



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

A report on

**Cylch Arch yr Enfys
Ysgol Gynradd Rhaeadr
Bryntirion Lane
Rhayader
Powys
LD6 5LT**

Date of inspection: December 2016

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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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Context

Cylch Meithrin Arch yr Enfys is in Rhayader, in the Powys local authority. The setting opens for five mornings a week and employs two practitioners.

The setting's registration allows it to take up to 15 children at any one time. The setting accepts children from two to four years old. At the time of inspection, the local authority funded seven children. Only a few children attend the setting for up to four mornings a week. The others attend for either one or two sessions weekly.

Nearly all children speak English as their first language. The setting states that there are currently no children with additional learning needs.

A management committee manages the setting and it is a registered charity. The leader began her post in September 2016. She shares the leadership role with the assistant play leader, who is studying for leadership qualifications at the moment.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) last inspected the setting in January 2016 and Estyn inspected the setting in October 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is adequate:

- The majority of children make suitable progress in their literacy and numeracy skills
- In a short period, the majority of children demonstrate a firm basic understanding of the Welsh language
- Nearly all children use information and communication technology (ICT) skills well
- Many children are keen and interested learners
- The majority of children are confident and independent learners
- Many children behave well and are polite
- Practitioners care, support and guidance nurtures children effectively

However:

- A minority of children do not listen well enough and do not engage in tasks immediately
- Only a few children begin to form letters of the alphabet and numbers in reasonably recognisable forms
- Planning processes are new and have not had time to embed into the setting's daily practices
- The setting's provision for developing the Welsh language is satisfactory
- Practitioners' teaching and assessment practices do not always challenge all children to perform at their best
- The setting does not use its outdoors resources well enough

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are adequate:

- The setting's strategic objectives, plans and policies focus appropriately on ensuring effective provision to meet most children's needs
- Evaluation process consider the views of everyone involved with the setting carefully
- Practitioners receive effective training
- There are positive partnerships with the school, and this supports the next steps in children's learning successfully
- Leaders use funds effectively to ensure improvements in the quality of the indoor provision

- The management committee is addressing the setting's long-term leadership plans purposefully

However:

- Leadership practices have not had enough time to impact on the setting's provision and children's outcomes effectively
- Regular supervision and appraisal practices are not fully established
- Recently established self-evaluation processes have not had enough time to embed or impact fully into the day-to-day life of the setting
- Targets in the improvement plan do not always derive directly from the setting's self-evaluation

Recommendations

R1 Improve children's listening skills

R2 Embed the new planning and assessment systems successfully

R3 Ensure that practitioners challenge children in line with their abilities

R4 Make better and consistent use of the outdoor area to enrich children's experiences

R5 Establish secure leadership practices within the setting

R6 Embed effective self-evaluation processes and ensure that targets in the development plan derive from the self-evaluation report

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

The majority of children demonstrate effective progress in the development of their skills across all areas of learning, including their literacy and numeracy skills. They talk sensibly about how they develop their skills, for example when they create a painting of a Christmas tree together with handprints and when they make their own Christmas wrapping paper with potato stamps and printing blocks.

Nearly all children's Welsh language skills are low on entry. Their early understanding and use of the language is developing appropriately. In a short period, the majority of children demonstrate a firm basic understanding of the language. For example, they use words and simple phrases occasionally while role-playing in Santa's grotto and during the weighing of ingredients and preparation of pastry to make mince pies.

The majority of children understand what to do when directed in Welsh. This is evident when they listen reasonably well to stories and when they climb outdoor adventurous equipment under the direction of the setting's practitioners.

Around half the children attempt to speak clearly and make sure that others understand them when responding to practitioners' questions in Welsh during tasks. These children listen to instructions and act on them promptly, demonstrating an increasing awareness of the language. However, a minority of children do not listen well enough and do not engage in tasks immediately.

Around half the children respond well in Welsh during individual activities, such as when painting a still life representation of a Christmas tree in their own style. This occurs during informal play and activities led by adults, such as when creating treasure hunts with electronic tablets in the outdoor area, arranging farm animals in the sand tray and completing jigsaws.

Most children handle the books in the reading area appropriately and a majority of children show interest in these books. They understand the purpose of the illustrations and identify different characters effectively.

Many children experiment with mark making effectively and they enjoy writing experiences using a variety of media. Examples include painting with paintbrushes and marking chalkboards and the setting's yard with chalks. A few children begin to form letters of the alphabet and numbers in reasonably recognisable forms when handling pencils and crayons. The majority of children explain the purpose of writing in the correct context. A minority of children recognise their own and others' names during registration and at snack times.

