



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 Parcyrhun
Ysgol Gynradd Parcyrhun
Villiers Road
Ammanford
Carmarthenshire
SA18 3HB**

Date of inspection: June 2015

by

**Dorothy Morris
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

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Context

Cylch Meithrin Parcyrhun meets in a classroom in Ysgol Gynradd Parcyrhun which is located on the outskirts of Ammanford, Carmarthenshire. It is open five days a week.

The setting is registered to take up to 16 children per session. Currently, there are 48 children aged two and three years of age on roll. Fifteen children receive funded early years education. Nearly all the children come from homes where English is the main language spoken. There are a very few children from minority ethnic backgrounds. There are a few children with additional learning needs.

There are five permanent members of staff. They are experienced and suitably qualified in the education and care of young children. One additional member of staff is a student trainee. The leader has been in post since 2013.

The nursery was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in May 2015 and by Estyn in April 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting is good because:

- Most children make appropriate progress from their starting point
- Most children develop an appropriate range of numeracy skills
- Most children's creative and physical skills develop effectively
- Children's personal and social development is good
- Children behave well
- Most children participate fully in their activities and are developing as independent learners
- Practitioners provide a range of interesting experiences that ensure children's involvement and enjoyment in their learning
- The inclusive ethos creates a warm and supportive environment for all children

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader provides strong direction to the setting's work
- The constructive use of practitioners' skills leads to effective teamwork
- The leader has a sound understanding of the setting's strengths and the main areas for improvement
- The setting development plan sets appropriate priorities including developing children's literacy and numeracy skills further
- There is evidence that improvements have been introduced successfully
- The close partnership with the primary school, parents and the community supports children's learning and wellbeing effectively

Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen children's Welsh oral skills
- R2 Refine planning to focus more on developing children's basic skills consistently
- R3 Reinforce basic Welsh vocabulary and phrases regularly during activities
- R4 Develop further the use of assessment outcomes in planning the next steps in learning

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Children's skills when they start at the setting vary greatly. Most children make appropriate progress from their starting point. They are good listeners and display interest and enthusiasm when listening to stories. They recognise some of the characters in the stories. Most children show a good understanding of basic instructions and familiar words in Welsh but offer very brief responses orally. They know a range of songs and rhymes and sing them with enjoyment. Most children show an interest in books and hold books correctly. The majority recognise their name cards during self-registration. Many children develop appropriate marking skills and use them appropriately in different contexts. A few children can copy words appropriately to place on the displays in the classroom.

Most children make appropriate use of their basic number skills in everyday activities. Most children can count from memory to at least 10. Their ability to recognise the value of basic numbers and to link symbols and sound is developing appropriately. They make effective use of a fishing game, for example, to catch and identify fish which are numbered. Most children identify basic two-dimensional shapes correctly and can refer to shapes in the outdoor area. Most children understand the meaning of mathematical terms, such as big and small, when comparing the size of different objects. They understand that they need money to buy goods when they visit the shop or play in the ice cream cafe.

Most children use their information and communications technology (ICT) skills appropriately to control programmable toys, move objects on the screen and create colourful pictures. Most children use a range of media effectively to paint, model, print and produce collages. They choose suitable materials and colours, and experiment with growing confidence. Many children use tools with good control to cut, glue and paint.

Most children make appropriate use of their thinking and problem-solving skills when participating in a treasure hunt in the outdoor area and experimenting to find out which objects float or sink in the water tray.

Wellbeing: Good

All children settle well and quickly become familiar with setting routines. They form good relationships with other children and with practitioners. They are willing to ask for help and support.

Most children have good attitudes to learning and respond positively to learning experiences. They work diligently on a task for an appropriate period of time and enjoy the range of activities on offer. Most take turns readily and are willing to share equipment and toys. They behave well.

The majority of children have a developing awareness of the importance of physical exercise and healthy eating. The visits to a health food shop to buy fruit and vegetables, and daily physical activity, reinforces this. They understand the importance of washing hands frequently and especially before eating snacks.

The children's social skills and awareness develop effectively through daily activities and through experiences such as visiting local shops and joining in activities with the primary school.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

Practitioners provide interesting and purposeful learning experiences across the areas of learning. The setting's planning is detailed and organised, and provides clear guidance for practitioners. Long-term planning is based on a series of themes that are suitable for the children's age range and stage of development. Short-term planning makes appropriate reference to the learning objectives and lists activities. Experiences that are led by practitioners are thoroughly planned to meet the needs of children of different abilities. At times, however, planning processes do not give enough attention to developing children's basic skills consistently.

Provision provides appropriate opportunities to develop children's literacy, numeracy and wider skills. During group activities, for example, there are purposeful opportunities for children to listen to stories, join in songs and rhymes and use their marking skills. There are productive opportunities for children to count and discuss numbers. The displays around the room assist children to experiment with numbers and to count. For example, children are encouraged to count to at least five by hopping along the 'number ladder' on the classroom floor. Practical experiences in the outdoor area further promote children's understanding of shape and number, and of mathematical terms, such as full/empty, heavy/light through sand and water play activities.

Purposeful experiences, including celebrating St. David's Day, the story of 'Y Twrch Trwyth' and St. Dwynwen's Day, develop children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of Wales successfully.

There is constructive use of visits to a range of different places, such as shops and a farm, to promote children's understanding of the world around them. The contributions of visitors, such as a dentist, a fireman and a nurse, help develop children's awareness of the roles some people play in the community.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a sound understanding of the philosophy and requirements of the Foundation Phase. They support children effectively and take a keen interest in their development and progress. As a result, children are happy and confident to participate in the range of activities available.

