felt tips. Older children also choose to make marks independently when taking a food list in the burger café. This has a valuable effect on their early writing skills.

Most children develop sound numeracy skills and use mathematical language intelligently in different correct contexts. For example, they count and pair cups and saucers to make a cuppa in the playhouse. Many children have a very sound understanding of numbers and count, recognise and name numbers up to five confidently. A few count and sort objects, such as coloured pompoms, up to ten skilfully.

Most children enjoy group story time. They participate actively by using Makaton signs to reinforce the experience when listening to the story '*Mynd i'r Sŵ*'. Various reading resources are available in the indoor and outdoor areas and a few children succeed in showing an interest in books independently on a regular basis.

Nearly all children enjoy gross and fine motor experiences both indoors and outdoors and succeed in building a tower and a house with a spade and trowel when loading 'shaving foam cement' onto the blocks. Children enjoy well-being sessions, which encourage them to use various physical movements in a relaxed and comfortable environment. These experiences provide opportunities to foster movement with music. This has a positive effect on their physical development.

Nearly all children succeed in playing an active part in creative activities successfully. For example, they build grandad's house with small plastic blocks and use different colours for different parts of the house.

Most children's digital skills develop appropriately. For example, they use a digital tablet to make marks. A few children use technological resources, such as digital cats, and demonstrate sound control skills.

Many children develop astute thinking skills through interesting activities. For example, they work intelligently with others to set the table for lunch and decide which dishes and which food they would like to use in the playhouse and the mud kitchen. This has a positive effect on their learning and the standards they achieve.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners focus continuously on keeping children safe and healthy. All have up to date first aid and food hygiene certificates. They understand their roles and responsibilities very well and implement all of the setting's policies and procedures consistently. This has a positive and rigorous effect on the children's safety.

Practitioners know the children very well and have a clear understanding of their needs, abilities and individual preferences. There are robust procedures in place to support children with additional learning needs. Practitioners work effectively with key agencies to support the children. For example, they attend training and receive expert advice from key workers. This has a positive effect on the children's development and well-being.

Practitioners have received child safeguarding training and are confident about what to do should they have any concerns about a child. Their setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. They

respond sensitively to children who have just begun to attend the setting and support them sensitively to develop their self-confidence.

Practitioners follow detailed hygiene procedures and practices have been embedded appropriately in the children's daily routines. For example, they ensure that tables and surfaces are clean and that the children wash their hands before eating. They offer healthy and nutritious snacks and drinks, which include fresh fruit, milk and water.

Practitioners understand the positive behaviour policy very well and implement it highly effectively. For example, when children argue over a toy, practitioners remind them of the importance of sharing and model how to resolve conflict. Practitioners' interactions are purposeful and effective. This has a valuable effect on all aspects of the children's development.

Practitioners promote equality successfully and ensure that all children have equal access to all resources and activities. Practitioners are responsive, listen and respect the children's views consistently. They celebrate children's achievements at every opportunity. This has a valuable effect on the children and promotes their self-confidence successfully.

Practitioners take pride in the children's progress. For example, they have fun when encouraging the children to sing and make movements when choosing a song in the morning. All of this has a positive effect on the children's confidence and progress.

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

There is a very close relationship between the practitioners and children and this provides a very firm foundation for their work. They respond well to the various needs, interests and background of the children. This creates an inclusive ethos in which the qualities of each individual child are valued. Practitioners nurture values such as honesty, fairness and respect in the children by reminding them about the importance of considering each other's feelings, modelling good practice and playing together. They encourage the children to help each other when it is time to put on their aprons, share resources and take turns.

Practitioner plan rich opportunities to develop children's skills in stimulating and fun contexts. This succeeds in engaging the children's interest in all aspects of provision so that they enjoy learning while playing. Children enjoy discussing the best recipe to make the perfect cuppa. They use a variety of authentic resources, such as a cup and saucer, herbs, water and mud and play together maturely. Practitioners know the children well and discuss their assessments and observations informally. However, they do not always use the findings of this work to adapt their plans and extend activities.

Practitioners have established stimulating areas and activities that provide opportunities for children to enjoy play and learning both indoors and outdoors. For example, out in the wind, many children make food for the small birds and feed and

handle lambs from the nearby farm. These opportunities make a valuable contribution to the children's understanding of the world around them.

Practitioners succeed in facilitating learning by working together effectively. They encourage the children's development by adding resources or suggesting challenging ideas. For example, they suggest that a child could use a tyre to create an accurate circle shape. Practitioners question thoroughly and give children time to think for themselves. However, practitioners do not always ask open-ended questions to move learning forwards.

