



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Bro Dysynni
Ysgol Craig y Deryn
Llanegryn
Tywyn
Gwynedd
LL36 9SG**

Date of inspection: May 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 Bro Dysynni is a Welsh-medium setting. It meets in a self-contained room at Ysgol Craig y Deryn in the village of Llanegryn, in Gwynedd local authority. The setting provides education five mornings a week between 9.00am and 11.00am during term time.

The setting is registered to admit up to 12 children at any given time, and admits children between two and four years old. Most three-year-old children are currently funded to receive early years education. Nearly all children come from white British backgrounds and a minority speak Welsh as their first language. There are currently very few children with additional learning needs.

The setting employs three qualified practitioners, including the leader. The leader began in post in September 2016.

The setting was last inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in December 2016. This is the setting's first inspection by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Practitioners provide an interesting and balanced curriculum that reflects the philosophy of the foundation phase successfully
- Practitioners work diligently with each other to provide stimulating and engaging activities, which create confident and independent learners
- Practitioners' purposeful teaching and questioning have a positive effect on children's learning and progress
- The setting has purposeful arrangements to support children's health, wellbeing and needs
- Practitioners use the building, the outdoor area and resources purposefully to meet the requirements of the foundation phase and children's aspirations

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader sets a clear direction for the daily and long-term work
- Practitioners work together effectively to realise the setting's purposeful aims
- The management committee supports and challenges sensibly to improve provision and children's outcomes
- Efficient self-evaluation procedures lead to setting purposeful targets to improve provision
- Practitioners are keen to benefit from relevant training from external agencies to improve their personal skills
- There are purposeful partnerships with specialist agencies, parents and carers
- There are effective arrangements to transfer children to school life and the next steps in their education
- The management committee makes effective use of funding and grants to make improvements to provision and to improve resources successfully

Recommendations

R1 Time plenary sessions more effectively in order to maintain all children's interest

R2 Use daily assessments effectively 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.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	
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Standards:

Wellbeing:

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, or their wellbeing. This is because there were not enough relevant children present at the time of the inspection to report on without identifying individual children.

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

Practitioners provide an interesting and balanced curriculum that reflects the philosophy of the foundation phase successfully. They provide sensible activities and learning experiences that target children's needs, preferences and interests effectively. As a result, practitioners provide beneficial opportunities for them to develop as independent learners across all areas of learning.

The leader co-ordinates planning effectively by using well-established planning procedures and the advice of the local authority sensibly. As a result, systems for daily and long-term planning have a purposeful effect on children's experiences. They contribute positively to the children's enthusiasm as they learn through play. For example, they mix dry foods in the mud kitchen and plant potatoes confidently in a glass box.

Practitioners plan methodically and intelligently to develop children's literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Activities include challenges to solve problems with mathematical equipment, such as using scales to weigh water and making letters on the playground with chalk. Activities build effectively on children's existing knowledge and understanding, and derive from their personal preferences and decisions within a group. As a result, the daily tasks that are provided across all areas of learning challenge children to perform at their best consistently, either independently or under the guidance of practitioners.

Practitioners provide effective opportunities to children to use ICT equipment, such as electronic toys and tablets, a compact disc player, cameras and a microphone. They provide regular opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills purposefully by using educational software and apps successfully.

Practitioners recognise that a majority of the children's Welsh language skills are low on entry to the setting. They address this immediately by modelling words, numbers, colours, discussing the weather and repeating simple phrases regularly. As a result, many children's understanding of the language develops quickly.

The setting promotes children's awareness of Welsh traditions, celebrations and culture successfully. These activities include celebrating St David's Day and St Dwynwen's Day, opportunities to take part in folk dancing and following the Welsh rugby team in international championships.

Practitioners plan stimulating learning experiences purposefully by focusing on developing children's physical, thinking and creative skills. They work together diligently to provide engaging activities, which motivate children to work together and learn practically. For example, children are given regular opportunities to ride bicycles and vehicles energetically, discuss the taste of haggis from Scotland with each other and print different coloured patterns with blocks.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits and visitors to enrich children's learning experiences. This creates a sound awareness among the children of their rural area and the village, and the roles of people in their community such as the police, farmers, dental hygienists and a veterinary surgeon.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners greet the children warmly when they arrive at the setting, and manage their behaviour effectively. This encourages the children's participation and enjoyment in the activities that are provided from the second they cross the threshold.

Practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development, understand the requirements of the foundation phase and work together effectively. They show a sensible balance between activities that are directed by adults and children's independent tasks. As a result, they provide a wide range of opportunities for children to learn through practical experiences and play. Good examples of this are throwing balls into bowls from a distance and counting them, and programming an electronic toy to travel along a square track.

Practitioners have high expectations and challenge children frequently in focus tasks. They question children skilfully and regularly, which has a sound effect on their literacy and numeracy skills and thinking skills. This is evident as they discuss the characteristics of the three little pigs and the role of the wolf with the sharp teeth in the story. However, plenary presentations lose pace at times and become monotonous. As a result, a very few children lose interest in discussions and the aim of the session.

Procedures for assessing and recording children's achievements are well-established and robust. Evidence corresponds correctly with individual children's outcomes by using the foundation phase profile well, as they develop at the setting. The leader co-ordinates and records practitioners' assessments regularly and consistently. Practitioners discuss sensibly with the children what they need to do to improve their work. They use daily assessments appropriately to draw attention to individuals' successes and areas for improvement. However, they do not use this information rigorously enough to plan directly for the next steps in their learning.

Practitioners share incidental information informally with parents and carers at the beginning and end of sessions. The setting also provides parents with useful booklets and reports when their children leave the setting to go to school, and holds meetings with them to discuss their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides purposeful opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners use specific activities, such as role-playing in the cafe, sensibly to focus on the feelings of others and how to treat people in social situations. By doing so, practitioners nurture values such as honesty, fairness and respect purposefully. As a result, these daily routines are beneficial to the setting's overall ethos and joint activities, such as snack time.

Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to reflect, discuss feelings and say thank you each day. For example, as the children sit to brush their teeth and say thank you for their food and drink. Practitioners provide useful and practical opportunities for them to serve and support each other in order to develop their independence. As a result, children take turns politely while eating snacks around the dining table, and take pride in their role as the helper of the day by leading recycling and setting out the milk cartons.

The setting has comprehensive arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. These arrangements contribute well to their development and support their learning successfully. The setting promotes eating and drinking healthily and, as a result, children understand the fruit, vegetables and keeping fit are an important part of a sensible diet and a healthy lifestyle. Practitioners also provide regular opportunities for children to recycle paper, plastic, food and card. This develops their understanding of sustainability effectively.

The setting uses positive behaviour strategies, which eliminate any kind of disruption and unacceptable behaviour. As a result, children are happy and safe in the company of adults. The setting is a safe environment and practitioners take diligent care of the children when they arrive and leave. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The setting has robust arrangements to support any child with additional needs. Practitioners work together closely and observe children carefully when identifying any concerns. They act on these by communicating with parents and receiving advice from specialist agencies to help to proceed with specific intervention. The setting keeps formal records of additional comments to help them to track these pupils' progress rigorously and shares this information intelligently with parents.

Learning environment: Good

The setting promotes a caring ethos. Practitioners adopt positive attitudes and their daily activities aim consistently to create a stimulating environment for children. They provide an inclusive community in which each child has equal access to the areas of learning and the equipment that is available. As a result, practitioners recognise children's individuality and needs effectively.

Each practitioner places a clear emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity. The setting achieves this successfully by celebrating different festivals from around the world, such as the Chinese New Year and Diwali, and providing dolls from different ethnic backgrounds in the role-play area.

The setting uses resources purposefully to meet the requirements of the foundation phase and the children's needs. Practitioners provide a wide range of resources, and they are available for each child to choose to use them and put them away. This promotes their understanding of responsibility successfully. Continuous, focus and enrichment tasks make good use of learning resources. This has a positive effect on children's learning. This can be seen as they make marks and use their mathematical skills practically in the setting's activities, such as the construction area, by using sieves and the sand area.

The accommodation is part of a relatively new school and is therefore of very high quality and is well maintained. It is secure and follows the school's procedures in relation to site safety in detail. The outdoor area includes beneficial opportunities for children to grow plants, in addition to role-play equipment, such as the mud kitchen. The school's extensive areas are available to them, which include fields and nature areas for energetic play, inquiry and investigation.

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

The leader sets a purposeful direction and has established thorough practices for the setting's day-to-day procedures. This makes beneficial improvements to provision. Her sensible vision ensures that planning, teaching and care have a good effect on children's experiences and outcomes.

