



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 Bethel
Ysgol Gynradd Bethel
Bethel
Gwynedd
LL55 1AX
United Kingdom**

Date of inspection: January 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 Bethel meets in a portacabin based in the school field adjacent to Ysgol Gynradd Bethel. Bethel is a small village some 4 miles from Caernarfon in Gwynedd. Children attending the setting come from the village and surrounding area, a typical rural Welsh community. The setting describes children's background as being varied socio-economically but overall relatively prosperous.

The setting is administered by a voluntary management committee and is an education provider supported by the Gwynedd Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. It is also a registered member of the Mudiad Meithrin.

The setting provides for children between the age of 2½ years and 3 years and operates for 5 mornings a week, between 8.45 a.m. and 10.45 a.m. during term time. Currently there are 13 children on the register of whom 4 are three years of age and funded. Children move to the next phase of their education in the September following their 3rd birthday.

Most children come from homes where Welsh is the predominant language. At the time of the inspection there were no children from an ethnic minority background attending the setting, or children identified with additional learning needs. The setting however welcomes children of all backgrounds and ability.

The main room is warm and attractively furnished incorporating examples of the children's work. The room is appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of the Foundation Phase curriculum.

The outside play area is fenced and provides an area for the children to play safely. Children do not have free access to the outside neither is there a covered outside area for the children to play.

The setting is staffed by a leader and 2 assistants, all of whom have relevant qualifications and experience. They are all Welsh speakers.

The setting was inspected by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in June 2007 and is registered to accommodate 19 children.

The setting was inspected by Estyn in 2008. The recommendations have been addressed.

Summary

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

Current performance

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because of:

- the care, support and guidance children enjoy;
- the partnership with parents and their support;
- the work of the management committee;
- the learning opportunities provided for the children;
- children's behaviour and attitudes.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for Improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because of:

- the active support provided by the management committee;
- the quality of self-evaluation and development planning;
- the openness of the leader and staff to change and new ideas;
- the support provided by the Local Authority support teacher and Mudiad Meithrin.

Recommendations

- A1. refine its assessment procedures.
- A2. plan activities well matched to individual children's ability so as to challenge them.
- A3. continue to develop links with the receiving primary school.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan which 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 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: **Good**

Planning is done co-operatively and provides children with an interesting range of activities. Planning is detailed and incorporates reference to skill development. The provision for developing children's communication and numeracy skills is coherent and incorporated in the experiences of all children.

Children's learning experiences incorporate activities that develop their ICT skills, and their creative skills. Practitioners use the indoor and outdoor environment imaginatively and this provides the children with new experiences that effectively develop their skills.

Overall, however, planning is not sufficiently focused on children's individual ability and the next steps in children's learning are not clearly indicated.

Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their personal skills and cultural identity. Children have opportunities to work together and individually. The setting is also an integral part of the local community and is involved in local activities and Welsh festivals, such as St. David's day. The children also partake in the local Eisteddfod. Celebrations of the Chinese New Year extend children's knowledge of other cultures.

Teaching: **Good**

Children experience a wide range of learning experiences across all areas of learning. Staff have a broad knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase, and use a good range of teaching strategies. They successfully engage and interest the children and use questioning well, particularly to develop children's language skills. They are good role models and this is influential in developing good relationships between adults and children.

The staff are sensitive to children's needs and know when children need support. There is a good balance between child-initiated activities and adult-led tasks.

Practitioners make good use of resources including digital equipment to motivate the children. The staff know their children well and are aware of their capabilities. Children are encouraged to take responsibility – this includes a child every day assuming “Helpwr y Dydd”,

Questioning and discussion are well used to develop children's thinking skills. Children's achievement and progress are recorded with annotated pictures of children's work in their “LLyfrTrysor”. This provides a good record of what children have achieved and is welcomed by the parents. It is limited however in providing a good basis for planning future work well matched to children's needs and planning the next steps in children's learning. However, the recently introduced County assessment record keeping format is well designed to record individual children's achievement and will help to pinpoint the next steps in children's learning.

Parents are kept well informed about their children's achievement, wellbeing and development.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing are well established and efficient and make a significant contribution to their development.

The setting has appropriate policies and arrangements for promoting healthy living - even the youngest children were observed washing their hands without prompting by an adult. Children are beginning to understand the principle of sustainability such as composting and collecting waste paper. A notable feature of the setting is the very good quality of relationships that are apparent. Children are treated with respect and know that adults will help them if necessary. They show high levels of self-confidence and are quite happy to talk with the inspector. The setting employs a positive behaviour strategy and involves children in tidying and clearing away as well as giving them responsibility.

Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is given high priority and makes an effective contribution to children's development.

