



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 Dinas
Canolfan Bro Llanwnda
Llanwnda
Caernarfon
Gwynedd
LL54 5UG**

Date of inspection: December 2011

by

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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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About the setting

Cylch Meithrin Dinas is a Welsh medium cylch based in Canolfan Bro Llanwnda, near Caernarfon, Gwynedd. All the children attending the cylch come from the village and the surrounding area. The area is recognised as being neither socially nor economically advantaged or disadvantaged.

The cylch has been in this location since 2006 and has full use of the building and the outdoor area.

The cylch reports that nearly every child comes from a home where Welsh is spoken. Children represent the full range of ability and the cylch accepts children with additional learning needs. No child in the current group is recognised as having additional learning needs. In the past, the cylch has received assistance from outside agencies to support children that have additional needs. No children attending at present are from a minority ethnic background and none come from socially disadvantaged homes.

The cylch is registered for a maximum of 12 children and it accepts children from two years old. There are currently up to 10 children attending the cylch at different times during the week. Three of these, who do not attend school on a part time basis, are three years old. The Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and the local authority support the cylch.

The leader has held the position since 2008. One member of staff assists her and they are both suitably qualified.

There is an informative booklet available for parents and carers that provides them with details of the cylch. Parents and carers bring their children into the cylch and this provides for a meeting with the staff if needed. The cylch is open for five days a week between 9am and 11.30am.

The cylch is registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales. The management committee oversees the work of the cylch.

The cylch was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in September 2011. Estyn has not previously inspected the cylch.

Summary

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

Current performance

The performance of the cylch is good because:

- the learning experiences are planned well;
- all children are supported well and benefit from a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum;
- the teaching is very effective and concentrates well on Foundation Phase outcomes;
- generally, good resources are available, especially indoors;
- adults speak Welsh very well and this has a very positive effect on how children learn the language;
- the cylch is led and managed well;
- there is a very good relationship between adults and children;
- there are effective links with the local schools, the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and the local authority; and
- the staff work very effectively together and everyone contributes purposefully to the success of the cylch.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leadership and staff provide a positive direction for the work of the cylch;
- changes and developments over time show that the cylch has a good record of improving for the sake of the children;
- all the staff have active attitudes towards development and training;
- good support links are used consistently; and
- the learning environment is stimulating and challenging.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the cylch needs to:

- R1 set clearer learning objectives and success criteria at the start of focus activities that are linked directly to the areas of learning; and
- R2 extend the provision and use of information technology equipment to develop further the children's skills; and
- R3 continue to enhance and develop the resources in the outside area.

What happens next?

The provider will produce an action plan that shows how it will 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, 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.

Wellbeing:

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

The curriculum is planned well to meet the philosophy of the Foundation Phase curriculum and to achieve the identified outcomes of children's learning. The curriculum builds effectively on children's previous knowledge and experiences and incorporates enriched opportunities for the development of skills across the curriculum.

Time is set aside weekly, when all staff meet to plan the curriculum. This provides the children with useful and interesting activities. The curriculum is flexible and is matched appropriately to the children's interests.

There are worthwhile opportunities incorporated into the day-to-day working of the cylch for children to develop their self-confidence and to become independent learners. Whilst specific activities are planned, children have the freedom to select their own tasks and activities.

Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their basic and key skills of literacy, numeracy, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creativity. An effective aspect of children's learning experiences is the provision made for children to acquire the Welsh language. Welsh is the natural language of communication between adults and children and through coherent opportunities, all children, whatever their background, display enjoyment in speaking the language. The provision for developing information technology skills is not as good and there is not enough direction by the staff towards the use of technological resources.

Children have many opportunities to develop their thinking skills through challenging activities, which focus on every area of learning in their turn.

The traditions and celebrations of the culture of Wales are given due emphasis, like the celebration of St. David's Day. Good opportunities are also provided for children to acquire knowledge and understanding of other cultures and traditions, such as during their study of the Chinese New Year and Diwali. Such activities help children to develop a good understanding of the wider world and raise their awareness of age appropriate global citizenship effectively.

The purposeful provision includes opportunities for all children to develop respect for each other; opportunities to form good relationships with each other and with adults; and to become tolerant of each other.

All children have good opportunities to plant seeds, look after plants and recycle. This begins their understanding of plant growth and sustainability effectively.

Teaching: Good

The staff have a good, practical knowledge of children's development and a clear understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. There is a very positive relationship between all the staff and the children.

The staff have high expectations of the children and these expectations are put into practice well. The staff's active role in planning the curriculum ensures the best use of their expertise. However, when a focus activity is introduced, there is not enough reference made to the learning objective and the success criteria of the activity.

The system of sharing responsibilities means that staff have a detailed knowledge of a small number of children and as such are well aware of their achievements and progress.

There is a good balance between adult directed and child selected activities, both indoors and out of doors. All children are free to select from either independent or adult led activities.

Staff model language very effectively to the children's development levels and use questioning very well to develop children's thinking and communication skills. The standard of the staff's Welsh is very good. The staff provide a stimulating environment, especially indoors, that successfully ensures every child's involvement and enjoyment.

Assessment procedures and recording children's achievements are completed efficiently and thoroughly. There are records of children's achievements available to parents at any time. Staff know the children well and plan the next steps in their learning effectively.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The cylch's provision for ensuring children's health and wellbeing is good. All children enjoy their time at the cylch. They arrive showing a sense of anticipation and are keen to get involved. They partake enthusiastically in activities set out for them. The broad curriculum, which consists of visits and visitors, develops and extends children's experiences well.