Provision to develop spoken Welsh skills is very beneficial to the children. Practitioners encourage and praise the efforts of children who are new to the language appropriately. For example, they plan fun singing sessions and read stories regularly. Suitable and appropriate vocabulary is modelled and reinforced within tasks and in the areas so that the children become familiar with the word that represents different equipment.

Practitioners promote children's awareness of Welsh traditions, celebrations and culture successfully. For example, they discuss Wales's World Cup campaign by designing football caps.

A range of learning experiences promote children's spiritual, moral and cultural development well. Practitioners provide a rich range of resources and activities for children to learn about other cultures and their traditions. They learn about the Chinese New Year and Buddha Day.

Practitioners provide parents and carers with valuable information about their children's progress through social media and the '*Fy nhaith ddysgu*' ('My learning journey') book, which reflects the progress they have made at the setting.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure that the environment is safe and clean and they promote children's safety and well-being successfully. They ensure that practitioners follow effective safety procedures when children arrive and leave the site.

It is ensured that risk assessments and safety checks on the fire equipment, the fire alarm and electrical equipment are up to date. Leaders hold regular fire drills to ensure that everyone is aware of the arrangements to follow should the building need to be evacuated in an emergency. Leaders have established thorough cleaning arrangements that reflect good standards of hygiene. Their effective infection control practices reduce any risks to the children's health and safety.

Leaders ensure that the indoor and outdoor play space is seamless and that the doors are open throughout the session. This ensures that the children succeed in moving freely from one area to another effectively. As a result, children can choose where to play according to their wishes. This has a positive effect on the organisation of the setting and on the children's confidence and independence.

Leaders and practitioners ensure that there are resources available that correspond to the children's interests and that they are accessible to everyone. For example, suitably labelled equipment is kept at a low level on open shelves. Children are given valuable opportunities to choose equipment independently, which promotes their sense of responsibility effectively.

Continuous areas are organised with appropriate resources to enrich the children's experiences. Leaders have developed the outdoor area and it provides exciting opportunities for children to learn and play in the fresh air, in addition to the opportunities that are available in the main room.

Leaders ensure that resources and equipment are of an appropriate quality, which supports the children's development in terms of their skills and knowledge successfully. For example, the different herbs that are growing outdoors encourage the children to feel and identify different smells.

Practitioners succeed in providing items of woodwork and plastic and authentic household items that encourage children to experiment and discover. For example, children enjoy playing with recycled materials in the role-play areas. This also promotes an ethos of sustainability successfully. Leaders ensure that all equipment is suitable for the children's age and that there are appropriate facilities to promote their complete development.

The toilets and handwashing facilities are clean, age-appropriate and easy to access. Children can take advantage of appropriately-sized furniture, such as tables and chairs, in addition to equipment that promotes their physical development and independence skills successfully.

Leadership and management: Good

The leader and practitioners have a robust vision to develop the children's independence so that they develop as skilful and confident learners. The well-being of practitioners and children is at the heart of all of the setting's work. This has a very powerful effect and creates a positive ethos where children and practitioners feel that they are valued.

The person in charge sets high expectations through skilful modelling with the rest of the practitioners and the children. Practitioners are very comfortable discussing successes or concerns with the person in charge. They value her vast experience and feel confident to seek her opinion, when necessary. This has a powerful and positive effect on the setting.

Leaders follow timely and robust recruitment processes to safeguard children. They have good systems in place to update suitability checks, as necessary. The performance management process is appropriate and encourages practitioners to attend mandatory and optional training. Suitable evaluations are completed regularly. However, leaders do not ensure that practitioners receive regular supervision that is recorded.

The setting has effective self-evaluation processes. They are based on a good range of evidence and include an honest evaluation of provision and its effect on children's progress, skills and well-being. Priorities that are identified during the process are summarised in a manageable way. The person in charge uses displays effectively to show signs of progress. Sensible actions are identified and consider what they need to do to progress. A notable example of the effect of this work in the way in which the setting has introduced the '*laith ar Daith*' scheme.

Leaders and practitioners use social media as a means of sharing information with parents. There is also an opportunity for parents to make comments about their children's experiences at the setting. This includes daily activities and fundraising evenings, which ensure that efficient communication reaches all of the setting's stakeholders.

A close relationship has been developed with the nearby primary school. Information is received and shared between the setting and the school to facilitate the transition process.

The setting works purposefully with external agencies, such as the local authority advisory teacher and officers from support organisations. Practitioners also work with a range of other partners who make important contributions to improving provision. These include agencies that provide training on aspects such as food hygiene and safeguarding and child protection procedures. Recent training has been very beneficial to all practitioners and has led to positive developments in responding to aspects such as the Curriculum for Wales.

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)

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
Poor	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

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