



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 Trelech
Canolfan Cymuned Trelech
Trelech
SA33 6RU**

Date of inspection: April 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:

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 Trelech is a Welsh-medium setting based in the village community centre. It was established in 1977 and serves this rural community some 10 miles north of St. Clears in Carmarthenshire. The setting is registered by the Mudiad Meithrin.

The majority of children come from Welsh speaking homes and Welsh is the predominant language spoken in the locality.

The setting is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accept up to 16 children in any session. Children are accepted from age two years and move on to the local primary school in the term before they are four. Currently there are seven children on roll, of whom three are three year olds. All three year olds receive funding.

The setting is open on four mornings of the week (not Tuesdays) from 9 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Cylch Ti a Fi joins the setting at 11.30 on Monday.

There are two full time staff, both of whom are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children. The leader has been in post since September 2013.

The setting was last inspected by CSSIW in 2014 and by Estyn in 2010.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of Cylch Meithrin Trelech is good because:

- Children enjoy coming to the setting and settle in quickly;
- There is a welcoming and happy ethos;
- Relationships are excellent and children are well cared for and supported;
- Practitioners know the children very well and respond well to their needs;
- The setting provides a good range of high quality learning experiences for the children;
- Resources generally are of good quality and the learning environment is well designed to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum;
- Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader has a clear vision for developing the setting;
- Both practitioners are strongly committed to maintaining high standards and improving the provision where ever possible;
- Practitioners work efficiently as a team;
- The management committee is well informed and fully supportive of the setting;
- The support provided by the local authority support teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin development officer has been highly effective and well used by the setting;
- The leader has, in the short time since her appointment, made a significant impact on the setting's provision and on children's achievement and wellbeing;
- Partnerships with parents and the local school are good.

Recommendations

R1. Further develop the assessment procedures so as to clearly identify children's skill development.

R2. Use the results of assessment in planning so that activities are well matched to children's ability so as to provide them with sufficient challenge.

R3. Provide more opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Standards:

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development and the Welsh language. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection to report upon without identifying individual children.

Wellbeing:

There is no report on children's wellbeing. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection to report upon without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

Planning children's learning experiences is done collaboratively and fully meets the requirements of the Foundation Phase. It takes good account of children's interests and their suggestions. Weekly planning is detailed and provides children with exciting activities that fully engage them. Children's responses are noted. However, evaluation of children's achievements is not always sufficiently focused on identifying children's skill development.

The planning provides worthwhile opportunities to develop children's communication and numeracy skills within the chosen theme and to relate their learning to actual events, such as relating number to children's ages. The plans are sufficiently flexible to react to children's interests and provide for the development of children's thinking skills, such as when investigating whether objects selected by children sink or float. Planned activities, such as making milk puddings, provide worthwhile opportunities for children to use a wide range of skills practically. Such purposeful activities incorporate literacy skills in reading a recipe, numeracy skills in measuring and weighing and motor skills in mixing and cutting.

There are sufficient opportunities planned to allow children to work independently but opportunities provided for children to develop their ICT skills are limited.

Welsh is the language of communication in the setting and both practitioners converse fluently with children. Staff provide regular opportunities for children to talk,

respond to questions, discuss their activities, sing and listen to stories in Welsh. This is effective in developing and enriching children's language.

Practitioners provide opportunities for children to learn about Welsh traditions and celebrations effectively through activities arranged to celebrate St. David's day. Children receive worthwhile opportunities to learn about other cultures and traditions through studying, for example Chinese customs and foods.

Practitioners plan beneficial activities in their outside activity area, including planting and growing seeds. Children learn about how to care for living things and to respect them. Effective use is made of the local community and children learn about the importance of recycling through composting waste food.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners work well as a team providing stimulating and exciting learning experiences for the children, both inside the classroom and outside. This is highly effective in promoting children's involvement, participation and enjoyment. The leader has a comprehensive understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase and both the planning and teaching reflect such requirements. Practitioners have high expectations of all children and these are very largely met in practice. Practitioners understand the general philosophy of the Foundation Phase in that children learn through play. There is an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities with a beneficial emphasis on developing children as independent learners. Day-to-day activities and routines are well established. Children know where to seek help and show that they feel safe and secure. All children behave well and appreciate the support and comfort provided for them when required. Both practitioners are effective language role models and this impacts well on children's language development.

There are adequate arrangements in place to record children's achievement and progress. Records of children's work and notes are kept in individual children's files. These records are dated and give a good indication of children's progress in the six areas of learning. These records are made available to parents. Information on children's achievement is also made available to the receiving primary school. However, records of achievements do not always focus sufficiently on the children's acquisition of key skills. Assessment records are of limited use in identifying the next steps in children's learning and when planning future learning strategies that are well matched to children's ability and provide them with sufficient challenge.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting has effective arrangements to support children's wellbeing and to encourage children to live healthily. Children, for example, are encouraged to put their coats on before outdoor activities and to wash their hands before snacks.

Snack times are good social occasions where practitioners and children sit and chat whilst eating and drinking. Co-operation and independence of children is well promoted. Children are encouraged to help themselves and take time over their food and drink. There are suitable opportunities incorporated into each session for children to be physically active.

Day-to-day activities are successful in fostering children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences. Consistent emphasis is placed on values, such as fairness and respect and to help children differentiate between right and wrong. Behaviour is invariably good and children learn to care and respect one another.

