



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Llanrug
Ysgol Gynradd Llanrug
Llanrug
Caernarfon
LL55 4AL**

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 Llanrug is a Welsh-medium setting, which meets at Ysgol Gynradd Llanrug, near Caernarfon in Gwynedd local authority. The setting is open five mornings and three afternoons a week, during school hours, and holds a lunch club between these sessions.

The setting is registered to admit up to 20 children at any given time and admits children between two-and-a-half and four years old. A minority of children currently receive funded early years education.

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

The setting employs five qualified practitioners, including the leader. The leader took up the post in April 2009.

The setting was last inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in November 2016 and by Estyn in November 2011.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Most children achieve strongly from their starting points
- A majority of children have excellent Welsh language skills
- Most children develop effective literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- Nearly all children behave politely and responsibly
- Practitioners intervene purposefully in children's experiences and play in order to engage their interest and motivate them to succeed
- Practitioners provide valuable opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- The practitioners' care is diligent and consistent
- The learning areas and prepared resources stimulate children and engage their interest successfully

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader sets a clear and consistent direction for the daily and long-term work
- There is effective co-operation between all adults, the school and the management committee
- The management committee supports the setting successfully to improve provision and children's outcomes
- Regular self-evaluation and planning for improvement procedures lead to obvious improvements in provision and children's standards
- Practitioners are keen to benefit from relevant training
- There are purposeful partnerships with parents, carers and the school
- The leader and management committee make rigorous use of funding to make improvements in provision, both indoors and outdoors

Recommendations

- R1 Improve the use of assessment findings to plan the next steps in individual children's learning
- R2 Ensure that arrangements for grouping the children enable all children to participate actively in all activities

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 achieve strongly from their starting points, which are close to the expected average or above. They develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills successfully.

A majority of children have excellent oral Welsh skills. Many use mature and rich language patterns and phrases effectively, in informal play and focus tasks. For example, they discuss wisely the best way to build a brick wall in the outdoor area and how to decorate branches equally with Easter eggs. They also ask politely, and with accuracy of language, for vegetables, fruit and houmous around the dining table. As a result, nearly all children develop their use of the Welsh language very successfully. They follow instructions that are given in Welsh confidently, and most use the Welsh language with each other regularly and without prompting from adults. Nearly all children sing familiar and traditional nursery rhymes and songs enthusiastically and pronounce clearly in Welsh.

Many children handle books in the reading area as enthusiastic early readers. They respond enthusiastically to practitioners' questioning when discussing characters and events in stories that they have chosen themselves. As a result, they understand the purpose of pictures and the purpose of writing to convey the story and the roles of characters in the story successfully. A majority of children recognise their own and others' names correctly. Many have a sound understanding that there are different emotions and feelings and that they belong to individual characters in stories. For example, they identify the dangerous and vulnerable characters in a story when discussing the experiences of an octopus under the sea.

Many children make marks neatly when experimenting with different media. For example, they try to form letters on a screen with dirty water, a brush, vegetables and twigs. Many use pencils, chalk and crayons to make marks and draw pictures confidently. A very few children make a conscientious effort to begin to form letters from their names. As a result, many children succeed in early writing experiences when role-playing in the construction area and during focus tasks.

Most children use mathematical language effectively, for example as they thread different three-dimensional shapes onto string in order of shape or colour. They count numbers to five independently and a minority recognise, name and count numbers to ten and beyond correctly when sorting objects and making shapes out of clay. Most children know that there are differences in size; for example, they consider the properties of different seeds with magnifying glasses, before planting them in the soil. They also explain large, small and medium-sized objects in the small world area when discussing cars and lorries successfully. Many children discuss weight and volume purposefully, and understand that there is a difference between heavy and light buckets of sand, and boxes that are full and empty.

Most children use ICT purposefully when responding to challenges with electronic tablets and toys. As a result, they use Welsh educational software and apps to develop their ICT and thinking skills successfully.

