



*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 Sarnau a Llandderfel  
Neuadd y Sarnau  
Sarnau  
Y Bala  
LL23 7LG**

**Date of inspection: February 2015**

**by**

**Mr Eifion R Morgan  
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:

<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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW..or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2015: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.**

**Publication date: 04/03/2015**

## Context

Cylch Meithrin Sarnau and Llandderfel is a Welsh medium setting based in the local community hall in Sarnau – a small rural village some 4 miles from Bala. It is supported by the Mudiad Meithrin and the Gwynedd Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership. The setting dates back to 1984 and currently operates from 9 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Monday to Friday. It is registered with the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to care for a maximum of 24 children. Children attending come from the surrounding rural area and the majority are from Welsh speaking homes.

At present there are 17 children aged three to four years. Children move onto the local primary school in the September following their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 15 three year olds attending of whom 14 funded. The number of sessions attended by individuals varies according to parental choice.

The setting is staffed by a leader and two assistants. They are appropriately qualified and experienced.

The setting was inspected by CSSIW in October 2013 and by Estyn in March 2009.

## 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:

- staff know all children well and have a thorough awareness of their needs;
- all children make good progress and achieve well – a minority achieve very well;
- all children behave well and have a good attitude to learning;
- learning experiences are well planned, exciting and successfully motivate children to learn;
- tasks are well matched to children's ability and prior achievement;
- relationship between children and between children and adults are very good;
- all children benefit from worthwhile opportunities to develop their independence;
- the setting has a very good ethos where every child is respected and valued;
- established partnerships have a beneficial effect on children's progress.

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the setting is very well led and managed and has a good track record of improvement;
- the leader has a strong sense of purpose and is well focused on improving provision for the children;
- there is a strong focus on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills;
- the setting has benefited from the support provided by the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin;
- the setting is well supported by its Management Committee and parents;
- standards are high, children are well cared for and the setting provides good value for money.

## **Recommendations**

R1. provide further opportunities for children to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

R2. extend the outside facilities to provide a greater range of activities for the children.

R3. refine the setting's development plan to focus on children's achievement and wellbeing.

### **What happens next?**

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
---	-------------

### Standards: Good

All children make good progress during their time at the Cylch and achieve well, sometimes very well. All children have well developed literacy and numeracy skills relative to their age and ability. Children recall previous learning such as being able to name days of the week and when identifying two-dimensional shapes.

All children have good listening skills and respond promptly to instructions. They enjoy stories and can recall previous stories they have heard. All children join in enthusiastically with class songs, particularly action songs. All children enjoy looking at story books and they do this without prompting when they arrive in the morning. They handle books carefully and correctly without adult support and follow the story. Children recognise their names during self registration. Most children hold writing instruments correctly and many are able to write recognisable letters of the alphabet. These children handle small tools correctly such as when using scissors. They know that writing has a purpose.

All children are beginning to count objects correctly and many count to 10 and several beyond this number. Most children have a developing and worthwhile mathematical vocabulary such as describing objects as “big” and “small”. Children, during play, recognise and name common two-dimensional shapes correctly, such as triangle, circle and square.

Children’s information technology (ICT) skills are developing satisfactorily. Individual children control a programmable toy appropriately using switches and buttons and a minority beginning to understand how icons can be moved on a computer screen. However, their competence is limited.

Children have well developed physical skills. All children ride tricycles and bicycles skilfully relative to their age, showing good balancing skills. Similarly children’s creative skills are well developed enabling them to paint and mix colours appropriately.

Children’s thinking and problem solving skills are developing well. All children enjoy role play and happily discuss what they are doing with their friends. Children are sufficiently confident to work independently and in small groups during play activities.

Parents are highly satisfied with the progress their children are making.

**Wellbeing: Good**

All children enjoy coming to the Cylch and are eager to become involved. Routines are well established and all children on arrival actively search for a story book and settle down quickly to look at their book. All children know what is expected of them and act accordingly. There are sufficient opportunities for children to make choices and to work independently. All children are well motivated and show a very good attitude to learning, particularly when engaged in focused tasks with an adult. Most children are confident learners; discuss what they are doing and persevere for significant periods of time.

All children behave well and form good relationships with each other and with adults. They take responsibility, such as when helping to clear away and tidying up at the end of activities.

Snack time is a good social activity where children learn to take responsibility. They are considerate of each other and readily take turns and show commendable self-control.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
---	-------------

**Learning experiences: Good**

Learning experiences are of a good quality and staff ensure, through careful planning, that planned activities are suitable for the age and abilities of the children. Learning experiences build systematically on children's existing knowledge, understanding and skills and are well focused on children progressing towards meeting the Foundation Phase outcomes. Planning takes good account of children's differing abilities and focused tasks are highly effective in providing groups of children with work that motivates and stimulates them.

