



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: Focused improvement**

**Cylch Meithrin Pontyberem
Memorial Hall
Coalbrook Road
Pontyberem
Llanelli
Carmarthenshire
SA15 5HU**

Date of visit: December 2019

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

© Crown Copyright 2020: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Outcome of visit

Cylch Meithrin Pontyberem is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in December 2018.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the setting from any further follow-up activity.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Improve children's Welsh language skills

Many children develop their Welsh language skills soundly, by listening attentively and following instructions clearly. They are beginning to use familiar vocabulary and phrases in their play with encouragement from adults, for example when wrapping Christmas presents in Father Christmas's workshop. Many join in enthusiastically with singing and have a great deal of fun when correcting deliberate mistakes by adults, for example when singing 'Mi Welais Jac y Do'.

They communicate well in Welsh with adults, for example when discussing and matching Christmas cards, and placing them in the correct places on the different mats. Adults encourage children to speak Welsh effectively when holding conversations with them and by developing relevant vocabulary, for example when decorating the Christmas tree and handling the artificial snow.

Practitioners model language of a high standard regularly for children, for example when helping children to describe the weather outside. They take advantage of beneficial activities to correct children's language, for example when answering questions.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that the daily routine creates an appropriate balance between activities that are directed by children and those that are led by adults, in order to challenge children at the appropriate level

Since the core inspection, the local authority's support teacher has worked successfully with practitioners in order to restructure the daily routine. They now plan more strategically to enrich provision by planning challenging focus tasks, both indoors and outdoors. Practitioners also ensure a beneficial balance between activities that are led by adults and opportunities for children to work more independently. This ensures that children are given suitable opportunities to make progress in their learning.

Practitioners ensure relevant opportunities for children to reinforce their previous learning by taking part in purposeful activities in the different learning areas. They encourage children to investigate and discover for themselves, for example using a metal detector to search for numbers on Christmas bells hidden in the artificial snow tub. Children are given purposeful and practical opportunities to develop their independence throughout the session, for example through self-registration and by serving food and drink at snack time.

Recommendation 3: Improve planning to provide regular opportunities for children to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills systematically across the areas of learning

Practitioners use the foundation phase framework effectively, with the support of the advisory teacher, in order to identify specific skills to be developed. They now plan broader and more systematic experiences to develop children's literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across provision. The setting has also worked effectively with the local authority to invest in purposeful educational resources to support these skills. Practitioners make effective use of resources when planning purposeful activities and learning experiences, which have a positive effect on children's standards.

Practitioners plan a range of valuable activities to develop children's oral, reading and early writing skills. For example, they include beneficial opportunities to encourage children to make marks purposefully in several learning areas within the setting, for example to practise writing a name on a Christmas card. As a result, more children are keen to make marks and are beginning to understand the purpose of writing to communicate appropriately.

Practitioners plan valuable opportunities to develop children's numeracy across the areas of learning. They plan a variety of purposeful opportunities to develop children's awareness of number, shape and measurement. For example, the number of the week is presented and reinforced effectively through different activities, such as the 'agor y clo' (open the lock) puzzle, which asks children to match a number to a number of objects. There are now extensive opportunities for children to practise their number skills in several different areas, for example writing familiar numbers in different media, counting together during registration and placing objects in order in the discovery area.

Practitioners use a suitable range of ICT resources effectively, including programmable toys, microphones and digital cameras in order to ensure more valuable opportunities to develop children's ICT skills beneficially during sessions. Practitioners' plans build suitably on children's previous experiences and learning. For example, practitioners practise getting the children to move backwards and forwards by following familiar instructions, before using programmable toys to make the same movements. This has a positive effect on children's ICT and listening skills.

Recommendation 4: Raise practitioners' expectations of children's learning, particularly when questioning children effectively

Practitioners work closely with the local authority's support teacher to raise their expectations of what children are able to achieve. Practitioners now plan purposeful activities that challenge children in their learning, and develop their skills skilfully across the learning areas. By evaluating the effect of focus tasks and continuous provision on children's skills, they identify the next steps in children's learning effectively.

Practitioners have attended specific training on using open-ended questions with children in order to encourage them to think and extend their understanding.

Practitioners interact effectively with the children from the moment that they arrive at the setting, for example by holding a conversation about the colour of the child's clothing. They ask the children purposeful, open-ended questions and listen well to the responses in order to ask deeper questions, where relevant. They also question effectively to develop children's understanding during activities and when they play independently, for example rolling and shaping dough to form Father Christmas.

Recommendation 5: Improve arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning to identify the most important priorities and plan effectively to improve them

Since the new leader began in post, she has worked closely with the local authority's support teacher to strengthen the setting's self-evaluation processes purposefully. These procedures are now becoming a part of the setting's daily routine, and the leader is able to operate more independently as her confidence increases.

The leader ensures that self-evaluation procedures include all staff and consider the views of parents, children and external agencies. This feedback and advice is used to implement robust strategies that lead to improvements. A specific example of this is the way in which practitioners now divide the children into smaller groups to deliver a programme to raise children's standards of understanding and oral Welsh skills.

The leader evaluates teaching and learning with support, where necessary. She uses the information that derives from self-evaluation activities appropriately to identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. A specific example of this is monitoring the effectiveness of planning in improving children's standards of learning.

The leader uses self-evaluation findings successfully to create a development plan that identifies priorities for improvement. The setting targets priorities that are beginning to lead to improvements and have a positive effect on children's learning and wellbeing. However, these targets are not ones that can be measured easily in terms of progress.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the setting should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.