



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Crymych
Ysgol y Frenni
Caban
Crymych
SA413QH**

Date of inspection: December 2018

by

**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 Crymych is a Welsh-medium setting. It meets in a self-contained cabin on the grounds of Ysgol Y Frenni in the village of Crymych, in Pembrokeshire local authority. The setting provides education five mornings a week, between 9.00am and 11.30am during term time.

The setting is registered to admit up to 18 children at any given time, and admits children between two-and-a-half and four years old. Currently, four of the three-year-old children receive funded early years education.

Nearly all children come from white British backgrounds and around half speak Welsh as their first language. There are currently no children with additional learning needs.

The setting employs three qualified practitioners, including the leader. The leader began in post in October 2006.

The setting was last inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in July 2018 and by Estyn in November 2012.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Most children achieve well in all areas of learning and in their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- Nearly all children show exceptionally good motivation and interest in their learning, and most concentrate very diligently during tasks
- Nearly all children behave excellently and are extremely polite
- Very creative learning experiences meet children's needs and interests exceptionally well and stimulate them to learn purposefully
- A broad, balanced and engaging curriculum is supported very well by a successful learning environment
- Practitioners' teaching practices challenge children purposefully
- Practitioners support and care for children conscientiously
- Resources are used sensibly, both indoors and outdoors

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader sets a clear and robust direction for the setting's work
- Practitioners work together successfully to realise the purposeful vision and sensible targets
- The management committee supports and challenges the setting intelligently to improve provision and children's outcomes
- There are rigorous and coherent self-evaluation procedures, which lead to obvious improvements in provision and children's standards
- Practitioners are keen to benefit from valuable training by external agencies to improve their personal skills for the benefit of the children
- There are excellent partnerships with the community and external agencies, which have an excellent effect on children's wellbeing
- The leader and management committee make active use of funding and grants to make effective improvements to provision

Recommendations

R1 Ensure that practitioners understand when to intervene during activities that are led by children

R2 Act on assessment findings to plan the next steps in individual children's learning

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice that was seen during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

Most children make at least good progress from their starting points, which are similar to what is expected for their age. Nearly all children work conscientiously with each other and adults to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

Many children use Welsh language patterns and phrases purposefully during informal play and activities, without prompting from adults. Nearly all children follow instructions sensibly. Most sing Welsh songs and nursery rhymes enthusiastically. They respond promptly and eagerly to practitioners' questioning and challenges. This is evident during plenary activities, as they discuss the feelings of characters in a story and work together to plant bulbs and heather in the growing area.

Most children handle books in the reading area like intelligent young readers and respond to the content of books effectively. Many understand that different circumstances affect the outcome of a story, such as recognising the difficulties for a penguin that is trying to fly. As a result, they understand the purposes of pictures and text in a book and discuss familiar characters knowledgeably.

Many children make marks purposefully when experimenting with different media, and persevere successfully with early writing experiences. For example, they use colourful paint to paint the faces of members of their family wholly independently. A majority are beginning to recognise their own names when completing the register themselves, and a minority are beginning to form letters and numbers well in recognisable forms. A few children also write their names confidently on paper with a pencil.

Most children use mathematical language effectively while they play, and experiment with numbers and objects independently. For example, they sort socks purposefully to create long and short pairs, and those with spots and similar patterns, before putting them on a washing line. They also measure each other's height with a tape measure to create an effective record of their growth over time.

Many children recognise, name and count numbers to 10 independently. A few are beginning to count to 10 and beyond correctly when sorting shapes and objects. For example, they organise farm animals, cars and tractors intelligently into particular groups in the small world area. Most understand that differences in size can affect the weight of an object. This can be seen as they use scales sensibly to balance and compare the features of different objects. As a result, many explain the differences between 'big' and 'small', 'tall' and 'short', 'heavy' and 'light' and which object is 'medium-sized' in comparison with the others successfully.

Most children use a variety of ICT equipment skilfully. They control electronic toys confidently and choose to use a camera to record their work independently. Most use electronic tablets to practice their fine motor skills by using apps successfully. They use the setting's educational software and hardware purposefully to improve their ICT skills.

Many children choose equipment and materials effectively to solve practical problems. For example, they discuss the properties of shapes that are hidden under paper, and work together diligently to denote how to turn water into ice. Most children are also creative and experimental when using appropriate equipment to make a Christmas cake in the mud kitchen.

Most children develop their physical skills purposefully. Effective examples of this are riding bicycles and vehicles enthusiastically in the outdoor area, and dancing to music.

Wellbeing: Excellent

Nearly all children relate excellently with adults and visitors as they arrive at, and leave, the setting and during their time there. They show exceptional motivation and interest in their learning, and most concentrate very diligently during tasks. Nearly all children enjoy the stimulating activities in all areas of learning, and they share and work purposefully and sensibly with other children. They show attitudes of the highest standard towards new experiences and challenging tasks, such as singing Christmas songs together wholly independently in the role-play area.