The majority of children use mathematical language purposefully and in everyday contexts. They recognise, name and count numbers to five with adult support and a few count to ten and beyond accurately, when sorting shapes and different types of

objects. Most children understand the differences in size when placing different characters in and around a toy castle and during free play sessions with helicopters and cars. They explain with accuracy if objects are 'too big' or 'too small' and when they climb from a 'low to a 'high' position on the climbing wall to reach the slide.

The majority of children use a good range of mathematical language when co-operating together in spontaneous play, for example when comparing the length, height or weight of different objects. They also use numbers well in practical activities when comparing two and three-dimensional shapes as 'flat' or 'round', and when counting in sequence the amount of numbered doors around the room.

Many children enjoy listening to music and the majority of them respond enthusiastically to nursery rhymes and familiar songs in Welsh. They understand that their singing of certain musical phrases require louder or softer voices.

The majority of children choose relevant equipment and materials to solve practical problems effectively. For example, they use scissors and wrapping paper to cover different sized cardboard boxes and photograph different shaped road signs around the town. Around half the children develop effective thinking skills. This has a positive effect on their learning and the standards they achieve, such as when they operate buttons independently to cross the road at crossing points.

Most children use technology effectively when using cameras, electronic toys and tablets in everyday activities. They use educational software effectively to develop their ICT and fine motor skills.

Wellbeing: Good

Many children behave well and they are polite. The majority of children listen carefully to adults, such as when they dress suitably for outdoor adventurous activities in the school's outdoor area. Following the use of the toilet, painting and outdoor activities, many children wash their hands thoroughly, without too much adult prompting.

Many children show motivation and interest in their learning and the majority demonstrate positive levels of engagement during tasks. Many children enjoy the activities in the areas of learning and they share equipment and work sensibly with other children.

Many children demonstrate positive attitudes to new experiences, such as when creating a treasure trail with clues available on an electronic tablet. However, the behaviour and engagement of a few of younger children at the setting does affect the concentration of older children during tasks.

Many children relate well to adults and visitors when they arrive at the setting and when they leave. The majority of children are confident and independent learners. This is evident when these children explain sensibly which activities are their preferred choices and why they chose them before other tasks.

Most children are beginning to understand that they have rights as individuals and that they have an option of expressing personal opinions and preferences, such as when deciding to remain at or leave specific tasks.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Adequate
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Learning experiences: Adequate

The practitioners are beginning to plan together appropriately to provide a suitable curriculum, which reflects the ethos of the Foundation Phase satisfactorily. The planning targets children's interests and their needs beneficially and provides sufficient opportunities for them to learn independently.

The new planning processes provide flexible and interesting activities, which motivate children to learn through practical tasks. Practitioners allow children to contribute their own ideas to the planning and they balance adult-led and child-led activities competently. Learning experiences are by now more engaging and practitioners ensure sound progression in children's learning. However, the planning processes are new and have not had time to embed into the setting's daily practices and impact on children's outcomes. The setting is still improving and refining the processes.

There are relevant opportunities to develop children's literacy, numeracy and thinking skills. Literacy and numeracy tasks are now more prominent in the areas of learning and challenge the majority of children to perform at their best most of the time. The tasks build appropriately on children's current knowledge and understanding in a lively manner. Examples include worthwhile opportunities for role-playing in Santa's grotto and creating rockets independently out of different shapes.

The new planning practices ensure regular challenges to support the development of children's problem solving skills. Examples include organising themselves in line to slide off the climbing apparatus and choosing the most appropriate printing blocks and potato shapes to create effective patterns on wrapping paper.

Practitioners plan to develop children's physical skills successfully. They allow children to explore and experiment on climbing equipment and run around energetically during bear hunts. This promotes children's understanding of danger and how to use equipment sensibly to assist others.

The setting's provision for developing the Welsh language is satisfactory. Practitioners model the language correctly. They encourage children to use Welsh through singing songs and the use of simple phrases involving numbers, colours and instructions. However, this does not impact on the children's everyday use of the language sufficiently. The setting promotes children's awareness of Welsh traditions and celebrations successfully. These activities include celebrating Saint David's Day and Saint Dwynwen's Day, and baking traditional cakes, bread and cawl.

The provision for developing children's ICT skills is successful. It offers valuable opportunities to use an electronic tablet, cameras, electronic and toys and household objects. Practitioners challenge children to develop their early ICT skills systematically through offering ICT opportunities that support the development of literacy and numeracy skills.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits to enrich children's learning experiences. Visits to the town's shops and nature walks add interest to the curriculum. Visitors, who include National Trust officers and supermarket workers, teach the children suitably about the roles of people in their community.