Follow-up work in the classroom shows the wide range of experiences that arise from their activities and the children's sense of wonder. Visits to the community and visitors to the cylch develop children's knowledge and understanding of their own community effectively.

The cylch's provision for ensuring children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Values, such as honesty, fairness, respect and an understanding of what is right and wrong, are fostered through the day-to-day activities and accepted without question. All children know and accept the social norms of living together, sharing and accepting the views of others and being members of a community. Individual children, in turn, accept specific responsibilities, like tidying resources and equipment, which develops their self-esteem. The cylch is an organised unit, where children value each other and in turn, the staff value them.

Children's cultural development is good, which incorporates Welsh customs and traditions and it extends to other cultures when the children celebrate events like the Chinese New Year and Diwali.

The cylch's staff are vigilant in identifying children requiring specialist help. They make use of professional help and guidance effectively when necessary. The cylch has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. Staff have received regular and appropriate training. Staff undertake thorough risk assessments routinely.

The cylch is secure, where the entrance door is locked and only opened by a member of staff, consequently no one can enter or a child leave unaccompanied. Good care is taken when children are being collected to ensure they are in the care of their parents or of a known carer.

Regular reviews of children's progress ensure that any child suspected of requiring additional help is noted and their progress is monitored closely. The cylch's leader is the additional learning needs co-ordinator and is familiar with the necessary procedures for supporting such a child.

Where necessary external agencies are involved and support is provided if needed. At present, no children have additional learning needs.

Learning environment: Good

The cylch, through its day-to-day activities and the approach adopted by the staff promotes a very positive ethos. Staff know the children well and their individuality is recognised. All children have equal access to a stimulating curriculum supported by a suitable outside area. However, the resources in this area are in the process of being developed further.

The homely atmosphere and the friendship provided by the staff ensures that a tolerant attitude pervades the cylch. The cylch employs positive behaviour strategies that successfully eliminate any form of harassment or oppressive behaviour. All children enjoy equality of opportunity.

The cylch's staff are well qualified and experienced and there is a very favourable adult to child ratio. Staff expertise is used well both in planning and in supervising activities. The cylch uses its resources well to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and the needs of the children, apart from its use of information technology resources. The resources are accessible to children and this promotes the children's sense of independence and responsibility.

The local environment is used effectively on a regular basis, through walks and visits to nearby businesses. This contributes well to children's understanding of the world around them.

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

The staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities and work together well as a team, sharing values, aims and objectives. The leader involves the staff, managers and representatives of outside agencies in planning. This practice ensures the best use of their expertise. The leader is actively involved, giving clear directions and accepting advice. This commitment leads to a sense of purpose to the work of the cylch. There is a positive ethos and a vision to provide the best possible experiences for the children.

The leadership and staff are focused well on children's needs and the cylch successfully achieves this aim in practice. Staff have received relevant and appropriate training and this has impacted well on the quality of provision provided.

Effective links with the parents and carers are in place. They are kept well informed of their children's achievements and progress and this helps them to support their children's learning.

There is a well-established management structure in place with a clear definition of duties. The leader and managers delegate responsibilities effectively to others when needed to do so. The management of the cylch has taken good account of relevant legislation and the guidance meets legal requirements in full.

The cylch has taken good account of national priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum. It has also made good use of opportunities to work with local schools, the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and the local authority to ensure effective links.

Improving quality: Good

The cylch self-evaluates appropriately and identifies areas for improvement, implementing them for the benefit of the children. This has included developing the outdoor area to broaden the children's experiences and independence and the use of questionnaires for parents and children to express their views.

The areas for improvement are targeted effectively and concisely against relevant success criteria and timescales in the cylch's development plans. The development plans arise directly from the findings of the self-evaluation process and are given priority in the development of the cylch. The leaders discuss the process with confidence, understanding and clarity. This is good practice.

Staff have made very good use of training opportunities and professional learning experiences, including vocational qualifications, which are impacting well on children's learning and wellbeing.

Partnership working: Good

Parents, in the questionnaire replies and during discussions expressed their very high levels of satisfaction with the cylch and are highly appreciative of the standards of care and the quality of education available. They appreciate the open door policy and the opportunities they have to meet staff on a daily basis.

By the time the children leave the cylch; parents feel that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. The links with the local schools, the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and the local authority are good.

The support provided by the staff of the local authority and the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin benefits the cylch greatly. The advice and suggestions have helped in moving the cylch forward and has contributed to the good standards of provision.

Resource management: Good

The cylch's staff teach very well and the staff work together very effectively. Planning is completed collaboratively and this results in individual expertise being used successfully for the benefit of every child.

The cylch is resourced well apart from information technology equipment and the resources available are used effectively to further the aims of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The resources are also accessible to the children and this encourages independence and has a positive impact on their learning.

Even though the resources in the outdoor area are currently being developed, the cylch provides appropriate outdoor experiences, which are planned well. The leader and managers lead effectively and use support agencies purposefully.

The cylch provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Eight questionnaires were returned. The comments on paper and the discussions with parents and carers indicate very positive support for the cylch. Nearly all parents and carers are particularly pleased with all aspects of the cylch, especially the care provided and their children's progress.

Responses to discussions with learners

All children are happy in the cylch. Their enthusiasm is evident when they arrive and meet with their peers. Nearly all of them are self-confident from knowing that they are supported well and that they are provided with interesting and challenging tasks.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Nicholas 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)