



*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 Abererch  
Neuadd Y Pentref  
Abererch  
Pwllheli  
Gwynedd  
LL53 6BJ**

**Date of inspection: March 2013**

**by**

**Wil Williams**

**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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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## Context

Cylch Meithrin Abererch meets in the village hall and has been open for around nine years. The setting is part of the Gwynedd Children and Young People's Partnership and provides pre-school Welsh medium education for the children of Abererch village and the surrounding area. This is an area which is Welsh in both its language and culture. Every child speaks Welsh at home. The setting's main medium of teaching and learning is Welsh.

In the setting's view, the area it serves is neither prosperous nor economically or socially disadvantaged. Children of all backgrounds and abilities are admitted to the setting. During the inspection, no child with additional learning needs was attending the setting.

The setting provides two and a half hour sessions on four afternoons a week for three and four year old children, although the number of sessions attended by individual children varies according to parental wishes. Currently, two three year old children are registered at the setting and one of them is funded by the Partnership.

Children's education is supported by the leader and two part time practitioners all of whom are appropriately qualified to teach the early years.

When they have completed their time at the setting, children continue their education at local primary schools.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in June 2012 and by Estyn in February 2007.

## Summary

<b>The Setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The Setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- learning experiences successfully cater for all children's needs and interests and encourage them to learn effectively;
- the development of communication, numeracy and information communication technology skills is well planned;
- high quality teaching ensures that every child learns effectively;
- assessment information is used purposefully for future planning;
- provision for promoting children's spiritual, moral and social development is good, and
- the setting is an inclusive community where all children are given equal access to all areas of learning and activities planned for them.

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the strong sense of purpose promotes and maintains improvements;
- of the leader's strong desire to undertake local and national priorities;
- self evaluation is a key instrument for raising standards and improving the provision;
- a strong learning community and a positive culture of co-operation have been established;
- a wide range of partnership activities make a strong contribution towards the children's good achievements and welfare; and
- the setting provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

R1. Further develop the role and responsibilities of the management committee.

### 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?

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?

**Good**

#### Learning experiences: Good

Through purposeful planning, practitioners successfully provide a wide range of learning experiences which cater for all children's needs and interests and encourage them to learn effectively and to make good progress across all Foundation Phase areas of learning. Many of these experiences build systematically on children's current knowledge, understanding and skills and provide valuable opportunities for them to take risks and experiment with new experiences confidently and to develop into independent learners. Through working indoors and in the local area, children have regular opportunities to increase their understanding of the world they live in and of the wonders of nature. They also develop many key physical and creative skills in this manner.

The setting plans well to develop children's communication skills. When working on an individual task or participating in a whole group session, children are encouraged to listen carefully to adults and other children and to share their ideas and experiences with the rest of the group. The regular role play activities that are provided, such as taking phone calls at the veterinary centre, contribute substantially towards developing children's ability to adapt their language for different purposes. The setting provides daily opportunities for children to listen to stories which are read to them by an adult or to use books independently either to follow a story or to gather information from pictures. There are useful opportunities in most of the areas of learning, indoors and outside, for children to use mark making for specific purposes.

Good opportunities are created in the learning areas and during focus tasks for children to develop and use their numeracy and information communication technology (ICT) skills in different situations. The wide range of investigative tasks provided encourage children to make specific use of their thinking skills in order to solve practical problems.

A prominent place is given at the setting to developing children's knowledge and understanding of the traditions of Wales and its culture and also to increase their awareness of their role in society and globally.

By recycling and reusing waste, the setting has good provision to raise children's awareness of the importance of sustainability.

## **Teaching: Good**

The high quality of the teaching is an obvious strength at the setting and, as a result, all children learn effectively. Each practitioner has current knowledge of the Foundation Phase and expects much from all children regardless of ability or age. They make intelligent use of the indoor and outdoor areas to plan exciting and open ended activities which stimulate children's participation in the task being undertaken. A successful balance is maintained between child selected activities and practitioner led activities. Staff's timely intervention along with skilled questioning, extend children's understanding and skills very effectively and challenge them to learn more for themselves. Great emphasis is placed on learning through play and on enjoyment. Children's behaviour is managed positively, effectively and safely.

Practitioners know children well and keep detailed records of their personal, social and educational progress throughout their time at the setting. Practitioners employ a wide range of methods to measure children's progress which include day to day observations. Appropriate use is made of the information to plan future activities which satisfy children's needs and interests. Parents are included in the assessment processes and by receiving their child's Treasure Book, they obtain extremely useful knowledge about their development across all areas of learning.

## **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The setting has secure policies and arrangements for promoting healthy living and children's wellbeing. By eating healthy snacks, promoting hygiene and providing daily opportunities for children to share their experiences and partake in physical exercise, the setting helps children well to achieve their emotional and physical health and wellbeing. There are very good arrangements for ensuring that every child and adult is free from any physical or emotional interference. Every child is encouraged to participate fully in the setting's life and to undertake duties such as putting things away at the end of a session, or handing out resources.