Practitioners provide interesting learning experiences that encourage children to treat people from all cultural backgrounds with respect and tolerance. This includes celebrating the Chinese New Year and Eid. These planned experiences develop a better understanding of the world for children.

Teaching: Adequate

Practitioners greet the children warmly as they arrive for every session and manage children's behaviour safely. This encourages the children's participation and enjoyment in many of the activities.

The practitioners are up-to-date with information about child development. They understand the requirements of the Foundation Phase and they collaborate suitably. Practitioners demonstrate a sensible balance between child-directed and adult-led activities. They provide a sufficient range of opportunities to children to enable them to learn through play and practical experiences.

The practitioners have suitable expectations for most children and challenge children competently in some focus tasks. However, they do not always challenge children well enough in line with their abilities. They intervene sensibly in children's play, encouraging many children to perform at their best during continuous and enhanced activities. Practitioners question many children soundly in order to develop thinking and communication skills. This is apparent when discussing the amount of ingredients needed to make mince pies.

Practitioners complete assessments appropriately. At times, they encourage the children to assess their own learning well. They discuss occasionally with some children what they need to do to improve their work. Practitioners record evaluations and discussions on recording sheets and annotate children's work in their record books. However, this does not lead directly towards the planning of future tasks and it does not target the next steps in children's learning accurately enough.

Practitioners are by now evidencing the children's work to outcomes efficiently, as they mature at the setting, using the Foundation Phase profile. The setting informs parents and carers regularly and effectively about their children's achievements.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting offers positive opportunities to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children. For example, practitioners use group discussions to consider each other's feelings during circle time activities and at snack times. This fosters values such as fairness and respect for each other successfully.

Practitioners provide rewarding opportunities daily for children to reflect, discuss feelings and to say thank you. As a result, the children take turns appropriately while eating snacks and serving milk and water carefully around the dining tables. The helper of the day system allows children to assist effectively with preparing the snack table.

Efficient arrangements exist to support the health and wellbeing of children and the setting operates effective procedures to promote healthy eating and drinking. As a result, the children are beginning to understand that fruit, vegetables and exercise contribute to a sensible lifestyle.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to re-cycle paper, cardboard, plastic containers and food. Junk modelling is also an active part of the setting's planning. This develops the children's understanding of sustainability effectively.

The setting uses positive behaviour strategies competently. The setting is a safe environment and the practitioners take good care of the children when they arrive and when they are collected. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The setting records children's learning needs accurately when they join and during their time at the setting. Practitioners review children's progress regularly and identify their starting points suitably by following the guidelines of the Foundation Phase profile. Therefore, the setting targets children with additional support effectively when it is required. Practitioners discuss these children with the appropriate agencies in order to provide assistance as soon as possible to target their needs.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children have equal opportunities to all the areas of learning and resources. Practitioners know and understand the children well and they support children in a careful and sensitive manner.

The setting promotes a caring ethos through its daily activities and the approach adopted by the practitioners. Everyone has a clear emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity. The setting achieves this effectively by celebrating different festivals from around the world each year, such as the Chinese New Year and Eid. It also uses dolls from different cultural backgrounds purposefully to promote people's similarities and differences.

Generally, the setting uses its indoor resources well, to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase and children's needs. Practitioners use wide ranges of interesting resources effectively in continuous activities, the focus tasks and the opportunities to enrich the learning.

The setting's equipment and resources are accessible to all children, and this promotes the children's sense of responsibility purposefully. However, the setting does not use its outdoor resources well enough to develop children's skills successfully. Practitioners use facilities in the local area sensibly, such as utilising the town's amenities to support children's learning.

The building is of a suitable quality; it is clean, well maintained and safe.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?
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Adequate

Leadership: Adequate

The current leader of the setting is in a temporary position until the assistant practitioner achieves the necessary qualifications to take over as leader. The setting's strategic objectives, plans and policies focus appropriately on ensuring effective provision to meet most children's needs. However, the leadership practices have not had enough time to impact on the setting's provision and children's outcomes effectively.

The management committee is focusing on developing practitioners well and motivating them towards improvements in positive, sensible and supportive ways. The management committee is beginning to establish a clear strategic direction to the daily and long-term practices of the setting in order to promote and sustain improvements. In collaboration with the prospective leader, they currently manage the planning, teaching and learning appropriately. As a result, they ensure that practitioners have better expectations of most children.

The leaders use relevant information about the setting to bring about improvements to the provision. Recently, this includes developing assessment practices to target the next steps in children's learning and to improve the continuous provision inside the building. She also focuses suitably on national priorities, such as developing literacy and numeracy strategies to improve children's skills and using the Foundation Phase profile proficiently.

