



A report on

Cylch Meithrin Llangennech
The Parc Pavilion
Station Road
Llangennech
Carmarthenshire
SA14 8UB

Dates of inspection: 31 January, 1 February 2012

by

Branwen Llewelyn Jones

for

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

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January 2012

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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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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About the setting

Cylch Meithrin Llangennech is run in accordance with the recognised guidelines of Mudiad Meithrin. The setting is registered under the Children's Act 1989.

It was established over thirty years ago in Llangennech Junior School but as the school's numbers rose the nursery moved in 2009 to a multi-purpose building in the village which is the Llangennech cricket pavilion. The building is used by a number of different organisations which means that in the winter, practitioners set out the equipment on a Monday morning and put it back into storage on a Friday afternoon. During the summer, the equipment is put out each morning and packed away every afternoon. There is a large field outside with woodland at its far side and there is a children's park nearby.

The nursery provides care for children from the local community and surrounding areas for five mornings a week from Monday to Friday between 9.00 a.m. and 1.00 p.m. during school terms. Children of two years and upwards attend and they leave after their third birthday when they begin in the nursery at Llangennech Infant School or other schools in the area. At present thirty seven children are registered with twenty four spaces allocated each day of whom thirteen are funded.

The area is recognised as one which is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged.

This is a Welsh medium setting but children of different linguistic backgrounds also attend and children from ethnic minorities are welcome. Only one three year old child comes from a home where Welsh is the first language. At present there is no child who has been identified as having additional learning needs. The children who are not from Welsh-speaking homes develop their knowledge and understanding of Welsh through their experiences in the nursery and the Welsh which is spoken by the practitioners.

Four members of staff are employed including the leader and all attend each session. All have appropriate qualifications in early years education namely NVQ level 3. One part-time support assistant is employed in addition to the full-time staff. All practitioners have received training for the Foundation Phase. The setting is managed by a management committee.

The last inspection by Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales was conducted on 11th July 2011 and the nursery was inspected by Estyn in March 2006 before moving to its current location.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance is good for the following reasons:

- children achieve well and make good progress from their starting point;
- children feel happy and safe in the setting;
- children receive exciting experiences which match well their interests;
- the teaching is of a consistently good standard;
- assessment through observation and the effective use made of this to plan the next steps, and
- the strong partnerships with parents, the school and the community.

Prospects for improvement

The provider's prospects for improvement are good for the following reasons:

- there is a culture of professional reflection which is based on self-evaluation;
- the good standard of leadership;
- the setting's commitment to continuous professional development, and
- effective team work.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve provision and achievements practitioners should:

- R1 extend the use of open-ended questioning in order to develop further children's thinking skills, and
- R2 continue to develop the process of self-evaluation and to monitor regularly the targets which have been set.

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan which sets out how these recommendations will be met.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Every child achieves well according to their starting point and stage of development and each child makes good progress in all the areas of learning of the Foundation Phase.

Almost all children, including those from non Welsh-speaking homes develop a sound vocabulary and knowledge of language patterns. The majority understands and follows instructions correctly and answers questions appropriately. With the encouragement of adults the majority speaks in full sentences. They listen with interest to stories, concentrating well and recite together sections they know. The majority develops a wide vocabulary and they sometimes use this during role play.

They very much enjoy singing songs and enunciate clearly. The majority enjoys browsing through books and they choose books voluntarily, treating them like readers. All enjoy mark-making both inside and in the outside area and they experiment confidently with a wide range of materials. Every child uses mathematical language correctly when comparing the length, height or size of objects when playing. The majority uses fingers to count and they recognise common shapes. They develop their information and communications technology skills well through using a laptop and computer programs, an 'i-pod' and a microphone to record and follow instructions.

The majority demonstrates good creative skills during role play, responding to music through dance and in their art work.

The majority develops good levels of independence, self-confidence and self-control. The majority concentrates for extended periods while playing or exploring their outdoor environment and all enjoy their learning.

Wellbeing: Good

The children enjoy their experiences in the setting. The close and warm relationship between the adults and the children gives them a feeling of safety and contentment. The self-confidence and happiness of the children shows that they are appreciated and respected and they, in turn, respect and like the adults. They show concern for one another, the practitioners and visitors.

Each one understands that eating healthily, dental hygiene and keeping fit are important to their health and they name healthy foods and things they should not eat. They enjoy eating lunch together every day and they behave beautifully at the table. Every child goes to the toilet independently and then washes his/her hands.

All have a positive and enthusiastic attitude to learning and take an active and energetic part in their learning experiences and behave very well.

