



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 Maenclochog
Maenclochog Community Hall
Maenclochog
Pembrokeshire**

Date of inspection: 28-29 February 2012

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:

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 Maenclochog is based in the village community hall. It was established in 1972 and the children who attend live in the village and the surrounding areas. The area is described as neither advantaged nor economically and socially disadvantaged.

The setting caters for children between two and three years of age for four sessions a week during term time. It is open between 9:00 and 11:30 in the morning. During the inspection, there were five three year olds on the register. Most children come from homes where English is the main language spoken. At present, there are no children from ethnic minority backgrounds or children with additional learning needs.

There are two members of staff. They are experienced and hold relevant qualifications in the education and care of young children. They have been in their current posts for a short period of time

The setting was last inspected by Estyn in April 2006 and by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in June 2010.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is adequate.

The strengths include:

- the range of interesting activities provided;
- the good quality care provided in an inclusive environment;
- the very good relationship between the children and the practitioners.

However:

- curriculum planning processes are not fully established;
- aspects of teaching and learning are continuing to be developed;
- new processes for assessing and reporting on children's achievement are being introduced.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are adequate.

The strengths include:

- practitioners are hard working and conscientious;
- there is good teamwork;
- daily routines run smoothly;
- parents and the management committee are very supportive.

However:

- leadership and management processes are being developed;
- evaluation processes are informal in nature;
- the implementation of the development plan is at an early stage.

Recommendations

In order to improve further, the setting needs to:

- R1 develop curriculum planning to promote children's skills consistently across the areas of learning;
- R2 strengthen the teaching by focussing on the aim of the activities and ensuring that tasks extend the more able children's learning;
- R3 introduce Welsh vocabulary and sentence patterns consistently to develop the children's communication skills;
- R4 develop the practitioners' knowledge of evaluation and forward planning processes.

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Not applicable

Standards:

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Wellbeing:

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

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

The practitioners provide a range of activities which consistently gain children's interest. The activities are based on themes which are appropriate for the children's age range. More formal planning using curricular frameworks is at an early stage of development. Children are offered appropriate opportunities to use their communication and number skills and to a lesser extent their information and communications technology skills in different activities. Overall, the planning and organisation does not ensure consistent continuity and progression in the learning, including the development of children's skills, across the curriculum.

There is continuous encouragement for children to use their Welsh communication skills in their learning and play. Nevertheless, there is insufficient attention in the planning to introducing vocabulary and sentence patterns consistently to develop children's speaking skills. The practitioners develop children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of Wales effectively through activities which include celebrating St. David's day and St. Dwynwen's day.

Suitable opportunities, such as growing and caring for plants and involvement in recycling activities, promote children's awareness of the importance of caring for the environment and all living things. The children also have some opportunities to develop their awareness of the wider world, including other people and their cultures. They celebrate the Chinese New Year through participating in a range of art activities.

Teaching: Adequate

The practitioners have a developing knowledge of children's development and the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. They make suitable use of a range of teaching approaches and appropriate resources to support the learning.

They participate enthusiastically in the activities and offer the children consistent support. Nevertheless, there is not always sufficient attention to the aims of activities to ensure consistent learning. Activities are thoroughly prepared but tasks do not regularly extend the more able children.

The practitioners know the children well. They observe children's responses consistently during activities and complete an appropriate diary. Recently, new processes have been introduced to monitor and record children's progress in greater detail. This includes keeping samples of children's work and completing a record of their skill development. Transfer forms are completed appropriately and forwarded to the primary school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. The induction arrangements, including the daily contact with parents, ensure that children settle well into the setting. The practitioners are caring and supportive of all the children. There are clear expectations that promote very good behaviour.

There are suitable arrangements for supporting children with additional learning needs when required, and there are clear lines of communication with key agencies. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. Risk assessments are undertaken regularly.

Effective learning experiences promote children's personal development well and include their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Values, such as fairness and kindness, and an understanding of what is right and wrong, are fostered effectively through the curriculum and day-to-day activities. Experiences, such as visiting the church and participating in a baptism led by the vicar, and the work on the Christmas story contribute effectively to children's spiritual development. In addition, participating in a concert for parents contributes to their social development.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where children receive equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. Practitioners consider and value children's different backgrounds and respond appropriately. They succeed in creating a warm and welcoming environment for children.

The setting has an appropriate number of practitioners. The accommodation is of good quality and offers suitable facilities overall. Nevertheless, there is no outside play area for the children but the setting makes full use of the hall. Samples of children's work are displayed on appropriate moveable partitions. There are ample resources of very good quality which are used appropriately to support the learning and teaching.

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

The practitioners understand their roles and work well as a team. The lead practitioner is establishing sound daily routines and they operate smoothly. The use of planning and management processes in the context of the whole provision is at an early stage of development. Appropriate policies are implemented.

The management committee is very supportive and has established a good relationship with the practitioners. Members take a keen interest in the setting and work hard to raise additional funding. The committee meets regularly and the registered person is a regular visitor. She has a good knowledge of the setting's current provision and future needs. Appropriate processes are in place to appraise the work of the practitioners and to identify their further professional development needs.

The practitioners give suitable attention to national and local priorities including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum and promoting children's Welsh language skills.

Improving quality: Adequate

The practitioners are open to new ideas and are ready to try out new methods of working. They discuss regularly but the processes used to evaluate aspects of provision are continuing to develop and are informal in nature.

Aspects of provision are discussed further with the local authority link teacher and the Mudiad Ysgoli on Meithrin officer. Areas for development are agreed and relevant strategies introduced. The self-evaluation report and improvement plan prepared before the inspection is an important starting point. The setting has not responded fully to the recommendations of the previous report.

During their careers, the practitioners have attended suitable courses on aspects of the education and care of young children. The lead practitioner has attended appropriate courses on the Foundation Phase and has had some opportunities to discuss and share ideas with other settings and practitioners during training days.

Partnership working: Good

The practitioners work effectively as a team. They share information about children and know who to contact if further support is required. There is a close partnership with parents and this was confirmed in the conversations with them during the inspection. Practitioners are regularly available to meet parents at the beginning and end of sessions. Parents are provided with relevant information about the setting and the provision.

The close partnership with the registered person, the management committee, the local authority link teacher and Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin officer leads to improvements in the setting's work.

The setting has close links with the community which support children's learning. There is successful use of the links with local agencies and organisations to support fund raising activities.

Resource management: Adequate

The setting is suitably staffed and regular training opportunities are provided. There is a very good supply of resources. They are used appropriately to support the learning.

The registered person and management committee have a good understanding of the budget and prioritise spending according to the setting's needs. Spending decisions are discussed by the management committee and managed effectively by the treasurer. There is regular use of fundraising events to supplement resources. The setting offers adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

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 are happy in the setting and they all join in the activities enthusiastically. They are ready to talk simply about their favourite activities and state that they enjoy playing with their friends.

Appendix 2

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 2013.
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.
National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered child minders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National (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.

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