



*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 Ffestiniog  
Ysgol Bro Cynfal  
Llan Ffestiniog  
Gwynedd  
LL41 4NF**

**Date of inspection: July 2013**

**by**

**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 Llan Ffestiniog is a registered nursery setting and is part of the provision of the Mudiad Meithrin and the Gwynedd Children and Young People's Partnership. The setting is a voluntary nursery group which is run by a committee of parents. It meets on five mornings a week in a classroom at Ysgol Bro Cynfal primary school, Llan Ffestiniog. According to the setting, Llan Ffestiniog is a small rural village which is neither advantaged nor economically disadvantaged.

The setting accepts children of all abilities and backgrounds. During the inspection, no child with additional learning needs or of ethnic origin attended the setting. Five three year old children attend the setting and are funded by the local authority.

Welsh is spoken at home by almost every child. The setting's main medium of teaching and learning is Welsh.

The last two years have seen a very unsettled period for the setting, in particular as regards leaders and permanent staff. Due to staff changes, the current staff comprises a temporary leader, as well as two full time practitioners. They are all appropriately qualified to teach the early years.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in April this year. It is being inspected by Estyn for the first time.

## 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 performance is good because:

- a wide range of interesting learning experiences satisfy the educational and personal needs of all children well and ensure their commitment to learning;
- there is comprehensive provision which ensures that children acquire the necessary literacy, communication and numeracy skills;
- practitioners provide a stimulating, challenging and exciting environment for every child;
- assessment information is used effectively in order to respond to individual children's specific needs;
- every child is happy when he or she arrives at the setting and the setting is good at helping them to achieve their physical and emotional wellbeing;
- every child is able to take full advantage of the learning experiences and develop positive values and attitudes, and
- there is a good supply of good quality resources in almost every area of learning.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the strong sense of purpose created by the leader effectively promotes and maintains improvement;
- learning and teaching are well managed and policies are effectively implemented;
- the management committee fulfils its responsibilities conscientiously;
- the setting continually evaluates itself and is well aware of its strengths and areas to be developed;
- the setting is developing well as a strong learning community;
- a wide range of partners make a strong contribution to children's achievements and wellbeing; and
- the setting provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

R1 Increase the supply of computer programs.

R2 Include the parents in self evaluation processes.

R3 Formalise staff appraisal procedures

### What happens next?

The setting will form an action plan showing how it will 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**

Under the leader's direction, practitioners succeed well in providing a wide range of interesting and stimulating learning experiences, carefully tailored to satisfy all the children's educational and personal needs. As a result, almost every child becomes fully immersed in his or her work, involving themselves enthusiastically in activities provided and making good progress. Through careful joint planning, the setting ensures that all areas of learning in the Foundation Phase are skilfully integrated into the learning experiences so that the curriculum systematically builds on children's current knowledge, understanding and skills. This guarantees that there is continuity and progression in the children's learning as they progress through the Foundation Phase.

The strong focus placed on active learning provides very many opportunities for children to take risks, to experiment with new experiences, to investigate their environment confidently and develop into independent learners. The wide range of creative activities, such as painting and creating three dimensional models, effectively promote the development of children's creative skills. The daily opportunities children have to play outside on the school playground make a good contribution towards developing their physical skills, as well as their health and wellbeing. These learning experiences also enable children to develop a number of important personal and social skills, and particularly the ability to co-operate with others and to share with other children.

There is comprehensive provision to ensure that children acquire the necessary literacy, communication and numeracy skills which they need in order to take full advantage of the range of curricular activities provided for them. Practitioners' abilities to encourage children to discuss and explain their learning experiences, to share ideas with other children, and to listen carefully to the contributions of other children and adults around them is an obvious strength at the setting. Practitioners avail themselves of every opportunity to develop children's numeracy skills, for example by counting together how many are present or by singing number rhymes, and by including numerous number activities in the continuous provision. Although the provision for developing information and communication technology (ICT) skills is appropriate, a shortage of computer programs restricts the range of experiences that can be offered.

The strong emphasis placed on celebrating Welsh festivals and traditions and on learning about the celebrations of other cultures reinforces the children's personal sense of identity and raises their awareness of their roles as global citizens.

The setting operates in a sustainable manner and ensures that children take an active role in its recycling arrangements.

### **Teaching: Good**

Practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and Foundation Phase requirements, using it effectively to provide a stimulating, challenging and exciting learning environment for every child. At the beginning of sessions, practitioners carefully explain the activities prepared and encourage every child to become fully involved in that particular work. There are clear expectations as regards achievement, and practitioners adapt some tasks very skilfully to challenge children from the full ability range. They are patient, encourage children to express views and know when to intervene in order to move the learning forward. Through detailed planning, practitioners succeed in maintaining an appropriate balance between activities selected by the child and those led or directed by an adult. The strong emphasis placed on providing opportunities for children to be active in their own learning and to make personal choices is a prominent feature in every session.

There is a particularly close working relationship and mutual respect between children and adults. When a child's attitude or behaviour is unacceptable, practitioners respond to the situation sensitively but firmly.

