



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 Prion
Ysgol Pantpastynog
Prion
Denbigh
Denbighshire
LL16 4SG**

Date of inspection: March 2011

by

Wil Williams

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 Prion is part of the Denbighshire Children and Young People Partnership provision. The setting was opened a little over thirty years ago to provide Welsh medium pre-school education for the children of Prion village and its surrounding area. The setting meets in Pant Pastynog school hall which is on the outskirts of the village.

The area served by the setting is judged as being neither prosperous nor economically and socially disadvantaged. Children of all ability and background are admitted to the setting. During the inspection, there were no three year-old children with additional learning needs (ALN) nor from ethnic groups registered at the setting.

The setting provides sessions of two hours during five afternoons a week although the number of sessions attended by individuals varies according to parental choice. During the inspection, four three-year-old children were registered at the setting and funded by the Partnership.

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

Children's education is supported by three full-time practitioners. All of whom are appropriately qualified to teach early years children.

Accommodation includes one main teaching room and an enclosed outdoor area which is shared with the school.

When children have completed their time in the setting they continue their education in the primary school.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in July 2009 This is its first Estyn inspection.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- of the high quality of learning experiences;
- the quality of teaching and assessment is consistently good;
- the school's leadership has a clear sense of purpose; and because
- the setting provides good value for money.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- a culture of self-evaluation pervades all the work of the setting;
- every practitioner contributes constructively to the setting's development; and because
- practitioners are open to new ideas and are willing to try out different ways of working.

Recommendations

In order to bring about further improvements, the setting needs to:

- R1 share the outcomes of self-evaluation with the management committee; and
- R2 strengthen links with the community.

What happens next?

The setting will formulate 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 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 setting provides a very wide range of interesting and stimulating experiences that encourage to make good progress towards meeting Foundation Phase outcomes. High-quality planning leads to flexible and imaginative activities that succeed in engaging the interest of all children. The curriculum builds systematically on existing knowledge, understanding and skills ensuring progression and continuity in learning. Through a good variety of activities, children are encouraged to form positive relationships with others and show respect and tolerance for people around them. They are given valuable opportunities to become confident and independent learners. Provision for communication, numeracy and information communications technology (ICT) and wider skills is coherent and firmly embedded into the experiences for all children. Children are actively involved in the setting's recycling arrangements and are given good opportunities to learn about their role as global citizens. Children are constantly encouraged to use the Welsh language in their learning and play and are provided with high-quality experiences to develop their personal and cultural identity. Strengthening links with the community has been identified as one of the setting's main priorities.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is consistently good in all sessions. All practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and have a thorough understanding of Foundation Phase requirements. They have high expectations of all children across the range of ability. Practitioners succeed in maintaining a good balance between child-selected and practitioner-led activities. Learning experiences provided are extremely interesting and there is a strong emphasis on learning through play. Practitioners aim to ensure that each child is actively engaged in learning. Practitioners themselves are very good language models and through skilful questioning and purposeful intervention, they challenge children and improve learning. Practitioners make good and imaginative use of resources, including technology, to enhance learning. Behaviour is managed very effectively. Children's wellbeing and progress are carefully tracked across all areas of learning and this information is used well to plan children's next steps in learning. Parents are kept well-informed about children's achievements, wellbeing and development.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are clear policies and procedures in the setting for promoting healthy living and children's wellbeing. Healthy foods are provided during snacks and children are encouraged to care for their personal hygiene and to participate in physical activities. Learning experiences promote children's personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, very effectively. Children feel happy and secure in the company of the adults in the setting and are very confident when asking for help and support. Practitioners know how to respond appropriately if challenges arise in relation to inappropriate behaviour or safeguarding. The comprehensive induction arrangements ensure that children settle well into the setting. Early identification of children's needs when they join the setting ensures that these needs are met. When specific instances arise, practitioners are proactive in seeking support from specialist services. The setting complies fully with safeguarding regulations and ensure children's safety at all times. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a happy and inclusive community, where all children have equal access to all areas of the curriculum. The strong emphasis put on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity encourages values such as kindness and tolerance, leading to effective learning. The setting has enough practitioners, who have sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. All practitioners succeed in creating an interesting and stimulating environment in which every child is able to take full advantage of the learning experiences and to develop positive values and attitudes. There is an ample supply of good quality resources which are carefully matched to the learning needs of every child in all six areas of learning. Although some use is made of resources in the community to enhance resources in the classroom and enrich children's learning experiences, this aspect is not fully developed. The building and outdoor area are used effectively to provide an extremely pleasant learning environment.

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

The leader has clear aims, strategic objectives and appropriate policies that are focused on delivering a quality provision that meets children's needs. This created a clear sense of purpose which promotes and sustains improvement. The leader communicates high expectations for securing improvement and supports and challenges each member of staff in a positive and effective manner. Practitioners have shared values about learning, teaching and behaviour. The leader ensures that the Foundation Phase together with other local and national priorities, are successfully delivered. Relationships with children, parents and the management committee are very positive and contribute significantly to a sense of community. Members of the management committee have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities and fulfil their role regarding staff performance management, effectively. However, there are no formal procedures for sharing the outcomes of self-evaluation with committee members. The outcomes of the parents' questionnaires indicate a high level of satisfaction in the quality of the setting's leadership.

Improving quality: Good

A positive culture of self-evaluation pervades all the work of the setting. Strengths and areas for development are recognised and action taken to maintain good practice and implement change. Practitioners know their setting very well. They are open to advice and new ideas and are willing to try out different ways of working. Self-evaluation takes into account children's response to provision as well as the views of parents, the registered person from the management committee and the LA. Practitioners are able to show strong evidence of how self-evaluation has led to improvement and significant developments in provision and standards of children's achievement and wellbeing.

Partnership working: Good

A wide range of partnership activities make a strong contribution to children's achievements and wellbeing. Parents are regularly informed about all aspects of the setting's work and practitioners take active steps to involve them in all the activities organised. The setting has very productive links with the primary school and there are clear arrangements for sharing assessment information and good teaching and learning practice. The close co-operation with the LA support teacher contributes very positively towards improving the quality of provision and standards. Practitioners work well together, share information about children and know who to contact and when if additional support is required for children.

Resource management: Good

The setting is appropriately staffed to teach the curriculum effectively with the best possible use made of practitioners' time, expertise and experience. There are effective strategies for fulfilling staff's professional development needs which ensure they have up-to-date information about recent developments in the Foundation Phase. All resources are managed well. The leader and the management committee have a secure understanding of their budget and priorities expenditure in line with the setting's developmental needs. Financial decisions are carefully evaluated by the management committee to make sure that they have a positive impact on standards of achievement, progress and children's wellbeing. The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Six parents' questionnaires were received. Nearly all were positive with parents saying that their children have settled down well in the setting and enjoy the learning experience provided for them. They say that their children are making good progress in learning and are well prepared for moving on to the primary school. Nearly all believe that they receive regular information about their child's progress and that the setting is well managed.

Responses to discussions with children

Children say they are happy in the setting and are confident to turn to any adult to ask for advice and guidance.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

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)