



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 Bancyfelin
Bancyfelin Hall
Bancyfelin
Carmarthen
SA33 5NB**

Date of inspection: January 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 Bancyfelin meets in the Village Hall, Bancyfelin near Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire. The setting is open for one morning and three afternoons a week during the school term.

The setting is registered to take up to 24 children per session. Currently, there are 16 children aged two and three years of age on the register. Nine have funded early years education. The number of children attending the setting has increased in recent months. The majority of children come from homes where English is the main language spoken. There are no children with additional learning needs.

There are two members of staff. They are very experienced practitioners and suitably qualified in the education and care of young children. The leader has been in post since 2000.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in July 2013 by Estyn in May 2010.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting is good because:

- Most children make consistent progress from their starting point
- Most children develop an appropriate range of literacy and numeracy skills
- Nearly all children have good attitudes to learning
- Good teaching ensures most children's active involvement and enjoyment in their learning
- Practitioners provide a wide range of interesting activities
- Practitioners are very effective language models for children
- There is good provision to promote children's spiritual, moral and social development
- The setting provides a happy and caring environment for all children

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader provides a clear sense of purpose to the setting's work
- Effective teamwork creates an organised and purposeful learning environment for children
- Practitioners are committed to children's development and wellbeing
- Practitioners have a sound understanding of the setting's strengths and the main areas they wish to develop
- The development plan includes appropriate areas for improvement
- The new officers of the management committee carry out their duties conscientiously
- Partnerships contribute constructively to the setting's work

Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen planning to extend children's skills consistently across the areas of learning
- R2 Ensure that focused activities respond consistently to the learning needs of children of all abilities
- R3 Embed self-evaluation procedures further
- R4 Develop the strategic role 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?

Good

Standards: Good

Most children make consistent progress in their learning from their starting point. Their listening skills develop well and they listen to stories and presentations with interest and enthusiasm. A few children have a sound understanding of Welsh vocabulary and phrases, and are confident to hold a conversation. The young learners' understanding and use of the Welsh language is developing appropriately. They respond accurately to instructions and greetings and make a good effort to answer questions in Welsh. Most children are able to recall rhymes and songs and repeat them correctly.

Almost all the children are interested in books and understand that pictures and print convey meaning. Most children recognise their names in print as well as the names of many of the other children. They can name the first letter of their name and show good progress in learning familiar letters. Many children can name objects and pictures that start with the letter of the week. Most children begin to understand some of the functions of writing, for example when recording their names on parcels to be posted at the post office. A few children make good progress in trying to write their names independently.

Most children make correct use of their basic number skills in everyday activities. They count to ten confidently and few can count beyond that. The majority recognise the value of numbers to at least five. They sort objects by shape, size or colour correctly. They develop a secure understanding of basic mathematical language, using terms such as big and small, long and short, full and empty correctly in their play. Most children recognise two-dimensional shapes and a few of them recognise some familiar three-dimensional shapes. A few children can explain well that there are more square shapes than triangles on the board using different methods such as counting and sorting. The majority are beginning to recognise the purpose of money, for example in their role-play activities in the setting's post office.

Many children use basic information and communications technology (ICT) skills, such as moving objects on the screen and inputting instructions to programmable toys, appropriately. Most children develop good manipulative skills when using writing tools, cutting out, painting and gluing. The majority make appropriate use of their thinking and problem-solving skills in activities such as cooking, building with blocks, planting bulbs and creating houses to represent the story of the Three Little Pigs.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children have good attitudes to learning. They are happy to make choices and become confident learners. They work diligently on their tasks and enjoy the range of activities available. Most children behave well and are willing to share and

take turns.

All children settle well in the setting and form good relationships with other children. They feel happy and safe in the company of practitioners and are ready to ask for help. Attendance levels are good.

The majority of children have an appropriate awareness of the importance of exercise and healthy eating. They understand the importance of washing hands regularly and especially before eating snacks.

Children's personal and social skills develop well. They take on responsibilities in the setting, such as tidying up after activities, confidently. Their social skills and awareness develop further through participating in activities, such as concerts, sports and services, organised in collaboration with the school and the community.

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

The practitioners provide a wide range of learning experiences that consistently engage children's interest. The activities are based on a series of themes that are suitable for the children's age range and level of development. They include topics such as People and their work, Light and Darkness, and seasonal topics. There are a few opportunities for children to contribute their ideas for activities.

There is appropriate use of a planning framework to identify skills and activities for sessions that are led by practitioners and for free play sessions. At times, however, the planning lacks sufficient detail on extending children's skills consistently across the learning areas.

The practitioners provide effective opportunities for children to develop literacy and numeracy skills. The regular opportunities for children to listen to stories, talk about their experiences, look at books and use their marking skills have a positive impact on their progress. Story time and singing sessions are enjoyable activities that readily gain children's participation. There are productive opportunities for children to count and discuss numbers, and to develop their understanding of mathematical aspects, such as shape and money.

There are suitable opportunities for children to practise their basic ICT skills in their play. Relevant experiences enable children to use their investigative skills appropriately to experiment with three-dimensional shapes and to find numbers in the water tray.

Welsh is the natural medium of the life and work of the setting and promotes children's early bilingual proficiency effectively. Practitioners model accurate language constantly. Children learn about the traditions and celebrations of Wales through purposeful activities including celebrating St David's Day and St Dwynwen's Day. There is appropriate use of a few visits, such as to the village post office, and

of the contribution of visitors, such as the minister, postman and firemen, to extend children's learning experiences.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have sound knowledge of child development and the requirements of the Foundation Phase. They make purposeful use of a range of teaching methods. During circle time and free play sessions, for example, practitioners utilise every opportunity to speak with children to nurture and develop their communication skills. There is effective use of questioning techniques to encourage children to reflect on their learning and to apply their skills independently in a range of activities.