Practitioners know children well. They possess thorough and current knowledge of every individual's strengths and learning needs and they use this knowledge effectively in order to monitor children's progress and to ensure that there is appropriate provision for them. The daily practice of observing and recording children's response to their tasks enables practitioners to adapt learning experiences to meet the specific needs of individual children. By means of the 'Llyfr Trysor', practitioners can trace a child's progress in detail across the six areas of learning and intervene early if the need arises. The booklet which is handed to the parents when the child finishes at the setting is an interesting, visual record of their child's progress and development over time.

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

Every child is happy and smiling on arrival at the setting. The setting has secure policies and arrangements to promote children's healthy living and wellbeing. By encouraging the parents to provide healthy snacks for their children, cleaning teeth at the beginning of every session and washing their hands before eating, the setting promotes hygienic practice and healthy eating very effectively. By providing daily opportunities for children to share their experiences and to participate regularly in physical exercise, the setting provides good help for children to achieve their physical and emotional wellbeing. There are secure arrangements to ensure that every child and adult is free from any physical or emotional harassment. Every child is encouraged to participate fully in the life of the setting and to undertake duties such as 'Helpwr Heddiw,' putting things away at the end of sessions or handing out resources.

There is good provision to promote children’s spiritual, moral and social development. There is strong emphasis on developing children’s curiosity and sense of awe and wonder about the world they live in, particularly the natural world. Additionally, values such as honesty and respect are strongly promoted through all the setting’s work. Children are encouraged to show initiative, to control their behaviour and be willing to share resources with other children.

The leader takes early action if there is concern about any child’s development or welfare. When a child or parent needs specialist support, she is well aware of whom to contact.

The good induction arrangements, as well as the care given by practitioners, ensure that children new to the setting settle down without difficulty.

The setting’s arrangements for safeguarding children satisfy requirements and are not a cause for concern.

**Learning environment: Good**

Practitioners succeed in creating a stimulating environment where every child can take full advantage of learning experiences and develop positive values and attitudes. The setting is an inclusive community where every child has equal right to all areas of learning and activities provided. There is strong emphasis on developing tolerant attitudes and ensuring that children and staff are free from any harrassment. The setting has enough practitioners who possess sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach every aspect of the Foundation Phase curriculum.

With the exception of ICT, there is a good supply of good quality resources in all areas of learning. They are carefully matched to every individual’s development and learning needs. The practitioners make good use of the local area, as well as the area outside the classroom to enrich children’s learning experiences. The setting uses resources and people from the local community purposefully to support teaching in the classroom. The accommodation is of good quality and offers full access to any disabled child.

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

Through the leader’s dedication and enthusiasm, the setting is successful in creating an extremely positive ethos where children and staff feel appreciated. Practitioners share common values about learning, behaviour and relationships and they co-operate very effectively to ensure that the Foundation Phase and local and national priorities are successfully implemented. The leader creates a strong sense of purpose which promotes and sustains improvement effectively. Learning and teaching are well managed, and the setting’s policies are effectively implemented. Staff possess clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and fulfil them conscientiously during sessions. Relationships with children, parents and the primary school are very positive and contribute very significantly to the sense of community.

There are effective arrangements for the induction of new staff and members of the management committee take an active role in the process. Although there are informal staff appraisal procedures in place, discussions are not minuted and the focus on identifying the individual's training needs are not sufficiently clear.

The management committee is well informed of the setting's performance and fulfils its responsibilities conscientiously. Officers of the committee consult with parents and share information regularly and they make an effective contribution to the setting's administration.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Practitioners have good knowledge of the setting's strengths and areas to be improved. Through the leader's encouragement, they self evaluate continually and look into ways of improving. There are secure arrangements to maintain good practice and to implement change in areas which need improving. Although the setting benefits substantially from professional advice given by the local authority when self evaluating, arrangements to include parents in the process are not clear enough.

The recent self evaluation report, as well as the improvement plan, are of good quality and set a clear direction for the setting's development. Priorities noted are implemented systematically and thoroughly by the leader and practitioners.

Practitioners are strongly supported through a programme of continuous professional development provided mainly by the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin. This has enabled them to acquire new knowledge and skills and to present the Foundation Phase successfully.

The setting is developing well as a strong learning community. Practitioners are open to new ideas and they are willing to attempt different ways of working and share knowledge and ideas amongst themselves.

### **Partnership working: Good**

A wide range of partnership activities make a strong contribution to children's achievements and welfare. The very productive partnership with the primary school eases transition arrangements substantially and ensures progression and continuity in the children's education. The leader and the Foundation Phase teacher at the primary school are in daily contact and the setting benefits greatly from using the school playground and also from joining in with the Foundation Phase collective worship. The setting also benefits from the willingness of people from the community, such as a local farmer, to share their experiences with the children. Practitioners take practical steps to include parents in every aspect of the setting's work by informing them regularly about all the activities and encouraging them to participate in their children's education.

The regular visits, reports and professional advice of the local authority support teacher have a very positive impact on the setting's development. The leader also receives good managerial support from the Mudiad Meithrin development officer.

The practitioners work together well, share information about children and know whom to contact and when if individuals require additional support.



## **Resource management: Good**

The setting is well staffed to teach the Foundation Phase curriculum. The staff is used effectively to make best use of time, expertise and experience. The leader and the treasurer of the management committee have detailed knowledge of their budget and they prioritise spending in line with the setting's development needs. Spending decisions are very carefully evaluated to ensure that they have positive effects on children's standards, progress and wellbeing. The setting provides good value for money.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Stakeholders' satisfaction report**

#### **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.