Practitioners make appropriate use of a range of strategies and resources to support children's learning. They maintain a good balance between activities led by adults and those the children choose. The programme of activities moves at a good pace. There is effective use of indoor and outdoor resources to provide regular opportunities for children to learn through play and to be active in their learning.

Activities led by practitioners are thoroughly prepared with clear objectives. Practitioners talk to children constantly, using relevant vocabulary. At times, however, basic Welsh vocabulary and phrases are not reinforced regularly enough during activities.

Practitioners know the children well and use comprehensive procedures to assess and record their progress. They observe carefully, especially during activities led by adults, and record any significant developments clearly. The detailed records on children's development across the areas of learning are updated regularly. The use of assessment information to promote learning is developing appropriately in aspects of the work such as identifying individual targets for children.

Parents are suitably informed about their children's development through informal discussions, open evenings and written reports. The collection of samples of children's work is a useful record of their development.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. The setting is a caring community with a family atmosphere which contributes significantly to children's wellbeing. There are suitable opportunities to raise children's awareness of the importance of healthy eating and physical exercise. Being part of the 'Designed to Smile' project, for example, promotes good practice in the care of teeth.

There are suitable arrangements to support children with additional learning needs. The clear lines of communication with key agencies, such as children's support services, ensure appropriate advice and guidance for practitioners.

Learning experiences promote children's personal development effectively, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Values, such as kindness, and an understanding of what is right and what is wrong, are promoted constructively through daily activities. There is good attention to developing children's awareness of the need to help people who are less fortunate by collecting money for good causes.

There are productive opportunities to develop children's awareness of different cultures by participating in activities such as celebrating the Chinese New Year and the festival of Divali. The opportunity to visit a Chinese restaurant and enjoy a meal contributes further to children's learning.

Opportunities to grow plants and flowers and participate in recycling activities develop children's awareness of the importance of caring for the environment and all living things appropriately.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to the curriculum and to all activities. There is an appropriate emphasis on celebrating diversity. Practitioners consider and value children's diverse backgrounds and respond appropriately.

The setting has enough experienced practitioners to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase. On the whole, there are sufficient resources across the areas of learning. They are accessible to children and this promotes independent learning effectively.

The setting's facilities are adequate. Although space is limited, the activity areas which are arranged around the classroom are attractive and suitably equipped. There is effective use of the primary school's outdoor learning area, which includes a garden, to provide purposeful opportunities for children to investigate and play. Practitioners make appropriate use of a small area outside the classroom for practical activities. The building and site are clean and safe.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The leader provides firm direction to the setting's work. This ensures an organised and purposeful environment for children. There is a clear structure to the daily sessions. Practitioners are aware of their responsibilities and work effectively as a team. They share agreed values and are committed to children's development and wellbeing. Suitable policies are implemented appropriately.

The management committee is supportive of the setting. Members meet each term and give appropriate attention to the setting's current needs. Minutes of the meetings are used appropriately for further planning. The setting has a suitable system for appraising the work of practitioners and identifying their further professional development needs.

The setting gives appropriate attention to national and local priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase, developing children's Welsh language skills and promoting healthy eating.

Improving quality: Good

The leader has a sound understanding of the setting's strengths and the main areas for improvement. This is based on information gathered by observing provision, discussion with staff and the monitoring of children's individual profiles. Full staff meetings are held to plan and evaluate provision. In addition, discussion sessions

are arranged with individual practitioners to provide support and further guidance. This structure succeeds in promoting improvements in aspects of the setting's work. The detailed planning of activities led by practitioners, including the focus on continuous assessment, is an example.

The self-evaluation report provides a balanced view of provision. The development plan arising from this identifies a number of suitable areas for improvement. It gives due attention to the further development of children's literacy and numeracy skills. The plan is being implemented appropriately.

Aspects of provision are monitored effectively by the local authority link teacher. Areas for development are agreed and appropriate strategies are implemented that improve provision. Practitioners are open to new ways of working. Aspects of provision are discussed further with the Mudiad Meithrin development officer and Flying Start officer. Practitioners give due consideration to the views of parents through daily discussions and by analysing the annual questionnaires, which are supportive.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a strong partnership with parents and this was confirmed in discussions with a sample of parents during the inspection. They stated that they are pleased with the progress their children are making. They added that practitioners are welcoming and happy to discuss their children's development. The setting provides parents with relevant information through the notice board, brochures and newsletters.

The productive links with the primary school prepare children effectively for the transition to the nursery class. Practitioners benefit from close contact with the headteacher and the use of school resources and facilities.

The constructive partnership with the local authority link teacher and Mudiad Meithrin development officer contributes to improvements in the setting's work through the useful advice and guidance provided. The effective partnership with the Flying Start officer contributes to ensuring good support for the children and their families.

Links with the community impact effectively on children's learning. Children make regular visits to different places in the community. Members of the community in turn provide good support to the setting, including support for fundraising activities.

Resource management: Good

The setting is appropriately staffed and there is productive use of practitioners' time and skills. Overall, there is effective use of resources to support the teaching and learning.

Practitioners have attended a number of relevant training courses led by the Local Authority and Mudiad Meithrin. They make appropriate use of the training to promote children's language skills, for example, and to cater for children with additional

learning needs. There is effective support for practitioners who wish to gain further qualifications in education and childcare.

The treasurer has a firm understanding of the budget and prioritises spending in line with the setting's needs. He provides constructive advice and guidance to the setting leader and the management committee. There is effective use of fundraising events to supplement resources.

Given the quality of leadership, the learning experiences and care and support for children, the setting offers good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received was fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector –

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

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.