



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 Aberclwyd
Capel Clwyd
Clwyd Street
Rhyl
LL18 4NB
United Kingdom**

Date of inspection: May 2014

by

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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 Aberclwyd is long established and is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. It is a Welsh medium setting and meets in the vestry of Capel Clwyd in Rhyl Denbighshire. Children attending the setting are largely from Rhyl and the immediate surrounding area, - an area recognised as being disadvantaged with high levels of unemployment.

The setting is run by a voluntary committee and is an educational provider as a member of the Denbighshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. It is also a member of the Mudiad Meithrin.

The setting is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accommodate a maximum of 26 children. Currently there are 14 on the register, of whom 9 are from the Flying Start area of Rhyl. Five children are aged 3 and funded.

The setting is open for 4 days a week (not Tuesday) during school term time and there are two sessions each day, 9 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.

English is the language spoken in the homes of nearly all the children. None are from a minority ethnic background nor have been identified with additional learning needs. The setting however is happy to accept children whatever their background or ability.

The setting is staffed by a total of three members of staff and a “Cam wrth Gam” student. The Cylch occupies the chapel’s first floor vestry. It is approached via a stairway and this makes access to the outside for the children difficult. However, community facilities, such as the local library, shops and the local park are well used to extend children’s experiences.

Children attend the setting once they are 2½ years old and most transfer to Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant in the September following their 3rd birthday.

The setting was last inspected by the CSSIW in February 2013. There were no issues of non-compliance in the report and the setting has addressed their recommendations. Estyn inspected the setting in May 2008 and the recommendations have been addressed.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because:

- planning for learning successfully engages all children;
- children develop their confidence to become independent learners;
- provision for developing the Welsh language and an awareness of the culture of Wales;
- teaching impacts well on the learning;
- of the care, support and guidance children receive;
- of the ethos and equality of opportunities provided for the children;
- of the sense of purpose evident;
- of the support provided by the local authority advisory teacher.

The current performance of the setting is only adequate because:

- planning for learning does not show how children's knowledge, understanding and skills are to be developed systematically;
- assessment is not well used when planning the next steps in children' learning.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leadership and management is well focused on providing the best possible provision for the children.;
- staff work together well as a team;
- self-evaluation has clearly identified areas to develop;
- the support provide by the local authority support teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin.

Recommendations

- R1. develop the planning so as to show how the curriculum builds systematically on children's existing knowledge, understanding and skills.
- R2. refine assessment procedures to clearly indicate children's skill development.
- R3. identify the next steps in individual children's learning and plan accordingly.

What happens next?

'The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.'

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skill 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?

Good

Learning experiences: Adequate

Practitioners plan collaboratively and take into account children's interests and previous experiences. Planning of the learning experiences successfully engage all children and are well focused on encouraging children's progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. The planning, however, does not indicate sufficiently how children's knowledge, understanding and skills are to be developed systematically and progressively.

Learning opportunities are well designed to encourage children to form relationships and to treat each other with respect. Children develop sufficient confidence to become independent learners and to try out new experiences. There are good opportunities for children to develop their thinking skills and to develop an understanding of the world and their immediate environment.

Planning is well focused on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills. Children make use of these skills across the curriculum enabling them to successfully access the whole curriculum.

The setting makes good provision for Welsh language development. Welsh is the medium of communication and through the establishment of good language patterns children are acquiring a good command of the language. Whilst children understand more than they speak, the provision is good as is the planning to develop children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of the culture of Wales.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a good knowledge of child development and of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They have high expectations of all children whatever their age or ability.

Planning ensures a good balance between child-selected and adult-directed activities. Staff know when to intervene and when to allow children to work independently. Practitioners are well aware of the importance of providing children with opportunities to learn through play and active involvement.