They are courteous at all times and the majority shows consideration towards others. The majority makes friends in the nursery and they are very fond of one another. They look for their friends to play with them and demonstrate concern for them.

All the children make decisions and choices about their learning and almost all are very confident.

They enjoy their regular visits to the local community, visiting the park and the school.

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

The planning process begins after practitioners evaluate and discuss the week's provision and results. They discuss the achievements, progress and needs of each individual child in addition to general matters. Observations which have been made are considered and practitioners use all this information to plan the next cycle of provision. The planning matches well the needs and interests of the children and a wide range of exciting and practical experiences is planned which enables the children to make good progress towards meeting the outcomes of the Foundation Phase. The planning is flexible and practitioners were seen to adapt it in order to meet children's interests. Adults build well on the knowledge, understanding, skills and interests of the children in a way which is meaningful to them.

Almost every child develops into an enthusiastic, confident and independent learner and all develop good thinking, creative, physical, linguistic and mathematical skills in all areas of learning. They demonstrate good creative skills when moving to music. All display great interest in the world around them and they possess a good knowledge as a result of the emphasis placed on investigating their immediate environment through activities such as exploring the natural environment surrounding the setting. Their knowledge of sustainable development is promoted through the re-cycling of paper, glass and plastic.

Children develop strong relationships with others and they demonstrate respect and tolerance towards everyone including people from different cultural backgrounds.

Children are encouraged by practitioners to speak Welsh at all times and to develop their language through listening to stories and a wide range of rhymes and songs. They celebrate the Welsh culture in many ways including holding a St David's Day concert for the community and through visiting places in the village and further afield which are related to the theme, for example, Cydweli castle.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a good knowledge of child development and current developments in the field. They understand well the requirements of the Foundation Phase and have high expectations of each child according to his/ her stage of development. Behaviour is managed positively in a sensitive manner and as a result, children learn lifelong dispositions including the importance of showing respect and kindness towards others.

Practitioners generally make effective use of open-ended questions in order to extend the children's learning and these sometimes extend their thinking skills. The flexibility of the teaching meets well the children's individual needs. The flexible organisation ensures good opportunities for the children to make their own decisions about their learning and develops well their independence and self-confidence. Practitioners give children plenty of time to become engrossed in their learning experiences, for example, exploring their environment, and practitioners intervene only when there is an opportunity to extend their learning.

Practitioners know and understand the children well. They assess through observing the children while they engage in their experiences noting significant things and discussing their observations. The information gathered is fed into the next stage of planning; this is a good feature. They track children's progress regularly and keep a termly record of their achievements in all areas of learning; parents receive a full and informative report about their children when they leave to attend school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

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Practitioners have created an inclusive family atmosphere in the setting where children feel comfortable and happy. Each child is valued and respect is shown for their ideas and interests.

Practitioners develop well the children's awareness of the importance of healthy eating and keeping fit. Children's curiosity about their lives and beliefs and those of others is developed well, for example, through celebrating Diwali and the Chinese New Year which they celebrate by wearing Chinese clothes and listening to Chinese music while eating food from that country. They celebrate the main Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter and say a prayer before lunch and before going home. Practitioners develop well in the children a sense of awe and wonder about the world around them particularly through the regular opportunities they have to explore their natural environment.

Practitioners nurture well the morals and values they believe are necessary to the holistic development of the responsible child. The children learn about the importance of fairness, honesty and truth and they know well the difference between right and wrong in the context of their young lives. The provision enables the children to socialise well, to take responsibility, to display initiative and to develop a good understanding of living and sharing within their small community. They have regular opportunities to make decisions and they enjoy their learning.

The relationship between the setting, the school and outside agencies is good. The close relationship with the school ensures a particularly successful transfer to the nursery class for the children. The head teacher of the school comes to talk with the children regularly; she knows the children well and they enjoy her company.

A selection of parents said they were very satisfied with every aspect of the setting's provision, especially the social development of their children and they feel that their children receive very good care.

The setting has an appropriate Child Protection policy. The staff are aware of its contents and the steps to be followed and all have received training in child protection. All the necessary procedures for Child Protection are in place and they reflect the requirements of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008.

There are no children with additional learning needs at present and every child has access to all areas of learning and all the rich learning experiences provided.

Learning Environment: Good

There is a warm family ethos in the setting and adults show affection and kindness towards each child. Practitioners know the needs and interests of the children very well and they respond to them with sensitivity using their thorough knowledge of the children's backgrounds. Each child has equal access to every aspect of the curriculum. As a result of the affection and respect for the child and the values and standards displayed by the staff, the children develop tolerance, positive attitudes towards their learning and good behaviour.