Many children choose equipment and materials effectively to solve practical problems. For example, they experiment with a metal detector to find Easter eggs in the straw and use tongs to move eggs from one box to another. Most children are creative and experimental when playing instruments in the music area and use appropriate equipment to make imaginary cakes in the mud kitchen.

Most children develop their physical skills purposefully. Effective examples of this are climbing, jumping and balancing on outdoor equipment, dancing to music and riding vehicles and bicycles outdoors.

Wellbeing: Good

Most children are confident learners and work independently during play activities, such as painting independently and putting on aprons without encouragement. They decide to continue with a specific task or start a new activity of their own choosing without apprehension, and they concentrate for long periods.

Most children choose which learning areas contain their favourite activities thoughtfully, or whether they wish to work indoors or outdoors. They explain sensibly which practical tasks are of most interest to them. As a result, most children start to express their personal opinions and preferences effectively.

All of the children relate well to adults and visitors as they arrive at and leave the setting. They show an interest and perseverance in their learning. As a result, most show motivation during independent activities and focus tasks and learn productively. They enjoy activities in all areas of learning and most children share and work diligently with other children. Many children show positive attitudes towards new experiences, for example as they print on paper with paint and peg clothing on a washing line in the home area.

Nearly all children behave responsibly and are polite. They respond respectfully to adults and each other. Nearly all children listen sensibly to adults, for example when they move sand in a wheelbarrow to the mixer and when they sit in turn to eat their snacks. After using the toilet, messy play and planting seeds in the soil, nearly all children wash their hands thoroughly without support from practitioners. This shows their sound understanding of the importance of hygiene and that infections have a poor effect on a healthy lifestyle.

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

The leader and practitioners plan interesting learning experiences that meet the children's needs and interests successfully. They motivate children purposefully to learn through practical experiences. Examples of this are the beneficial opportunities to role-play in the home area, building cars out of blocks and rolling paint on paper to make a picture of spring. On the whole, the curriculum is effective and reflects the

foundation phase ethos purposefully. However, although planning is detailed and probing on the whole, it is not based fully on assessment findings. As a result, it does not challenge individuals consistently enough against the next steps in their learning.

Practitioners work together successfully to provide exciting activities for the children, such as shooting balls into a net in the outdoor area and tasting food from different countries. While persevering with similar tasks, children develop effectively as independent learners, both outdoors and indoors. Active examples of this are choosing books as individuals in the reading corner and using musical instruments of their own choosing to hit enthusiastically, such as drums, a tambourine and a xylophone.

All practitioners discuss the best ways to challenge children in regular meetings, and organise themes and activities based on this. They provide good opportunities for children to voice their personal preferences to develop activities further by considering their ideas before the theme begins. Their intelligent listening with regard to children's ideas adds purposefully to the children's daily enthusiasm. It has a positive effect on their motivation, for example as they print enthusiastically with paint on their hands to make a colourful rainbow, and carve a pumpkin to make a face.

The setting plans effectively to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills. Literacy and numeracy activities are prominent in all areas of learning and challenge children to achieve their best consistently. Practical examples of this are the valuable opportunities for children to make shapes and marks independently to record what they have just made in the construction area, such as shapes on paper.

Provision to develop children's ICT skills is purposeful. Practitioners provide purposeful opportunities to use a range of equipment, such as computers, tablets and electronic toys. All practitioners challenge the children meaningfully, which includes using Welsh educational software and apps to develop their early ICT skills.

Practitioners focus purposefully on developing children's physical skills in the outdoor area. There are regular opportunities for them to climb on adventure equipment and play energetically on the playground. These activities are planned well. Practitioners make the best use of the space that is available to them in the school hall occasionally, which challenges children effectively to develop their physical skills.

The setting's provision to develop the Welsh language is very beneficial. Practitioners are excellent language models. They support and challenge children extremely effectively. Practitioners encourage children to use the language as much as possible through interesting activities. They challenge children regularly in the learning areas, and their thoughtful questioning and correct and elaborate language patterns support children to respond sensibly on all occasions. Many children respond with mature words and phrases soon after they start at the setting. As a result, most children's understanding of the Welsh language is developing exceptionally well.