All children are happy in the setting, they are warmly welcomed each morning and nearly all the children are enthusiastic to take part in activities set out for them.

Good arrangements are in place to support children with additional learning needs and whilst none are currently present the setting reports on a number of such children who have attended in the past and benefited from the Gwynedd Referral Scheme. Effective links have been established with the Speech Therapy unit.

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

Learning environment: Good

The setting's welcoming ethos is a notable feature of the Cylch. Staff greet children warmly and quickly engage them in activities set out for them. Children show that they are happy to come to the setting and any child showing concern is shown affection and understanding. All children have equality of access to all activities and have a good range of materials to choose from.

Staff know their children well and are sensitive to their needs. The "open door" policy gives parents an opportunity to converse with the staff.

Children benefit from a learning environment that is well matched to the needs of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The teaching room is warm, attractive and well resourced. Areas are set aside for specific activities and resources are to hand. The outdoor area is adjacent to the setting and easily approached and resourced for children's play and other activities. However, children do not have free access to the outside, neither is there a covered area where they can play.

Facilities enable the setting to accept children with physical disabilities.

The setting is staffed with well qualified Welsh speaking practitioners. The building is behind the primary school and secure in that access is via the school yard. The door is securely locked so no one can enter or leave unannounced.

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

The setting displays a strong sense of purpose focused on providing the best learning experiences for all children. Since her recent appointment the leader has managed the setting well and overseen the improvement in the provision, both inside the classroom and outside. All relevant policies are in place and effectively implemented. These include details of complaints procedures, although this has never been used. The staff work together very well as a team complementing and supporting each other. Relationships with parents and the management committee are positive and have worked well to establish a well resourced provision. All are clearly focused on improving the provision and set against established priorities.

The setting's positive ethos is apparent and shared with the management committee. All share common values based on providing the best learning environment for the children, focused on both their academic and personal development.

Staff who attend courses share their professional expertise with colleagues and an effective appraisal system is in place.

Improving quality: Good

Since her recent appointment the leader and the management committee have adopted a self-evaluative approach and clearly identified areas for development. As financial resources allowed the deficiencies in the provision have been addressed, priorities established and resulted in a well resourced setting.

Practitioners are able to show how the provision and standards of children's achievement have been improved. This includes developing the outside activity area.

The recently produced self-evaluation document is an accurate assessment of the setting and planning for the future is detailed and realistic.

Parents are appreciative of what has been done.

Partnership working: Good

The partnership between the leader and the management committee has been a good and notable feature in bringing about improvement in the provision and subsequently in children's achievements and wellbeing. Parents have been actively involved and the replies to the parental questionnaires indicate their strong satisfaction with the setting.

Parents are well aware of their children's progress and have commented favourably on their language development. Parents also attend the setting to see the work their children have done and to hear them perform. The setting invites parents to a open morning in April and to visit before their child begins at the Cylch. The setting welcomes parents' views and feedback and circulates parents with an annual questionnaire. There is also an end of term party when parents can see the work children have done. The "LlyfrTrysor" is a record of what each child has achieved.

Links are in place with the local primary school. Being adjacent to the school facilitates the transfer of children but overall links are underdeveloped.

The setting benefits from the support it receives from the Local Authority advisory teacher and from the representative from the MudiadMeithrin. The setting has useful contacts with relevant organisations and knows who to contact when additional support is required for children.

Resource management: Good

Financial decisions are carefully evaluated by the management committee and recent initiatives have resulted in the provision of good quality resources. Resources are well deployed to support learning.

The setting staff share their professional knowledge and this ensures good quality teaching.

Overall, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Yn dynodi'r meincnod – mae hwn yn gyfanswm o'r holl ymatebion hyd hyn ers mis Medi 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'ngryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'ngryf	Don't know Ddimyngwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliadyngyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	10	10 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	10	10 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fymhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		70%	26%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r raddysgu yn dda.
		79%	18%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		82%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	9	7 78%	1 11%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Caiff fymhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		73%	22%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	10	5 50%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	4	Mae fymhlentyn yn cael gymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		64%	25%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed	8	5	3	0	0	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyso

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'ngryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'ngryf	Don't know Ddimyngwybod	
about my child's progress.		62%	38%	0%	0%		n am gynnyddfymhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwni'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problemau.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	10	7 70%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad a rhyngwyf i ddiolch â chwynion.
		62%	30%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	9	7 78%	2 22%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn wedi'i baratoli'n ddwydded a rhyngwyf i ddiolch â chwynion.
		71%	23%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	10	8 80%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweiliadau.
		62%	31%	4%	0%		
The setting is well run.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael i redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion Rees Morgan

Reporting Inspector

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 partnership's 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>

National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders 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.