Practitioners plan during weekly meetings and all contribute constructively towards a flexible curriculum. It takes into account children's interests and suggestions, such as activities selected around the circus in town.

The Cylch provides children with worthwhile and beneficial opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills throughout each session. Children self-register when they arrive, when most children recognise their name on registration cards. While children wait for all to arrive, they select a book and without adult prompting settle down to look at their chosen book. This is a good planned opportunity for children to handle books and follow the story. The planning incorporates opportunities to develop and extend children's numeracy skills through focused activities and through developing children's mathematical skills in play activities.

Circle time is well planned and the time well used to develop children's listening and speaking skills. Daily activities are well focused on developing good relationships, tolerance and respect for each other.

Sessions proceed at a good pace with opportunities for individual working and free choice. Physical and creative skills are an integral part of the sessions and children show good skill development. Very good use is made of the locality and by visits to, for example, a local farm, children learn about the care and respect for living things.

Provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of Welsh culture and traditions is good. St. David's day and Santes Dwynwen are celebrated. Local village eisteddfod and visits to this rich local environment enhance children's knowledge of Wales and the locality.

### **Teaching: Good**

Staff have a thorough knowledge of child development and a good understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. Sessions are well planned and proceed at a good pace, ensuring that all children are actively and purposefully involved.

An excellent feature of the teaching is the quality of presentation and storytelling. Children listen spellbound to an account of the life in China, Chinese clothes and foods. Children are excited, stimulated and challenged and become actively involved.

Children's behaviour is managed effectively and adults have high expectations of children that are achieved in practice. Staff are sensitive to the need to listen to children.

There is a good balance between child-selected and adult led activities and worthwhile opportunities are provided for children to learn through play and active involvement.

Adults are sensitive to children's needs allowing them to work independently but always aware when they need help. Questioning and discussion are well used to develop children's thinking and to challenge them. Overall, activities are suitably challenging and successfully motivate the children.

Children are assessed regularly and comprehensively and observations recorded. A record of children's achievement provides an end of year record for parents. The outcomes of assessment are very well used to direct future learning opportunities and to meet the needs and interests of the children. Focused tasks based on children's different ability are very successful in developing individual children's skills.

The Cylch uses social networking to keep parents informed of the daily activities undertaken at the setting. This enables parents to discuss such activities with their



child. Parents have regular opportunities to discuss issues of concern when they meet the staff each morning. However, the leader regularly contacts individual parents by text, e-mail and letter to inform them individually of their child's progress and what they can do to help their child improve. This is good practice and parents are very appreciative of such information.

**Care, support and guidance: Good**

Arrangements for children's care, support and guidance is good and impacts successfully on children's standards and wellbeing. Effective arrangements are in place to encourage children to eat healthily, to wash their hands before food and to take regular exercise.

Learning experiences promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Children understand the importance of helping others and this is reinforced by nominating "helpwr y dydd". Daily activities are well focused to foster values such as honesty, fairness and respect and promote children's ideas of right and wrong.

All children, at various times, show an ability to take responsibility, such as helping to clear away at the end of a session and have a good understanding of rules of behaviour, such as sharing and listening to others.

Visits to the locality are well designed to encourage children to be curious about the world in which they live. Celebrations of the culture and traditions of Wales, including celebrating St. David's day and Santes Dwynwen, give children a good understanding of their own culture. The Cylch also partakes in a local eisteddfod.

Children's knowledge and understanding of other cultures is developed through studies of China, its peoples and customs. Children also sample typical Chinese food.

Children's understanding of sustainability and recycling is developing appropriately. Children recycle peelings from their fruit snacks and collect waste paper.

The Cylch has effective arrangements for promoting and safeguarding children. All staff have received appropriate training and are fully aware of procedures for identifying and how to respond to such issues. The Cylch is a safe environment for the children. Doors are kept locked and no person can enter or leave unannounced. Policies and procedures are in place. Arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

No child currently present has been identified as potentially having additional learning needs. However, the Cylch has good procedures in place should the need arise.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The Cylch is a caring, supportive community that has an inclusive ethos. This makes a significant and positive contribution to children's learning and wellbeing. Staff encourage children to respect each other and recognise each other's attributes. Children celebrate their own traditions and others, such as the Chinese New Year. This extends their knowledge of their own and other people's cultures.