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 mixing and baking traditional cakes.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits and visitors to enrich children's learning experiences. Experiences include visits to local businesses and trips to the town of Caernarfon and the castle. Visitors such as a farmer with a lamb, and the emergency services, teach children effectively about their local area and the roles of people in their community.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and a sound understanding of the requirements of the foundation phase. This encourages the children's participation and enjoyment successfully in all activities that are provided for them.

All practitioners challenge children regularly through focus tasks and as they work independently in the learning areas. The use of the Welsh language is stimulating, as they model rich language patterns and vocabulary. Practitioners have a sound awareness of when to intervene in children's play in order to interest them further and motivate them to succeed. As a result, practitioners ensure that children's motivation and desire to learn are high. This can be seen as the children persevere to find eggs under a pile of straw and compare weather features over a period of days.

Practitioners understand the importance of providing a wide range of opportunities to learn through play. Good examples of this are the opportunities for children to experiment with water and soil by painting on a screen with a brush, before making marks on it with carrots, and making cakes in the mud kitchen. However, practitioners do not group children wholly effectively on all occasions. At times, older children have a tendency to control groups excessively and, therefore, disrupt other children's learning experiences.

Practitioners have high expectations of the children and work together effectively. They manage children's behaviour positively and there are diligent safety procedures associated with their work.

Procedures for assessing and recording children's achievements are stable and sound. Evidence corresponds accurately to individual children's outcomes by using the foundation phase profile as they develop at the setting. All practitioners record assessments regularly and consistently. They 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 always use this information rigorously enough when planning the next steps in learning.

The setting informs parents and carers regularly about their children's achievements. Daily dialogue between practitioners, and parents and carers reinforces this effectively.

Care, support and guidance: Good

All practitioners create a reflective environment by providing positive opportunities for children to think, discuss feelings, say thank you and pray. As a result, children take turns politely when washing their hands together, pouring drinks from jugs and serving snacks. These practices, in addition to tidying equipment and taking turns as helper of the day, provide valuable opportunities for each child to shoulder responsibility during social activities.

The setting provides purposeful opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners use plenary sessions, such as snack times, to nurture these values successfully. They ensure that most children consider their peers' feelings intelligently, treat each other fairly and respect others, including adults.

There are efficient arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing, and the setting implements effective systems to promote eating and drinking healthily. As a result, children understand that fruit, vegetables and exercise contribute to a sensible way of life and lead to healthy lifestyles.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to recycle clothing, paper, card, plastic goods and food. This develops children's understanding of sustainability successfully.

The setting uses positive behaviour strategies, and this eliminates any disruption and poor behaviour. The setting is a safe environment and practitioners are vigilant as the children arrive and when they are collected. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The setting record children's learning needs thoroughly on entry and during their time at the setting. Children's progress is reviewed regularly and their starting points are identified rigorously by following the foundation phase profile guidelines. The additional learning needs co-ordinator is very familiar with the necessary procedures to support children, and uses them purposefully to support individuals with specialist support. As a result, the setting targets specific children with additional support effectively, when the need arises.

Learning environment: Good

Practitioners have a clear awareness of children's needs. This leads to creating a wholly inclusive community where all children are given an equal opportunity to learn in the different areas. Practitioners challenge and support children daily in a positive and careful way.

The setting uses resources purposefully to meet the requirements of the foundation phase and children's needs. A range of interesting resources is used very effectively in child-led activities, in focus tasks and to enhance learning. Resources are kept at a practical level for all children to be able to reach. This enables children to fetch them and put them away without adult intervention. This has a purposeful effect on promoting a sense of responsibility among the children. The setting has enough good quality ICT resources to develop children's skills successfully.

The leader and practitioners place a daily emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity. They promote a positive ethos through their daily activities and enthusiastic attitudes. They teach children about the world's different festivals and cultures successfully. As a result, they plan valuable opportunities for children to celebrate festivals from foreign countries, such as the Chinese New Year. Daily activities, such as taking dolls from different cultures for walks in the prams, also improve children's awareness of the similarities and differences between the people in our world.

