



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Llanilar
Ysgol Gynradd Llanilar
Llanilar
Ceredigion
SY23 4PA**

Date of inspection: March 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 Llanilar is a Welsh-medium setting. It meets in a self-contained building on the grounds of Ysgol Gynradd Llanilar, in Ceredigion local authority. The setting provides education and care for five mornings and three afternoons a week.

The setting is registered to admit up to 19 children at any given time, and admits children between two and four years old. All eligible children currently receive funded early years education.

Nearly all children come from white British backgrounds and a few speak Welsh as their first language. There are currently very few children with additional learning needs.

The setting employs two qualified practitioners, including the leader. The leader began in post in January 2007.

The setting was last inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in May 2017 and by Estyn in September 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 show sound progress in their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- Nearly all children show motivation and interest in their learning
- Nearly all children behave responsibly
- Practitioners plan effective learning experiences to challenge children purposefully
- Purposeful teaching improves children's outcomes successfully
- Provision for the Welsh language is effective
- The practitioners' diligent and sensible care creates a happy and engaging environment
- The stimulating learning environment engages children's interest intelligently

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader sets a firm and clear direction for the setting's work
- Regular self-evaluation systems lead to setting useful targets
- Practitioners are keen to develop professionally and attend appropriate training by external agencies
- Conscientious use of support services, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin, supports provision and leadership purposefully
- The management committee provides active support
- There are beneficial partnerships with parents and carers, the community and the local school
- Funding is used sensibly to ensure improvements in indoor provision and the outdoor area

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that daily assessments are used effectively to plan the next steps in individual children's learning
- R2 Develop effective strategies to reduce the noise levels in the building
- R3 Ensure that the management committee's monitoring practices are rigorous and robust

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?	Good
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Standards: Good

Most children make consistent progress in their skills from their starting points, which are close to the expected average. They achieve well over time in their literacy and numeracy skills, and many make marks purposefully and a few write letters and numbers correctly.

Most children speak clearly and ensure that adults and other children understand them when they explain and clarify their intentions intelligently during activities. For example, they discuss sensibly with each other as they make chocolate in the role-play chocolate factory, and perform confidently on stage with a microphone. They listen to instructions from others and act on them effectively. This is evident as they collect balls from the water with a net to fill egg boxes and discuss their feelings meaningfully in a group. A few children use mature language in spontaneous and structured play. This includes discussing the sizes of different Russian dolls and describing the weather to each other by using electronic devices.

Most children show an interest in books and enjoy their content. They discuss characters and events confidently with adults and peers, and handle books like natural readers. Many children sit quietly and follow stories that are read to them intelligently. As a result, they share stories with each other and respond with interest to the content of the story, such as explaining how to stroke lamb's wool and describing eggs hatching.

Many children make marks purposefully. They enjoy early writing experiences and use a variety of media. They experiment with paint, chalk, crayons and their fingers in shaving foam to create patterns and the first letters of their names. As a result, a majority of children recognise their own names correctly and form the letters of the alphabet and numbers independently. Many children explain the purpose of writing in the correct contexts, for example when making marks on paper to record ingredients when making chocolate.

Many children use mathematical language effectively in the correct contexts. Most count, recognise and name numbers up to 10 confidently. A few children count beyond 10 skilfully when arranging spring objects in the small world area and picking up different fruits with tongs to order them by type and colour.

Most children choose relevant equipment and materials to solve mathematical problems successfully. They fill jugs carefully from a water barrel and measure to halfway correctly. They arrange themselves into a line confidently when putting on their coats, and use ordinal numbers from first to fifth appropriately. They also work together diligently when preparing a cake in the mud kitchen, and create original melodies when playing with cooking equipment in the outdoor area.

Many of the children understand the difference between moving left and right as they throw and follow balls on the playground. They also group different types of objects

according to size, shape and colour correctly, particularly when building towers in the construction area. Many of the children compare two- and three-dimensional shapes correctly. Examples of this include explaining that a circle is flat on paper but round when describing a sphere.