This is a caring community and children learn social skills as part of the daily routine. Children learn about other peoples, such as during "Australia day" and through meeting a local visitor from New Zealand.

The setting is beginning to encourage children to think about sustainability and recycling. Children compost waste food and collect waste paper.

The setting has an appropriate range of policies in place to safeguard and to promote children's wellbeing. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

There is currently no child present with additional learning needs. However, appropriate policies and procedures are in place should the setting admit any child with such needs in the future.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is inclusive and both boys and girls of all ages and ability have equal access to all resources and activities. All children are respected and valued as individuals. Staff are conscious of their individual needs and children are very well supported. Overall, children are happy in each other's company.

There is an ample supply of age appropriate, good quality resources to deliver the Foundation Phase curriculum successfully. The exception being the limited supply of equipment to support children's ICT skill development. Overall, the teaching room is spacious, colourful and well designed to meet children's needs; it is an exciting learning environment for children.

The outdoor learning environment is well designed to meet children's needs and used on a daily basis. It allows for sand and water activities and for basic investigations, such as finding out what objects float and sink. The outdoors is well used as a learning environment complementing the work indoors.

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

Leadership: Good

The recently appointed leader has a clear vision for the setting based on a thorough understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. There is a strong focus on ensuring that each child achieves their full potential.

The leader has established a strong working relationship with her colleague and both share a vision for the setting based on providing a caring, supportive environment for all children. They work together well as a team and show a strong commitment to providing an effective, worthwhile education for the children. They know the children well and successfully meet children's individual needs.

Relationships with children and parents are excellent and parents value the fact that practitioners are approachable and that children are happy and eager to attend.

The leader is hardworking and conscientious and has focused her efforts on ensuring good provision for the children and maximising their standards of achievement and wellbeing. In this she has been successful.

There is a good relationship with the management committee. The committee is kept well informed of the setting's work and is fully supportive. The work of the staff and setting is valued and all are strongly committed to maintaining and improving standards where possible.

Day-to-day management is efficient with the staff undertaking different roles as necessary. Children are actively involved with the emphasis on developing their independence but receiving help when necessary.

The leader monitors the provision and has ensured that the setting is well resourced. She is aware of deficiencies, for example the need to supplement ICT resources.

The setting has appropriate systems for practitioners appraisal linked to training and professional development opportunities.

The setting meets national and local priorities appropriately, including implement the Foundation Phase curriculum and encouraging healthy eating and drinking.

Improving quality: Good

The leader has a clear understanding of the strengths of the setting and the areas that need to be improved. Staff know the children well and react positively to their needs, resulting in a good range of experiences provided for the children. Through regular discussion staff are also aware of what is required to improve the provision.

The self-evaluation report is a detailed and comprehensive document which clearly identifies the strengths and areas for improvement. The improvement plan is realistic and achievable and well focused on improving the standards of achievement and wellbeing of the children. The plan is well directed at developing the setting further; it identifies a suitable timescale, responsibilities for implementation and success criteria. Targets are however not prioritised.

The setting's provision and standards are effectively monitored by the education authority advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin's development officer. This collaboration with the setting's staff has been highly effective in achieving the current high standards of children's achievement and wellbeing.

Practitioners have received appropriate training on a range of aspects, including safeguarding children, first aid and teaching the Foundation Phase curriculum.

The recommendations of the previous Estyn report have been successfully addressed.

Partnership working: Good

The setting co-operates effectively with a range of partners who make a worthwhile and beneficial contribution to the quality of provision and children's development.

Relationships with parents are excellent. They receive relevant information about the setting in an introductory booklet that provides them with background information. Many children will have attended the Monday "Ti a Fi" session and will be familiar with the setting. Parents receive regular newsletters and information about the teaching topics. Further relevant information is made available on the notice board in the foyer. Parents appreciate the open door policy and regular opportunities to discuss their children's development with the staff when they bring and collect their children.

The setting has valuable links with Ysgol Hafodwenog. Children visit the school for school activities, such as Christmas concerts, and know the Early Years teacher well. Transfer arrangements are very effective and ease the transition of children to their new school.

The partnership with the local authority advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin's development officer has been particularly effective in developing the provision and ensuring good standards of achievement and wellbeing. Good links are also in place with other settings, such as when combining to provide "movement sessions".

Resource management: Good

Resources are well managed and used effectively. The setting is appropriately staffed with well qualified and experienced staff ensuring that the Foundation Phase

is delivered effectively. Practitioners have worked constructively with outside help to ensure a good quality curriculum and have attended relevant professional training courses.

Both practitioners are Welsh speakers and are good language role models for the children. They are sensitive to children's needs and provide them with the necessary support when required. Practitioners manage children's behaviour very well and this ensures a setting that provides children with a calm, homely atmosphere.

The leader and management committee officers have a clear understanding of the budget and expenditure decisions are prioritised in line with the perceived needs of the setting. Efficient use is made of money raised through community events to supplement the setting's resources.

Taking into account the efficient use of funds and the children's good standards of achievement and wellbeing and parent's high level of satisfaction, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received was fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion R Morgan	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Glossary of terms

Areas of Learning	<p>These are the seven areas that make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity • language, literacy and communications skills • mathematical development • Welsh language development • knowledge and understanding of the world • physical development • creative development
CSSIW	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	<p>This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnerships conditions of registration.</p>
Foundation Phase	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.</p>
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
Local authority advisory teacher	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
Mudiad Meithrin	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.</p>

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.