There is an appropriate balance between activities that are led by adults and those chosen by the children. Activities are thoroughly prepared with good attention to ensuring purposeful resources to support the learning. There is a clear emphasis on promoting children's learning skills. For example, there is effective use of the post office in the setting for children to use their speaking skills to ask for goods, to discuss the price of different stamps and to use coins to pay. On occasion, however, focused activities do not respond fully to the learning needs of children of different ages and abilities.

The practitioners know the children well and they assess and record their progress effectively. Children are assessed using an assessment profile that provides practitioners with a useful insight into what the child can do. There is productive use of this information to set group and individual targets for children. Children's progress towards achieving the targets is monitored appropriately by the practitioners. At times, there is suitable use of this information to plan group activities but, as yet, it is not a consistent feature.

Parents receive regular information about their children's development through informal discussions and individual feedback sessions. They receive informative written reports and samples of their children's work. There are suitable arrangements to transfer information to the local primary school and this is strengthened by the opportunities for children to visit the school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. Induction procedures ensure that children settle well in the setting. Children are encouraged appropriately to eat healthily and to take care of their personal hygiene. Practitioners have clear expectations that promote good behaviour successfully.

There are no children with additional learning needs at present. However, the leader has a clear understanding of the required procedures including ensuring access to more specialised agencies and services such as speech therapy.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Risk assessments are completed appropriately.

Relevant learning experiences promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development effectively. Values, such as care and respect, and the importance of helping others, are promoted strongly through the setting's work. Experiences, such as circle time, thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations, and saying prayers contribute positively to children's spiritual and moral development. Children's awareness of the wider world is fostered appropriately by celebrating the festivals and celebrations of other cultures, such as the festival of Divali.

Opportunities to grow vegetables, plant bulbs, learn about animals and recycle develop children's understanding of the need to care for the environment and all living things in a meaningful way.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community that provides children with equal access to the curriculum and all the activities provided. Practitioners consider and value the different backgrounds of the children and develop a good understanding of the needs of each child.

The setting has enough practitioners who are suitably qualified to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase. In general, the building and facilities are of good quality. Purposeful activity areas are arranged around the hall and examples of children's work are displayed appropriately.

On the whole, there are sufficient basic resources to support learning in the classroom and the outdoor learning area. The resources are accessible to the children and this supports independent learning. However, the range of resources, such as mathematics and number resources and board games, are more limited. The outdoor area provides a suitable place for children to develop their skills, such as their physical and creative skills. The building is clean and safe.

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

The setting is led effectively by an experienced leader. She sets high expectations that are based on children's development and wellbeing. Clear directions and organisation ensure that sessions run smoothly. The practitioners share common values and demonstrate a strong commitment to their roles. They work closely as a team and create a purposeful learning environment for the children. Policies are implemented appropriately.

The management committee is very supportive of the setting. It meets regularly and keeps minutes of its discussions, which are the basis for further planning. The officers, who are relatively new to their roles, undertake their responsibilities conscientiously. For example, the secretary prepares regular newsletters for parents that include useful information about setting activities. Nevertheless, the committee's strategic role, including forward planning, continues to develop. The setting has an appropriate system for evaluating practitioners' work.

The setting gives appropriate attention to national and local priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase, promoting children's literacy skills, and developing effective links with the local primary school.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners have a sound knowledge of the setting's strengths and the main areas they wish to develop. The leader monitors provision appropriately through observation, reviewing children's records and regular discussion with the deputy leader. Practitioners make productive use of the information collected to adapt aspects of provision as required. However, the use of more structured evaluation procedures has not been embedded fully.

Practitioners have completed a balanced self-evaluation report based on a detailed review of provision. There is a range of suitable evidence to support the conclusions. As a result, the new development plan identifies appropriate areas for improvement, together with a timetable and specific responsibilities in order to achieve the targets set. The new development plan is being implemented appropriately with the support of the local authority link teacher.

Aspects of provision are monitored effectively by the link teacher. Areas for development are agreed and constructive strategies implemented that improve provision. The practitioners are open to new ways of working. This approach has brought about improvements in areas such as the organisation of activities.

The leader gives careful consideration to the views of parents through discussion and questionnaires. The implementation of new policies and guidelines are discussed further with the Mudiad Meithrin officer.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has established a sound partnership with parents and this was confirmed in discussions during the inspection. The setting provides parents with relevant information through the notice board, brochures and newsletters. Practitioners are regularly available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of each session.

The close working relationship with the management committee provides an appropriate basis for the further development of the setting. Close collaboration with the local authority link teacher and Mudiad Meithrin officer leads to improvements in the setting's work through the constructive advice and guidance provided.

The setting has a good partnership with the primary school. The children and practitioners benefit from the opportunities to contribute to activities, such as sports and concerts, which are organised collaboratively. The partnership with the school and with the local Ti a Fi setting promotes a smooth transition for children to the next stage in their education.

The setting has beneficial links with the community. Members of the community contribute appropriately to children's experiences and provide good support for the

setting's fundraising activities. The children take a full part in village events such as and carnival and services in the chapel.

Resource management: Good

The setting is appropriately staffed to deliver the curriculum and to provide for children's welfare and development. The setting has a sufficient supply of basic resources and they are used productively.

The practitioners attend suitable courses on Foundation Phase requirements and on aspects of child care and development. The positive impact of the training can be seen in the quality of the experiences provided such as the activities to develop children's early literacy skills.

The leader and treasurer have a sound understanding of the budget, and the management committee prioritises spending appropriately according to the setting's needs. There is successful use of fundraising activities to assist the setting.

Given the quality of leadership, the teaching and the care and support to 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	<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.