Most children are beginning to use technology effectively by using electronic tablets and through tasks that include electronic toys, cameras and a computer. They also use educational software and apps to develop their ICT skills and fine motor skills purposefully.

Many children develop useful thinking and creative skills through interesting activities, and this has a positive effect on their learning and the standards that they achieve. For example, they create a flow chart to record a river's journey to the lake and record the features of spring, such as frogspawn and tadpoles in the water and buds on the trees.

Nearly all children enjoy listening to music and respond enthusiastically to familiar Welsh nursery rhymes and songs. Most children use their physical skills effectively, for example as they jump and spin around the playground, ride bicycles and scooters confidently, and climb enthusiastically on the school's adventure equipment.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children relate well to adults and visitors as they arrive at and leave the setting. They behave well and treat adults and each other with respect. Most children listen carefully to practitioners. Effective examples of this are their commitment to tidying-up after playing, and putting on aprons before painting and messy play.

Nearly all children show motivation and interest in their learning, and most concentrate conscientiously during activities. Most children share resources and work sensibly with other children. They show positive attitudes towards new experiences, such as counting and burying dinosaurs in the sand and planting seeds and herbs in the growing area.

Most children are beginning to make sensible choices during free play. They express an opinion and make personal choices effectively, for example when choosing to move from the outdoor area to experience new activities. As a result, most children are confident and self-sufficient learners.

Nearly all children have a sound awareness of hygiene. They understand that it is important to stay healthy and that they need to avoid infections through sensible practices after using the toilet, messy play and outdoor activities. As a result, nearly all children wash their hands thoroughly without much encouragement from an adult.

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

The leader and practitioners work together diligently to provide interesting activities across all areas of learning. Their conscientious commitment engages children's interest effectively. The effect of their work is that children develop as independent learners, both indoors and outdoors. For example, they encourage children to learn practically by role-playing in the mud kitchen and following the life cycle of a frog.

Practitioners provide an engaging curriculum that reflects the foundation phase ethos purposefully. Their planning to provide stimulating learning experiences is efficient and meets children's needs and interests sensibly. However, although planning focuses on creating interesting experiences, it is not based wholly on assessment findings. As a result, it does not challenge individuals consistently enough against the next steps in their learning.

All practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to voice their personal ideas to enrich activities further. This includes choosing books independently to discuss in the reading corner, and expressing their personal opinions on their favourite ingredients to make a smoothie. These activities add positively to the children's daily enthusiasm as they learn through play and educational activities.

Provision to develop children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is effective. Activities, which include literacy and numeracy challenges, are prominent in all areas of learning and stimulate children to perform at their best regularly. Practical examples of this can be seen as children discuss the features of spring, such as farmers ploughing the land and daffodils sprouting. As a result, nearly all children's knowledge and understanding are developing soundly.

Provision for the Welsh language is beneficial to the children. Practitioners are good language models when talking to the children. They support children who are beginning to learn the language successfully. Practitioners encourage children to use the language as much as possible through daily activities and reinforce their development regularly. They question children purposefully in the indoor and outdoor learning areas. As a result, most children's understanding of the language is developing positively and they respond with familiar vocabulary and phrases in a short period of time.

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, and cooking traditional dishes such as soup and baking Welsh cakes.

Provision to develop ICT is effective. The setting plans useful opportunities for children to experiment with a wide range of equipment, such as cameras, electronic tablets and programmable toys. All practitioners challenge children effectively by using Welsh educational software and apps on the electronic tablets and the computer. This develops children's early ICT skills purposefully.

Practitioners focus on developing children's physical skills successfully. They allow them to climb on adventure equipment and slide to the ground independently, and ride bicycles and scooters energetically to improve their physical development. Practitioners also plan valuable opportunities to develop children's creative skills. They provide good opportunities by using chalk to make marks and numbers on the playground, and paint at an easel to draw aspects of spring on paper.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits and visitors to enrich children's learning experiences. For example, they visit local farms to study horses, walk to the local shop, the garage and the doctor's surgery. This reinforces the curriculum effectively. Visitors such as the emergency services, a nurse and a dental hygienist teach children successfully about the roles of people in their community.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and are knowledgeable about the requirements of the foundation phase. They manage children's behaviour positively and safely by setting firm boundaries throughout the sessions. This encourages children's participation and enjoyment successfully in their activities. However, at times, sound levels in the building are high, which distracts a few children and disrupts their commitment to the task.