Nearly all children are confident learners and work wholly independently during play activities to solve the challenges that are set for them. They make very thoughtful and positive choices about which areas of learning include their favourite activities, such as role-playing as a farmer or being a chef in the mud kitchen. They explain very confidently and clearly which practical tasks are of most interest to them, and what motivates them to succeed. This is evident as they decide to continue with a particular task or start a new task of their own choice, such as turning sand through the mill. As a result, nearly all children are beginning to express their views and personal preferences very successfully, particularly when providing input into the content of their themes.

Nearly all children behave excellently and are extremely polite. They show genuine respect and courtesy when responding to adults and each other, which contributes to a very productive ethos. Nearly all children listen attentively and maturely to adults, for example when co-operating very positively with all partners who are involved with the setting's day-to-day life, such as owners of the village's shops. They also have a sound awareness of the importance of hygiene and that it contributes to a healthy lifestyle. For example, nearly all children wash their hands thoroughly, without being prompted by practitioners, after using the toilet and messy play, and explain the importance of doing so very intelligently.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Excellent

Practitioners provide an extremely interesting and stimulating curriculum that meets the requirements of the foundation phase very effectively. They plan very creative activities and learning experiences jointly, which target children's needs and interests purposefully. For example, the leader and practitioners plan stimulating experiences in the outdoor area for children to inquire and investigate in the bug hotel. This develops children's curiosity and desire to learn particularly well, and develops their skills extremely successfully across all areas of learning.

Practitioners plan thoroughly to ensure continuity and progression in children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Exciting activities to compare volume, such as experimenting with different containers in the sand and with water, have a positive effect on pupils' numeracy skills. There are also beneficial opportunities to extend children's use of different letters when they practise writing their names with different media, such as crayons and chalk. These activities build purposefully on children's current knowledge and understanding, which derive from their personal decisions before they begin the themes. As a result, daily tasks that are provided, across all areas of learning, challenge children very well to perform at their best consistently.

Practitioners provide purposeful opportunities for children to use ICT equipment, such as electronic toys and tablets, a voice recorder and cameras. They ensure beneficial opportunities for them to use educational software and apps successfully to correspond with the themes and children's needs. As a result, they provide regular opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills effectively.

An excellent feature of the setting's work is the way in which practitioners promote the Welsh language particularly well. They model the language skilfully, for example by repeating phrases and singing nursery rhymes regularly. This has an excellent effect on children's linguistic skills, and most children's understanding of the language develops quickly. Practitioners also create a very good awareness among the children of Welsh traditions, celebrations and culture. This includes celebrating St David's Day and comparing the features of mountains, such as y Frenni Fawr and y Frenni Fach.

Practitioners plan stimulating learning experiences that develop children's physical and creative skills purposefully. They work together diligently to provide successful activities, which motivate children to work together and learn in a practical way. For example, children are given regular opportunities to ride bicycles and vehicles, visit the village and the park, and investigate in the nature area.

The setting makes exceptionally good use of visits to enrich children's learning experiences. Following frequent visits to the local area, practitioners encourage children masterfully to discuss and reflect the features of their local area by creating an attractive map of their walk around the village. Partnership with local businesses and organisations are an exceptional feature of the setting's work. They also invite visitors to the setting, such as a dental hygienist, a road safety officer and members of the emergency services, such as a fire officer. This raises children's awareness of people in their community very successfully.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have high expectations for children. They work together diligently as a team of effective educators. They have up-to-date knowledge of child development, and their understanding of the requirements of the foundation phase is sound. Practitioners greet the children warmly and enthusiastically when they arrive at the setting, and this enthusiasm continues throughout the sessions. All practitioners manage children's behaviour skilfully and gently. They ensure that children are safe when they work both indoors and outdoors.

All practitioners challenge children rigorously during activities. They use the Welsh language masterfully and model very rich language patterns and vocabulary for every child. They question children purposefully to develop their thinking and communication skills. This is done effectively when enquiring about the story of the nativity in Bethlehem. As a result, children are encouraged to take part in various activities, which reinforces their understanding of different challenging concepts soundly. However, at times, practitioners have a tendency to intervene too much during activities that are led by the children. This hinders the children's discussions, input and independent learning.

Procedures for assessing and recording children's achievements are useful. Practitioners have a sound understanding of assessing children and record their progress effectively by using the foundation phase profile regularly and consistently. They discuss sensibly with children what they need to do to improve their work. However, they do not use the daily assessments consistently enough to target the next steps in individual children's learning.