The Cylch is well staffed with qualified and experienced adults who successfully deliver the Foundation Phase curriculum. The Cylch is well resourced and resources well used to support the teaching. The accommodation is secure and well maintained and provides a suitable environment for learning. The outdoor area is adjacent to the main teaching room and used well to support the learning. However, it does not provide suitable areas for growing seeds and plants and to enable children to look after them. Staff use the locality very well to enhance the curricular provision. This includes visits to the immediate locality and further afield, such as a local farm, garden centre and woodland.

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

### **Leadership: Good**

The setting is very well led and managed. The leader's clear vision for the setting is successful in promoting and sustaining improvements. Staff work very effectively as a team, sharing aims and values and are actively involved in strategic planning for improvement. The leader gives the setting clear aims and objectives and overall the setting displays a positive sense of direction.

The leader is well aware of individual children's ability and makes good use of this information in providing activities well matched to children's needs. This successfully results in many children's achievement being above expectation of children of this age.

The setting displays a strong positive ethos where the high expectations of children are invariably achieved and celebrated. Children are very well managed in a quiet unobtrusive way, creating a highly effective learning environment.

Staff appraisal is done regularly and is effective in improving the provision and in raising standards. Links with parents are very good. Parents are kept fully aware of activities undertaken in the setting using social networking. Individual confidential reports give parents a detailed analysis of what their child has achieved and pinpointing the next steps in learning and how parents can support their child.

The Management Committee is well informed about the setting's progress and actively involved. Local and national initiatives, such as implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum and healthy eating programmes have been successfully developed.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The leader has a clear understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. Self-evaluation is undertaken regularly and resulted in improved provision for all children with the resulting improvement in children's progress and achievement. The leader has a thorough understanding of the self-evaluation process and consequently strategic planning is effective.

The setting's activities are regularly monitored and the focus is on improving performance. The setting has responded well to the recommendations of the previous inspection.

The local authority and Mudiad Meithrin, together with the staff, have been actively involved with producing the self-evaluation report. This report shows clearly what the setting does well and identified areas for development. The leader has also made good use of her visits to the feeder primary school and the reception class to extend her professional competence.

The links between self-evaluation and development planning is clear. Targets are realistic and achievable. However, targets are not always sufficiently focused on improving children's achievement and wellbeing.

The setting benefits substantially from the visits and advice from the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. Staff have also benefited from professional training with the consequent benefit to children. .

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting has a worthwhile and beneficial range of partnerships that contribute to and extend the provision for children. Such partnerships have successfully contributed to improving children's standards and wellbeing.

Parents are very supportive of the setting and work closely with the staff in order to develop children's learning and to promote the healthy eating initiatives. Parents appreciate the information about the activities undertaken at the setting and the confidential information about their child's achievements.

The local authority's advisory teacher and Mudiad Meithrin provide valuable advice. This partnership is effective in supporting practitioner's skills and raising children's standards further.

The children visit the local primary school on a fortnightly basis, enabling them to become familiar with the feeder school and to use their facilities for physical activities. They are well prepared to move onto the next phase in their education.

The setting is active in the local community and children have worthwhile opportunities to be part in local activities, such as the area eisteddfod.

The setting has effective arrangements in place to involve local specialist agencies when children need additional support.

**Resource management: Good**

Staff are suitably qualified and are experienced working with children. Very good use is made of practitioners individual skills and resources are well used to support the teaching. Resources are well matched to the needs of the children.

There is a close link between targets set for improvement and improving the provision, such as developing outside facilities.

Staff attend professional development courses ensuring up-to-date information about recent developments in the Foundation Phase.

The Management Committee allocates funds appropriately according to the setting's priorities, based on improving the provision for children.

The setting provides a good quality learning environment for children. They are well cared for and all achieve well.

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.	20	12 60%	8 40%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliadyngyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	20	19 95%	1 5%	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.	20	16 80%	4 20%	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.	20	15 75%	5 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	20	15 75%	5 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		69%	27%	0%	0%		
Teaching is good.	20	14 70%	6 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r raddysgu yn dda.
		79%	18%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	20	18 90%	2 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.	20	15 75%	5 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0	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.	20	15 75%	5 25%	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.	16	8 50%	8 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		64%	25%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed	20	12	8	0	0	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyso

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
about my child's progress.		60%	40%	0%	0%		n am gynnydd fymhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	20	18 90%	2 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwni'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu ondi problem.
		80%	19%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	20	13 65%	7 35%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad a rhyngwyferdelio â chwynion.
		62%	30%	3%	0%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	20	14 70%	6 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda a rhyngwyferdymlaeni'r ysgol.
		70%	24%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	20	17 85%	3 15%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gangynnwysteithia neu eymweliadau.
		61%	31%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	20	18 90%	2 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 R 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](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

## 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>Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)</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 Day Nurseries Association (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.