Behaviour is well managed and is substantially helped by keeping the children active and engaged in interesting activities. Children's Welsh language is enhanced by being immersed in the language and being taught by fluent Welsh speakers who, themselves, converse in the language. Another good and notable aspect of the teaching is the very good use of questioning to challenge children and to develop their thinking skills.

Children are regularly assessed and observations recorded in their individual record book – "Chwarae i ddysgu – dysgu i chwarae". Assessment records however, tend to be descriptive and insufficiently focused on children's skill development. The results of assessment are not used sufficiently in planning future activities so as to meet children's needs and to extend them.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Good and effective arrangements are in place to ensure children's health and wellbeing. Such arrangements contribute well to children's general development supporting their learning and their wellbeing. Children, through visits to their community, develop a sense of curiosity about the world in which they live. Their moral development is suitably supported by the values established in the setting, including honesty, fairness and respect. Children are well aware of what is right and wrong and behave accordingly. All children show respect and an understanding of the basic rules of behaviour. The setting encourages children to engage in creative work. Children are happy in the company of adults and are outgoing, such as when conversing with the inspector.

The setting is well aware of children's differing abilities, although no child at present has been identified with additional learning needs. However, arrangements are in place should the need arise.

Children are involved in recycling – wastepaper is routinely collected and vegetable waste recycled.

The setting's safeguarding arrangements ensure that children are safe and free from any form of harassment. Staff have attended relevant courses recently and are well aware of how they should respond if the need arises. Policies and procedures are in place and known to parents. The location is safe in that no one can enter or leave unannounced. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children have equality of opportunity. The setting is generously staffed with well qualified and experienced practitioners. Staff are well aware of the requirements and philosophy of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The setting represents a stimulating learning environment. It is well resourced and well matched to children's needs. A good feature is the way staff vary the resources available to the children and this helps to maintain their interest.

The setting occupies a spacious and well lit room. There are sufficient areas to allow children freedom to move around and to be active. Whilst the room does not allow immediate and free access to the outside, practitioners, through visits and community links, overcome this deficiency as far as possible.

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

Staff work together very well and both senior practitioners assume leadership roles. Learning and teaching are well managed and policies and local initiatives are effectively implemented. The commitment of all practitioners ensures good provision for the children. Relationships with the children, the parents and carers are positive and ensure that children both enjoy and benefit from the provision. The setting works hard to involve the parents but with limited success.

The setting is self-critical and all staff work with a sense of purpose focused on promoting and sustaining improvements. The setting displays a sense of purpose designed to meet children's needs and to provide them with high quality provision.

Children are positively managed and outcomes monitored and evaluated. An effective appraisal system is in place. Policies and initiatives, including those that meet local and national priorities are implemented consistently.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has successfully identified its strengths and areas for development and used this information to bring about improvements. The setting displays a self-critical culture and a willingness to bring about improvements. Practitioners are open to new ideas and are receptive to change. Practitioners share ideas and are sensitive to the views of the children.

Partnership working: Good

Practitioners have taken active steps to involve parents and carers with limited success. Parents are regularly informed about all aspects of the setting's work and questionnaires and discussion indicate that they are happy and supportive of the work of the setting. They report on how well their children are progressing and how well the children respond to the work of the setting, but overall they are not actively involved in supporting the setting. Good and improving relationships are in place with the feeder primary school and although some distance away, children visit the school whilst at the setting. Similarly, the reception class teacher visits and meets the children due to attend the primary school in the summer term.

Particularly good relationships have been established with the Local Authority Advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin. This has had a good impact on the quality of provision provided by the setting. Community links and visits to the locality are used effectively to support children's learning.

Resource management: Good

The setting is suitably resourced and they are effectively deployed to support learning. The budget is carefully controlled and used to support planned actions for improvement. This is a well-established learning community where staff use their ideas well and share their professional expertise. Staff make good use of professional development courses and share ideas. Staff reflect on their own practice and support each other. Such initiatives have impacted well on children's learning and wellbeing.

The setting deploys its own resources well and overall provides 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

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

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.