The setting has positive policies and procedures for dealing with any problems of aggressive behaviour and to promote equal opportunities and the rights of the child. These are known to all and are monitored and implemented effectively. The nursery is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales and there were no recommendations in its last report. Risk assessments are conducted regularly and every practitioner has received training in first aid.

The ratio of adults to children is good and each practitioner has appropriate qualifications. Practitioners address the requirements of the Foundation Phase well and the children receive interesting experiences which respond well to their specific needs. The large room provides sufficient space for the children to become engrossed in all their experiences. All children show concern and kindness towards their peers, adults and visitors.

Practitioners use the outside area regularly in order to provide children with stimulating experiences and opportunities to engage fully with things that interest them. They use this area well also to promote children's skills across each area of learning and to provide activities which develop their ability to concentrate and persevere. The setting's use of its immediate environment and the community enriches well children's learning experiences.

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

The leader gives clear and strong direction to all aspects of the life of the nursery and the process of improvement. She and her deputy work together very well and share principles and objectives which are based on a good understanding of child development. These are seen to be implemented in the active and interesting learning experiences which the children receive and the system of organisation which allows children to make decisions and choices about their learning, to develop self-confidence and independence and to make good progress.

All practitioners fulfill their responsibilities effectively and demonstrate a strong commitment to their role in the interests of the children. Both contribute to the

strategic planning of nursery. They share the values they wish to promote by personal example and through discussion. They have high expectations of both themselves, the staff and of the children together with targets which will ensure good provision and high standards of achievement. Progress towards achieving them is monitored regularly.

The child and his/her needs and unique interests is at the centre of everything and the leader and her deputy create a positive and happy ethos.

The setting improvement plan is derived from the results of the setting's self-evaluation process and gives positive direction to the life and work of the setting.

The management committee is well informed about everything that happens in the setting. Its members understand and fulfil their roles well. They are well informed about the performance of the setting which they discuss in their termly meetings. The registered person attends the setting regularly and the setting benefits greatly from her support. The committee makes good use of thorough information to make effective decisions and it fulfills its legal responsibilities.

The leader meets national and local priorities in accordance with the requirements of the Assembly and the local authority.

Improving quality: Good

The setting makes effective use of its self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The self-evaluation report is thorough and leads to sound strategies for improvement which ensure positive outcomes for each child. Leaders consult with parents and care-givers in order to inform the self-evaluation. They use the information collected from parents' questionnaires to gather opinions and to identify areas for improvement.

The setting makes effective use of the support of the local authority's advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin officer and implements successfully their recommendations.

Following the process of self-evaluation a setting improvement plan is produced which indicates a good awareness of the setting's performance and focuses on raising standards by improving provision and setting clear targets. All practitioners contribute to this.

Every practitioner has an annual appraisal interview with the leader and a member of the management committee in order to identify their continuing professional development needs. They attend training courses regularly and the positive impact of this is seen in the teaching and children's welfare as practitioners implement what they have learned.

Partnership working: Excellent

The way in which the setting works with others in order to provide learning experiences is an excellent feature. The leader works very closely and effectively with the local authority's Foundation Phase advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin officer in order to improve provision and to raise standards. Practitioners also attend regular cluster meetings of similar settings in the area to share good practice and this partnership has a positive effect on provision and standards. There is also a very close link with a private nursery in the area which is a very fruitful partnership in terms of extending good practice.

Practitioners work closely with all stakeholders and are very willing to consult parents and care-givers and to implement their suggestions.

The partnership with the school is an excellent feature. The nursery teacher and the head visit the children regularly and practitioners receive useful information and suggestions for improvement which have a positive effect on standards. The school shares expertise and resources with the setting and the nursery benefits greatly from this.

Managing resources: Good

Practitioners are well deployed in order to make the most effective use of their expertise and to ensure good provision. They use resources indoors and outdoors creatively in order to provide exciting learning experiences for the children and to broaden their horizons. They measure the effect of resources on learning and teaching and plan well for future resource needs. Practitioners use the outdoors well to develop children's skills in all areas of learning.

Leaders make the best possible use of the setting's resources and budget in order to offer the best provision. The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Responses to the parents' questionnaire

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received.

Response to discussions with children

Every child is comfortable when talking with a visitor and they say that they are very happy in the nursery. They talk about their friends and say that they know what to do if they are unhappy or worried about something.

Appendix 2

The inspection team / reporting inspector – delete as appropriate

Branwen Llewelyn Jones	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)

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

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</p>

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	early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.
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.