The setting informs parents and carers regularly about their children's achievements. There is daily dialogue between practitioners and parents and carers, which reinforces this effectively. At the end of their time at the setting, comprehensive information is available to parents and carers about their child's achievement. This, alongside a detailed report, reflects their children's progress over time successfully.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Practitioners use positive methods to nurture values such as fairness and respect among the children. They succeed in reinforcing the importance of these values in the setting's day-to-day life. For example, practitioners encourage children to form a line and wait their turn to put on their coats before going to learn outdoors, and share equipment sensibly in the learning areas.

Practitioners provide effective opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They use lively and enthusiastic plenary sessions to ensure that children greet each other, think carefully about the feelings of others, pray, and say thank you, when the need arises. Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for individuals to help with specific responsibilities during snack time. As a result, their role as 'helper of the day' provides beneficial opportunities for them to take responsibility in turn.

Practitioners have robust arrangements for supporting children's health and wellbeing, and promote healthy eating and drinking effectively. As a result, children understand that fruit and vegetables are part of a sensible diet. They also discuss the importance of keeping fit regularly. For example, through activities such as riding bicycles and running from one place to another, children understand that activities to increase the heart rate have a positive effect on their lives.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to recycle paper, cardboard, plastic goods, ink cartridges and food in the setting's foyer. This develops their understanding of sustainability purposefully.

The setting is a safe environment and practitioners take diligent care of the children when they arrive and when they are collected. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners use purposeful behaviour strategies, which eliminate any disruption or unacceptable behaviour effectively. As a result, children are happy and safe in the company of adults. They ask for help and support often to complete activities without concern, and interact and talk to practitioners confidently.

The setting records children's learning needs thoroughly on entry to the setting and during their time there. Practitioners review children's progress regularly, and their starting points are identified rigorously by following the foundation phase profile. There are necessary arrangements to support children and they are used purposefully to provide individuals with specialist support, when the need arises.

Learning environment: Good

Practitioners provide an inclusive community, in which every child has equal access to the areas of learning and equipment that is available. As a result, they acknowledge children's individuality and needs successfully. They provide daily activities that aim consistently to create an interesting environment for children, both indoors and outdoors. As a result, all practitioners promote a supportive and productive ethos from one session to the next.

Practitioners place a sound emphasis on acknowledging, respecting and celebrating diversity. The setting achieves this successfully by celebrating different festivals from around the world, such as Diwali and Hanukkah. They also discuss African fables intelligently to raise children's awareness of the lives others around the world.

Practitioners use resources to meet the requirements of the foundation phase and children's needs successfully. A wide range of resources is available for all children to choose, use and put away. This promotes their understanding of responsibility effectively. During activities that are led by adults and activities where children work independently, practitioners use learning resources sensibly. This can be seen as they make marks with chalk on blackboards in the outdoor area, and flow water through pipes to fill containers.

The cabin in the outdoor area is self-contained, of a good standard and well maintained. It is safe and practitioners follow the school's procedures rigorously in terms of the security of the site. The outdoor area includes beneficial opportunities for children to grow plants in planting areas, in addition to investigative equipment, such as water, scales and a playhouse. Practitioners also plan very effectively to use areas in the school and the village as purposeful learning resources.

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

The leader sets a purposeful direction for the setting's work. Through robust co-operation with practitioners, she has established consistent practices in the setting's daily and long-term procedures. They work conscientiously and commit themselves fully to the success of the setting for the benefit of the children.

The leader and practitioners have high expectations of themselves and the children. They motivate children to improve their work regularly in sensitive and supportive ways. As a result, the robust vision and intelligent teaching ensure that learning experiences and care have a positive effect on children's outcomes. The outstanding partnerships that are in place have an excellent effect on children's wellbeing.

The leader and management committee ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities thoroughly. This leads to purposeful planning and a clear focus on providing stimulating activities for children. As a result, they make sensible changes to the learning areas, both indoors and outdoors, in order to challenge children to perform at their best. For example, they engage children by creating investigative areas outdoors with opportunities to cut grass with scissors. The leader also uses the outdoor area as a prompt to improve children's learning. Her strategic objectives create a sound awareness of the village and the importance of the roles of specific workers in the community. As a result, the relationship with fire officers, local businesses and a curator of old tractors has a purposeful effect on children's outcomes, particularly their wellbeing. The leader focuses rigorously on developing national priorities, such as developing literacy, numeracy and ICT strategies to improve children's skills.

The management committee is supportive of the setting and challenges the leader and practitioners effectively to maintain and improve their practices. By receiving useful information about the setting's practices regularly, committee members have a sound understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. Performance management procedures are thorough and ensure that learning experiences and practitioners' teaching practices have a positive effect on children's learning. The dedicated management committee also meets regularly to organise activities to increase the setting's income, and it monitors income, expenditure and the use of grants in detail.