There is good provision for promoting children's spiritual, moral and social development. There is strong emphasis on developing curiosity and children's sense of awe about their world, and particularly about nature. Values such as honesty and respect are also strongly promoted through all the setting's work. Children are encouraged to show initiative, to control their behaviour and to be prepared to share resources with other children.

When a child or parent needs specialist support, the leader is well aware of whom to contact. The setting's previous experience of co-operating with educational psychologists and physiotherapists show that there are good arrangements to support every child with additional learning needs.

Good induction arrangements, along with the care provided by practitioners, ensure that children new to the setting settle down without difficulty.

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 every child has equal access to all areas of learning and activities provided. There is strong emphasis on developing tolerant attitudes and on ensuring that children and members of staff are free from any harassment. The setting has enough practitioners who possess sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The extremely interesting learning environment that is created and the regular opportunities children have to develop positive values and attitudes, are prominent features of the setting.

There is a good supply of good quality resources in all areas of learning, including ICT. These are carefully matched to every individual's development and learning needs. Practitioners make imaginative use of the local area as well as the hard surface near the building to enrich children's learning experiences. Resources in the local community and the nearby primary school are used very purposefully to support learning in the classroom. The building and accommodation are of good quality and are used extensively.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

The leader succeeds in creating an ethos where children and staff feel that they are appreciated within the setting. She has a clear vision for the setting, sets high expectations and challenges all to try their very best and to take an active role in the setting's development. As a result, there is a strong sense of purpose which promotes and maintains improvements. Members of staff share common values about learning, behaviour and relationship.

The setting's management is effective and sessions run smoothly. Members of staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. There are clear aims and policies which focus on children's needs and are understood and implemented by every practitioner. Effective links have been established with parents and other partners and the leader has developed an appropriate system for appraising practitioners. This gives rise to agreed targets, particularly in relation to further professional development needs.

Despite the leader's best efforts, currently the setting does not have a full working management committee. As a result, the leader has had to undertake all the setting's administrative and managerial responsibilities on her own.

The leader's desire to undertake local and national priorities, such as the Foundation Phase and assessment for learning, has enriched children's learning experiences substantially and has resulted in improved learning and teaching.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Self-evaluation is securely embedded in the setting and has been a key instrument in raising standards and improving provision. Through continuous self evaluation, practitioners are well aware of the setting's strengths and areas to be developed.

The self evaluation report analyses the setting's current situation in detail and uses the information effectively to set priorities for improvement. It sets a clear structure for implementing the improvements and ensures that secure arrangements have been established to evaluate their impact on standards and provision.

The leader values the opinions of parents and provides regular opportunities for them to express their views about the setting. Any comments made by individual parents have been responded to promptly and positively by the setting.

The setting is developing well as a strong learning community and has established a positive culture of co-operation. Members of staff are strongly supported through continuous professional development which ensures that they update their knowledge and skills regularly and develop new methods of learning and teaching. They share good practice and are very willing to undertake new ways of working, such as assessment for learning.

### **Partnership working: Good**

A wide range of partnership activities contribute strongly to children's good achievements and welfare. Parents are regularly informed about every aspect of the setting's work and active steps are taken by practitioners to include them in all the activities arranged. The information pack distributed to new parents provides useful information about the setting's policies and procedures and suggests ways in which parents can help their children. The setting has close links with the primary school and there are clear arrangements for sharing assessment information and good practice.

The close co-operation between the setting and the local authority support teacher makes a very positive contribution towards improving the quality of the provision and standards. Practitioners work together very effectively, share information about children and know whom to contact and when if children need additional support. The good links formed with people in the community such as parents, the police and the church have given rise to substantial benefits for children.

### **Resource management: Good**

Staff and resources are managed very skilfully by the leader. The setting is appropriately staffed and there are effective arrangements to fulfil practitioners' development needs. This ensures that members of staff possess current knowledge of recent developments in the Foundation Phase.

The leader has a good understanding of the setting's financial situation and has worked tirelessly to raise funds in order to ensure its long term prospects. Spending decisions are carefully evaluated to ensure that they have a direct impact on children's standards of achievement, progress and welfare. The setting provides good value for money.



## Appendix 1

### Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on parental questionnaires as only a small number of responses were received

### Responses to discussions with children

Children say that they are happy in the setting and are confident to turn to any adult to ask for advice and support.

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

Mr Wil Williams	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](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.

## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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"> <li>• personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li> <li>• language, literacy and communications skills</li> <li>• mathematical development</li> <li>• Welsh language development</li> <li>• knowledge and understanding of the world</li> <li>• physical development</li> <li>• creative development</li> </ul>
<b>CSSIW</b>	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	<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 partnership's conditions of registration.</p>
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	<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>

<b>National Childminding Association (NCMA)</b>	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
<b>National (NDNA)</b>	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
<b>Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)</b>	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.