



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 Llangadog
Llangadog Community Hall
Llangadog
Carmarthenshire
SA19 9BR**

Date of inspection: 6 February 2012

by

Dorothy Morris

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 Llangadog is based in the village community hall. It was established over thirty years ago and the children who attend live in the village and the surrounding areas. The area is described as neither advantaged nor economically and socially disadvantaged.

The setting caters for children between two and a half and four years of age for four sessions a week during term time. It is open between 9:00 and 11:30 in the morning. During the inspection there were eleven three year olds on the register. The majority of children come from homes where English is the main language spoken. At present, there are no children from ethnic minority backgrounds or children with additional learning needs.

There are three members of staff. They are experienced and hold relevant qualifications in the education and care of young children. The setting leader was appointed to her current post in June 2010.

The setting was last inspected by Estyn in February 2006 and by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in April 2011.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- the children make consistent progress in their learning;
- the children take an active part in their learning;
- a wide range of interesting activities is provided;
- the children are offered good quality care in an inclusive environment;
- there are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing; and
- there is a very good relationship between the children and the practitioners.

Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because of the:

- lead practitioner's effective leadership;
- the practitioners' commitment to children's personal and educational development;
- good teamwork;
- evidence of successful co-operation which ensures improvements to the provision;
- the good support of the management committee and the parents; and
- the close collaboration with the primary school and the community.

Recommendations

In order to develop further, the setting needs to:

- R1 strengthen children's listening and speaking skills;
- R2 strengthen the planning of tasks to extend children's learning, particularly the more able;
- R3 adapt the organisation of sessions to offer a better balance between the activities offered;
- R4 develop the practitioners' self evaluation skills further; and
- R5 update the information pack for parents.

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The children make consistent progress in their learning from their starting points. They work hard and acquire knowledge and appropriate skills across the areas of learning within the Foundation Phase curriculum.

The majority of children make increasing use of their thinking, communication, number and information and communications technology (ICT) skills in their work. Most children's Welsh speaking skills develop consistently. A few children demonstrate a secure grasp of a broad vocabulary and can maintain a simple conversation confidently. Nevertheless, most children offer brief responses. Children's listening and concentration skills are more uneven with the majority being good listeners. The children have an increasing knowledge of some of the main letters of the alphabet and they enjoy looking at and handling books. They know a good number of songs and rhymes which they sing correctly. They use mark making tools purposefully in a range of media demonstrating an increasing awareness of some of the purposes of writing.

The majority of children make appropriate use of their number skills in daily activities. Nearly all count correctly to ten and use mathematical language, such as big and small, accurately in practical situations. They can create and follow a pattern correctly. They know the names of basic shapes and understand that money is needed to buy goods in the shop. Many children use their ICT skills effectively to complete number tasks and to record their discussions. They make confident use of the mouse to move objects around the screen.

Most children make effective use of their thinking and decision making skills in a range of mathematical, physical and creative tasks. They demonstrate good use of fine motor skills when using tools to cut, paint and glue.

Wellbeing: Good

Most children have a developing awareness of the importance of physical exercise and healthy eating. They enjoy participating in physical activities including movement sessions in the hall. They understand the importance of washing their hands regularly.

All children settle well into the setting. They are happy and feel safe in the company of adults and are ready to ask for support and help. The majority of children demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and are keen to undertake new

experiences. The majority work conscientiously on their tasks, play co-operatively and behave well.

The children's social awareness and skills develop effectively through day to day activities and through experiences such as participating in concerts, thanksgiving services and visits.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The curriculum is appropriately planned to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. There is purposeful use of planning frameworks to provide a range of activities across the areas of learning. The activities are based on themes which are appropriate for the children's age range.

The planning offers appropriate opportunities to develop children's communication, number and ICT skills through the provision. A range of activities and purposeful resources are provided in each learning area around the room. The focused tasks, however, are not sufficiently structured at times to extend children's skills progressively, particularly those of the more able children.

There is consistent encouragement for children to use their Welsh communication skills in their learning and play. The practitioners communicate consistently with the children and introduce new vocabulary. Nevertheless, the attention to introducing basic sentence patterns regularly is more uneven. The practitioners develop children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of Wales effectively through activities which include celebrating St. David's day and cooking Welsh dishes. They also have opportunities to learn about the celebrations and traditions of other cultures such as celebrating the Chinese New Year.

The opportunities to grow and care for plants, visits to a nature centre and involvement in recycling activities promote children's awareness of the importance of caring for the environment and all living things.

Teaching: Good

The practitioners have a developing knowledge of the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and offer children learning experiences that gain their interest. They use a range of teaching approaches and appropriate resources to support the learning.

The practitioners work well as a team and offer children consistent support. They participate enthusiastically in the activities and manage behaviour effectively.

Session activities run smoothly. Nevertheless, there is insufficient balance and pace to ensure that children participate in a range of activities during the session.