Practitioners have high expectations for the children and challenge them intelligently in focus tasks and continuous activities. They intervene sensibly in children's experiences and play in order to stimulate and encourage them to succeed. They understand the importance of providing a wide range of opportunities to learn through play. An effective example of this is experimenting by building towers in the construction area, and organising a tea party by setting the tables neatly with dishes and cutlery in the home area.

Practitioners encourage the children to take part in various activities effectively. They ensure regular opportunities for children to move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas. This challenges children to make sensible choices about their learning. Practitioners question children purposefully to develop their thinking and communication skills. This is done skilfully by discussing individuals' feelings at the beginning of a session and holding lively discussions about a farmer's life, when they are lambing during the spring months.

Procedures for assessing and recording children's achievements are stable and robust. Evidence corresponds correctly with individual children's outcomes by using the local authority's procedures as they develop at the setting. The leader records assessments regularly and consistently. Practitioners discuss sensibly with children what they need to do to improve their work. They use daily assessments to identify the next steps in individual children's learning effectively. However, they do not use this information rigorously enough when planning the next steps in learning.

The setting informs parents and carers regularly about their children's achievements. The daily dialogue between practitioners and parents reinforces this well. At the end of their time at the setting, comprehensive information about their children's achievement is available to parents through useful booklets.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides useful opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners lead useful plenary sessions purposefully to encourage children to greet each other, reflect on others' feelings and say thank you. The practitioners' sensible methods nurture values such as fairness and respect effectively among the children. This reinforces the use of these values in the setting's daily life. An effective example is the 'helper of the day' system, which allocates duties to individuals and provides valuable opportunities for all children to shoulder responsibility in turn. As a result, children are polite when eating snacks and serving water and milk around the dining table.

The setting has robust arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily. Children understand that fruit and vegetables are part of a sensible diet. There are successful arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. These support children's learning sensibly, such as promoting activities to increase their heart rate in the outdoor area. As a result, these arrangements contribute well to the children's overall development and wellbeing.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to recycle paper, cardboard, plastic goods and food. This develops their understanding of sustainability purposefully.

The setting is a safe environment and practitioners take good care of the children when they arrive and when they are collected. Practitioners use positive behaviour strategies, which eliminate any disruption or unruly behaviour successfully. As a result, children are happy and safe in the company of adults, and they often ask for help and support without concern. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The setting records children's learning needs effectively when they join the setting and during their time there. Practitioners review children's progress regularly. They identify their starting points in detail by following the local authority's guidelines. As a result, the setting targets children with additional learning needs effectively, when necessary. Practitioners discuss these children with the appropriate agencies, such as the speech therapist, to provide support as quickly as possible to target individuals' needs.

Learning environment: Good

Practitioners promote a positive ethos through their daily activities and regular motivation. Practitioners challenge and support children conscientiously. They emphasise daily the need to respect each other and that individuals' choices are an important part of their personal development.

Practitioners teach children about the world's different festivals and cultures successfully. For example, the setting celebrates the Chinese New Year and Diwali every year and provides regular opportunities for children to taste foods from different countries, such as pizzas from Italy.

Practitioners meet children's needs sensibly and all children are given an equal opportunity to learn in the different areas. As a result, the setting is a wholly inclusive community, which recognises children's individuality purposefully.

The setting uses resources effectively to meet the requirements of the foundation phase and children's needs. A wide range of interesting resources is used effectively in continuous activities to enrich learning and focus tasks. Resources are accessible to all and promote the children's sense of responsibility effectively, such as around the mud kitchen and the water barrel. The setting also has plenty of ICT resources to develop children's skills successfully.