Improving quality: Good

The well-established procedures and culture of self-evaluation have a successful effect on the setting's work. The leader and management committee ensure that they give full consideration to each other's views, and those of parents and carers, children and external agencies. This has a positive effect on making purposeful changes for the benefit of the children. For example, they have responded to advice from Mudiad Meithrin to go for walks more often and reinforce local links in order to improve children's understanding of their community.

The leader uses relevant and up-to-date information about the setting to improve provision successfully. She and practitioners have made beneficial improvements to provision through evaluations and purposeful targets. Recently, this has included adding further to resources in the outdoor area by creating a nature area with the help of volunteers. This has extended opportunities to learn effectively outdoors.

The leader and practitioners have established rigorous arrangements to monitor children's standards, provision and their roles in the daily and long-term life of the setting. These procedures enable them to identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement well. As a result, quality improvement procedures lead to purposeful changes, which ensure beneficial planning and valid targets for the future.

For example, they have targeted and improved the reading area recently by accepting advice from the children on how to organise resources better. As a result, more children sit in the reading area to discuss books purposefully.

The leader and management committee are open to new ideas and are willing to experiment with different ways of working. They are willing to embrace new ideas from the local authority's advisory teachers and the Mudiad Meithrin officer. Advice on how to organise the indoor areas, in addition to providing opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills across the areas of learning in the outdoor area, has improved provision and children's ability to apply these skills better. As a result, they have created an effective learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, which derives from effective self-evaluation.

Partnership working: Excellent

The setting has a wide range of beneficial partnerships that have an excellent effect on children's wellbeing. These partnerships are extremely successful and contribute to creating an ethos of providing engaging, stimulating and creative provision, both indoors and outdoors.

Using external partners, such as volunteers, to develop the outdoor area is an excellent example of the setting's innovation. The leader and practitioners work with them very effectively to develop the whole space and provide stimulating experiences for children. Practitioners also make highly beneficial use of the local community to contribute strongly to children's wellbeing. For example, practitioners provide excellent opportunities for children to use money in real-life situations as they buy fruit and goods for the setting in the local shops. These impressive experiences enable the setting to develop as a self-contained community. These practices contribute exceptionally well to children's learning experiences in a practical and highly purposeful manner.

The setting has a very active relationship with the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. They use the setting as an example of a very effective setting. As a result, they share effective practices with other settings within the local authority and beyond. For example, the setting is a reliable and valid example of a setting that is leading the way in terms of making improvements by training practitioners purposefully. This includes taking pride in the relationship that it has with Mudiad Meithrin, which improves provision at the setting through intelligent co-operation.

Important partnerships, particularly with the community, the management committee, the school, and parents and carers, contribute very effectively to improving the quality of the setting.

The setting has a very strong partnership with the community. An effective example of this is the links with the local chapel, which have existed for many years. Children take part in activities there regularly, including a Christmas concert.

The setting has an extremely positive relationship with parents and carers. Very effective communication ensures that relevant information is available to them regularly, which includes a very useful information booklet about the setting's practices. The use of social media creates a clear dialogue between the setting and

parents. The setting has taken advantage of the strong relationship with parents to make improvements to provision, for example by creating a mud kitchen in the outdoor area. Practitioners ensure that the setting plays a key part in the community, for example by using the village and its organisations to hold purposeful social evenings for children and parents.

The partnership with the school that shares the site with the setting is extremely successful. The setting provides useful documentation to ensure the best possible transition for children on entry to the school, and communication between the leader and the school's foundation phase link teacher is very good. This ensures that children transfer to the school very well and settle quickly.

Resource management: Good

The leader and management committee focus conscientiously on improving all aspects of the setting's work. They ensure that practitioners' day-to-day work is diligent and targets children's needs intelligently.

The leader allocates duties purposefully. She enables practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge successfully to improve provision. For example, they have used information from training on using the village to improve children's awareness of their habitat, which has also had a significant effect on their wellbeing. As a result, a robust learning community has been established, with a culture of very good co-operation between practitioners and external partners.

Leaders manage resources effectively to support learning. This includes changing the indoor and outdoor activities often to stimulate children as they apply themselves to different themes and specific challenges. For example, they have developed the outdoor area to include a playhouse, planting area and a very useful nature area.

The leader and management committee use the budget and grants successfully. They prioritise expenditure wisely against the targets in the development plan. Their work ensures regular improvements to provision, such as improving the current ICT equipment and large toys in the outdoor area. As a result, the setting provides good value for money because of children's good progress and excellent wellbeing, the effective provision and the purposeful leadership.

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
CIW	<p>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 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 three to seven 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 that 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)	<p>This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.</p>

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation 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