The practitioners know the children well and use appropriate processes to assess and record their progress. They observe children's responses consistently during activities and an achievement record is compiled across the six areas of learning. Parents are kept regularly informed about their children's development through informal discussion at the beginning and end of sessions and through an appropriate written report. Transfer forms are completed appropriately and forwarded to the primary school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. Good attention is given to promoting their understanding of the importance of washing hands, using tools safely and behaving responsibly. The induction arrangements ensure that children settle well into the setting. The practitioners are caring and supportive of all the children.

There are suitable arrangements for supporting children with additional learning needs when required, and there are clear lines of communication with key agencies. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. Risk assessments are undertaken regularly.

Effective learning experiences promote children's personal development well and include their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Values, such as fairness and kindness, and an understanding of what is right and wrong, are fostered effectively through the curriculum and day-to-day activities. Experiences, such as offering a prayer before snack, thanksgiving celebrations, and the work on the Christmas story, enhance children's spiritual development. The opportunities to perform in small concerts for parents and members of the community contribute well to their social development. The children's awareness of the need to help those less fortunate than themselves is developed appropriately through raising money for good causes.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where children receive equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. Practitioners consider and value children's different backgrounds and respond appropriately. They succeed in creating a warm and welcoming environment for children.

The setting has an appropriate number of practitioners with relevant experience and qualifications. The accommodation is of good quality and offers suitable facilities. Nevertheless, there is no suitable outside play area for the children but the setting makes regular use of the hall and the local primary school's facilities. The displays of children's work contribute to creating a colourful environment. There are sufficient

resources which are used effectively to support the learning and teaching. The contributions of visitors from the community such as the Wales Forestry Commission staff, nurse, policeman and officers of the fire brigade enrich the children's experiences.

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

The setting is led effectively by a conscientious leader. The practitioners understand their roles and work well as a team. They offer children a purposeful and organised environment. Appropriate policies are implemented.

The management committee offers the practitioners consistent and effective support which promotes the further development of the setting. Members take a keen interest in the setting and work hard to raise additional funding. The committee meets regularly and the minutes are used as a basis for further planning. Members receive regular information from the leader and there is a good working relationship between the leader and the registered person.

The practitioners give suitable attention to national and local priorities including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum, promoting children's Welsh language skills and establishing effective links with the primary school.

Improving quality: Good

The practitioners have a good understanding of the setting's main strengths and the areas that need improvement. They hold regular discussions and are open to new ideas to improve provision further. The processes used to evaluate the overall provision are continuing to develop and are more informal in nature.

The provision is regularly monitored by the local authority link teacher. Areas for development are agreed and relevant strategies implemented. There is a good focus on promoting children's skills across the areas of learning. As part of the role, the chair of the management committee is a regular visitor and undertakes observations of aspects of provision.

The self evaluation report prepared collaboratively by the leader, the management team and the link teacher offers a balanced view of the setting. The improvement plan arising from this identifies appropriate areas for the further development of the setting. The views of parents/carers are sought and aspects of provision are discussed regularly with the link teacher and the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin support officer.

Appropriate procedures are in place to appraise the work of the practitioners and to agree on further professional development. The practitioners attend suitable courses on aspects of the education and care of young children and make effective use of the training received. The practitioners benefit from the regular discussions with the primary school staff which promotes their understanding of the Foundation Phase. There are some opportunities for practitioners to discuss and share ideas with other settings and practitioners during training days.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has clear aims and objectives which are shared by all the partners. There is a close partnership with parents and this was confirmed in the conversations with them during the inspection. Practitioners are regularly available to meet parents/carers at the beginning and end of each session. Relevant information is provided to parents but the Information Pack has not been completely updated.

The close partnership with the registered person, the management committee, the local authority link teacher and Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin officer leads to improvements in the setting's work.

The setting has close links with the community which support children's learning. There is effective use of visitors' skills and expertise, including a linguist and an artist, to contribute to the curriculum. There is successful use of the links with local agencies and organisations to support fund raising activities.

Good links have been established with the local primary school and draft proposals are in place to create a structure which will be the basis for further collaboration. Effective transition arrangements are in place including visits by school staff. The practitioners also benefit from their regular visits to the primary school. The setting works closely with the local Cylch Ti a Fi which benefits both staff and children.

Resource management: Good

The setting is appropriately staffed. Practitioners make good use of their time and experience when working with children in a range of activities. There is a good supply of resources. They are accessible to the children and this encourages independence. They are used well to support the learning.

The setting leader and management committee have a thorough understanding of the budget and prioritise spending according to the setting's needs. They follow appropriate funding processes. There is regular use of fundraising events to supplement resources. The setting offers good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

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

Responses to discussions with the children

The children are happy and at ease in the setting. They all join in the activities enthusiastically. In discussion, they can name their favourite activities and interests.

Appendix 2

Dorothy Morris

Reporting Inspector

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	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	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.
Foundation Phase	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.
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2013.
Local authority advisory teacher	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.
Mudiad Meithrin	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.
National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered child minders 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.

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