The accommodation is of good quality, is safe and is maintained effectively. The outdoor area provides valuable opportunities to grow and plant, discover and

investigate, climb and run around. They are used effectively. Practitioners also use the local area's facilities sensibly, such as the village's resources and nearby nature areas.

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

The leader implements her clear vision to improve provision and children's outcomes effectively. This ensures a robust direction for the setting's current work. She monitors weekly provision thoroughly and ensures engaging and interesting activities for the children. She shares the plans and aims of daily activities purposefully with her colleagues in order for them to understand their roles, both indoors and outdoors. As a result, they work together diligently as a team.

Regular staff discussions and meetings enable practitioners to share information about individual children's development effectively. The leader succeeds in creating an environment where children and practitioners feel that they are valued and, therefore, give of their best. The leader promotes new developments effectively and encourages practitioners to make changes in a supportive way. This has led to using successful strategies to measure children's linguistic progress. As a result, the leader and practitioners have high expectations for provision and teaching.

The setting focuses well on local and national priorities. Practitioners develop children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills successfully, in addition to developing outdoor provision purposefully. They plan purposefully to develop the Welsh language, and this has a positive effect on children's oracy skills.

The management committee are relatively new to their roles. They receive useful information about the setting's practices regularly from the leader. They meet to organise fundraising activities and monitor funding regularly. They have begun to evaluate the work of the leader and practitioners sensibly. However, the administrative arrangements are new to them and they do not always monitor all of the setting's practices rigorously enough.

Improving quality: Good

A positive culture of self-evaluation permeates throughout the setting's work. The self-evaluation report identifies the setting's strengths effectively, and the development plan identifies areas for development purposefully.

The leader and practitioners have established consistent arrangements to monitor children's standards and provision. The conscientious co-operation that can be seen daily, in addition to practitioners' discussions, contributes to this successfully. As a result, self-evaluation gives valuable consideration to the views of practitioners, children, parents and carers, the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. The information that derives from these processes provides a complete and accurate picture of the setting's work.

The leader and practitioners take purposeful steps to maintain regular practices and implement changes through effective development plans. They are open to new

ideas and willing to experiment with different strategies in order to succeed. The leader and management committee prioritise expenditure usefully in line with the actions that have been identified for improvement. Therefore, they improve provision by adopting different strategies and embracing valuable advice from others. For example, they have responded to the suggestions of the local authority's support teachers promptly and purposefully by establishing the children's starting points and monitoring their progress successfully.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a range of effective partnerships. It works successfully with these partners in order to improve provision and children's standards and wellbeing. For example, there are very positive links with the local school. Regular meetings that are held to support the transition to school life are robust. 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 children's learning well, such as the close relationship with the village show and carnival. This also includes successful fundraising activities and bids for grant funding, such as supper and a song evening and dancing competitions. The setting also supports local and national charities, which nurtures kindness and care among the children.

The setting works purposefully with external agencies, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. This reinforces the positive relationships that exist, and these organisations share documentation and policies, and facilitate training and management advice effectively.

Practitioners work with a wide range of other partners, who make 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 aim consistently to improve all aspects of the setting's work, by managing staff and resources effectively. They ensure that the setting has enough qualified practitioners by ensuring purposeful training for them. As a result, they are a team of stable and robust practitioners.

The leader encourages practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge successfully. As a result, the setting is a good example of a positive learning community.

Performance management procedures are effective and lead to interesting learning experiences and positive teaching practices. The setting manages resources sensibly to support learning. This includes intelligent use of the outdoor area for physical activities, discovery and investigation, and valuable visits to the local community.

The leader and management committee have a clear understanding of the budget and the importance of raising money to maintain and improve resources. They prioritise expenditure carefully and identify responsibilities and sensible timescales. They make regular improvements by discussing and funding plans for improvement purposefully. As a result, the setting ensures that the use of funding has a direct effect on provision and children's standards.

The setting provides good value for money because of the purposeful provision and effective 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	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnerships conditions of registration.
Foundation Phase	The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from three to seven years of age
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012
Local authority advisory teacher	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings that provide education for three and four-year-olds.
Mudiad Meithrin	A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh
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 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