The setting's objectives, plans and policies focus rigorously on having a positive effect on provision and improving resources for the benefit of the children. This meets the children's needs successfully and promotes their achievements well. The leader works conscientiously with the dedicated practitioners, and they have high expectations of themselves and the children. They succeed in motivating the children to improve their work consistently in sensible and supportive ways through their purposeful teaching.

The leader uses relevant and up-to-date information about the setting to improve provision. This has recently included using the foundation phase profile to identify the children's starting points accurately, and beginning to refine assessment to better target the next steps in children's learning.

Through their weekly planning, the leader and practitioners focus on providing stimulating activities for children. As a result, they make beneficial changes to the indoor and outdoor learning areas, and challenge children to perform at their best. For example, they stimulate children by creating hiding areas and providing large metal bowls to experiment with water. The leader also focuses rigorously on national priorities, such as developing literacy, numeracy and ICT strategies to improve children's skills before they transfer to school.

The leadership, which includes the very supportive and active management committee, ensures that provision for children is interesting and purposeful. They ensure that practitioners understand their roles in full through regular evaluations and discussions, and that they work together as a team. The management committee challenges practitioners wisely to maintain and improve their practices and develop

areas that need to be improved further. They receive information about the setting's practices regularly from the leader and listen sensibly to the suggestions of officers from the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. The dedicated committee meets regularly to organise activities to increase income, and it monitors expenditure and the use of grants effectively and in detail.

Improving quality: Good

A positive culture of self-evaluation permeates throughout the setting's work. Practitioners ensure that they give full consideration to the views of each other, parents and carers, children and external agencies. The leader and management committee hold regular discussions with everyone involved with the setting's life to make improvements and improve learning experiences further. This has a positive effect on improving the aspects that need to be changed meaningfully for the benefit of the children. For example, they use questionnaires wisely and act on the findings, such as using social media to convey information to parents. As a result, these practices are of benefit to the setting and ensure a complete picture of learning, provision and management processes.

The leader and practitioners have established consistent arrangements to monitor children's standards, provision and their roles in the setting's daily and long-term life. They use quantitative and purposeful procedures to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The rigour of these practices ensures an effective bridge between the self-evaluation and the development plan. As a result, quality improvement procedures lead to purposeful changes, which ensure strategic, beneficial and thorough planning for the future.

The leader and management committee are open to new ideas and willing to experiment with different ways of working. They are willing to embrace new ideas from the local authority's advisory teachers and an officer from Mudiad Meithrin. As a result, the advice on how to organise the learning areas and areas of learning, in addition to how resources and equipment are set out, has created an effective learning environment, both inside and outside the building.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a range of effective partnerships. The leader and practitioners work successfully with these partners to improve provision and children's standards and wellbeing. For example, there are very positive links with the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin to support training and documentation, and they advise on management issues effectively.

Effective meetings are held with the school to support the children's transition to school life. Arrangements for sharing personal information and assessments are well-organised and beneficial to the children.

Practitioners take active steps to include parents and carers in the setting's life. The setting informs parents and carers regularly about all aspects of the setting's work. The leader encourages them to give their own views effectively on issues to improve the setting through questionnaires, social media and regular discussions.

The setting's community links support the children's learning well and include successful fundraising events, such as fashion evenings and successful bids for grant funding from businesses in the area. The setting also supports local and national charities, which nurtures kindness and care among the children.

Practitioners work with a wide range of other partners, which makes an important contribution towards improving provision. These include agencies that support the setting with first aid training, food hygiene courses, foundation phase training and child protection.

Resource management: Good

The leader and management committee focus directly on improving all aspects of the setting's work. This is done by using practitioners intelligently and allocating resources purposefully. They ensure that the setting has plenty of qualified practitioners, who have had relevant training, to meet children's needs effectively.

Robust leadership practices enable practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge successfully. As a result, a purposeful learning community has been established, which has a culture of efficient co-operation between the setting's practitioners and partners.

The setting's performance management procedures are thorough and ensure purposeful learning experiences and positive teaching practices. The setting manages resources creatively to support learning. This includes changing the room's layout and the outdoor area occasionally to inspire children as they apply themselves to different themes and interesting challenges.

The leader and management committee use the budget and grants successfully. They prioritise expenditure against the targets in the development plan effectively and make consistent improvements by discussing and prioritising specific funding wisely. As a result, the leader and management committee ensure that the use of funding has a direct effect on provision and children's outcomes. An example of this is the recent ICT equipment that stretches children's skills further, and the new resources to promote children's understanding of planting and growing plants.

Because provision is effective and the leadership is purposeful, the setting provides good value for money.

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