The management committee ensures that the provision for the children is improving. It ensures that practitioners fully understand their roles and members work as a motivated team. However, regular supervision and appraisal practices are not fully in place at the moment. The management committee meets regularly and it receives information about the setting's day-to-day practices regularly from the leaders. It is beginning to challenge the setting more robustly to improve daily practices and to develop further the areas that require improvements.

Improving quality: Adequate

Leaders know the strengths of the setting reasonably well and several of the areas that need improving. They have recently established consistent arrangements to monitor children's standards and the daily provision. The effective collaboration and discussions amongst staff and information collated on a regular basis now contribute to these suitable practices. Leaders use the information about the setting to ensure improvements to its provision, for example refining the planning systems. The self-evaluation process takes considers the views of practitioners, parents and carers, the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin carefully. However, the report does not always contain enough detail as to how and why certain areas need improving further.

As leaders have only started their current self-evaluation processes recently, they have not had enough time to embed the practices fully into the day-to-day life of the setting. The self-evaluation report suggests that the setting's use of the local authority's self-evaluation guidance is still developing.

Current areas for development include improving children's mark making, numeracy and ICT skills and securing better self-evaluation processes. The leaders have set appropriate targets against suitable timescales and prioritised targets satisfactorily. The management committee allocates sufficient funding to meet the targets. However, not all targets in the improvement plan derive directly from the setting's self-evaluation.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a range of effective strategic partnerships. The setting works successfully with these partners to try to improve provision and the standards and wellbeing of children. This includes a positive link with the school next door to the setting, to where most children transfer at the end of their time at the setting. This supports children's transition arrangements well. Arrangements for the transfer of personal information and assessments are effective and beneficial to the children as they settle into school.

Practitioners take active steps to involve parents and carers in the life of the setting. The setting informs parents and carers regularly on all aspects of the setting's work. They are also encouraged to offer their own opinions on issues to improve the setting through questionnaires and regular discussions.

The setting's community links support children's learning appropriately. This involves successful fundraising events, which includes opening a pop-up shop in a nearby town annually to sell clothes and bric-a-brac to raise funds for the setting. In addition, the setting supports local and national charities, which fosters care and concern for others among the children.

The setting works purposefully with outside agencies, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. This reinforces the positive relationships that exist and these organisations actively support training and management documentation effectively. The setting has benefited from the support offered by these organisations during a period of significant change and disruption in its leadership structure.

Practitioners work and connect with a broad range of other partners, which also make important contributions to improving the provision. These include agencies that support the setting with training in first aid, food hygiene courses, risk assessments, Foundation Phase developments and child protection training.

Resource management: Adequate

Leaders are beginning to focus directly on improving all aspects of the setting's work. The management committee is addressing the setting's areas to develop intelligently, particularly the role of the leader. They are currently allocating resources effectively to target the important areas of development. They ensure that the setting has enough qualified practitioners to meet the needs of the children.

Current leadership practices enable practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge suitably. This has led to establishing a suitable learning community. Competent collaboration between practitioners and other partners is a positive starting point to support all aspects of the setting's work.

The performance management systems are adequate and are beginning to impact positively on learning experiences and teaching practices. The setting manages its indoor resources efficiently to support learning, however they do not use the extensive outdoor resources well enough.

The management committee uses the budget appropriately and now prioritises spending against set timelines and responsibilities with better purpose. This is beginning to create better leadership practices, which focus specifically on regular and consistent improvements. The management committee achieves this through purposeful negotiations and well-financed improvement plans.

The setting provides adequate value for money, due to the appropriate progress children make from their start points, the suitable provision and the developing leadership practices.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Denotes the benchmark – this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	12	10 83%	2 17%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		79%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		84%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	12	11 92%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	14%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	12	10 83%	2 17%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		81%	19%	0%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		72%	28%	0%	0%		
Teaching is good.	11	10 91%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		81%	19%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	11	10 91%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		84%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	11	7 64%	4 36%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		76%	23%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	12	8 67%	4 33%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	11	8 73%	3 27%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		72%	27%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	12	4 33%	8 67%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	31%	5%	1%		

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	12	10 83%	2 17%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	9	7 78%	2 22%	0 0%	0 0%	3	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		65%	31%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	12	8 67%	4 33%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		73%	26%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	11	5 45%	6 55%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		63%	32%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	12	10 83%	2 17%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Nicholas Jones

Reporting Inspector

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

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	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) 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 3 to 7 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 which 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)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (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.