The building is of good quality, maintained effectively and is safe. All of the space inside the building is used sensibly to provide lively and engaging indoor activities. The outdoor area includes planting and growing areas, climbing equipment and challenging areas to solve problems with water, gutters and a mud kitchen. The setting uses all of these areas creatively and purposefully.

Practitioners use the local area effectively by taking the children to various places to share activities in their local area, such as adventure centres and nearby supermarkets.

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

The experienced leader manages a team of dedicated and enthusiastic practitioners. She uses relevant knowledge of the setting to make improvements to provision, which have a positive effect on children's outcomes. Her vision ensures that teaching and learning are the main focus in order to promote and maintain consistent improvements at the setting. As a result, she has high expectations of practitioners and children, and motivates everyone to make consistent improvements sensibly and purposefully.

The setting's objectives and plans have a successful effect on children's learning. The practitioners' willingness to provide richly for the children focuses directly on creating stimulating experiences for them. The leader, practitioners and the management committee meet children's needs effectively and celebrate their achievements and progress effectively.

The leadership, which includes the beneficial contribution of the management committee, ensures that provision is engaging and stimulating. The leader ensures that practitioners understand their roles in full and work together diligently and conscientiously as a team. Supervision practices and annual evaluations are robust and stable. As a result, the best is made of practitioners' expertise. The leader and her team focus wisely on national priorities, such as developing literacy and numeracy strategies across all learning areas and implementing the foundation phase profile on entry to the setting effectively. The strong emphasis on developing the Welsh language among children is an obvious strength at the setting.

The supportive management committee is very active and ensures that provision for children ensures consistent improvements. The management committee ensures that practitioners understand their roles fully through regular evaluations and discussions and purposeful training. As a result, they challenge the leader and practitioners successfully to maintain and improve the setting's practices and develop the areas that need to be developed further.

Members of the management committee receive information about the setting's successes and practices regularly from the leader. As a result, they have a sound awareness of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement.

Improving quality: Good

Self-evaluation procedures are sound and are an integral part of improving the setting's practices. Practitioners monitor children's standards and the quality of provision regularly, by using the local authority's quantitative procedures effectively. The management committee plays an active part in the process and monitors the quality of provision thoroughly. As a result, leaders have a sound understanding of the setting's strengths and this enables them to identify priorities for improvement confidently and meaningfully.

The stable self-evaluation procedures consider the views of practitioners, parents and carers, the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin successfully. They use the information that is gathered, which derives from purposeful procedures, to set the most important priorities in the development plan.

The leadership and practitioners agree on the priorities and change aspects of provision purposefully, jointly, to respond to the needs that have been identified in the development plan. As a result, the targets in the development plan derive directly from the setting's self-evaluation procedures. The self-evaluation report includes useful details about how and why specific areas need to be improved further. The leader and management committee also prioritise expenditure purposefully in line with the targets for improvement.

Practitioners, the management committee, the school, the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin work together successfully. The information that is gathered regularly, in addition to visits and evaluations by external agencies, contribute purposefully to this practice. As a result, the setting has made purposeful improvements over time. This includes implementing the foundation phase profile and striving rigorously to improve planning and continuous provision.

All practitioners are keen to embrace new ideas that are suggested by the local authority's advisory teacher and officers from Mudiad Meithrin. They act wisely in line with their advice. This has led to sustained improvements, such as improving experiences for children in the outdoor areas, by adding the mud kitchen and adventure equipment.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a range of effective strategic partnerships. Practitioners work successfully with these partners to improve provision and children's outcomes.

There is a very positive link with the school. The setting and the nursery class are next door to each other, and children move naturally from one room to the other when they reach school age. Specific members of staff from the school visit the setting regularly to offer support. This strengthens the children's transition arrangements successfully, for example as practitioners and teachers transfer children's personal information and assessments purposefully at the end of their time at the setting.

Practitioners take active steps to include parents and carers in the setting's life. Practitioners inform them regularly, through newsletters and social media, about all aspects of the setting's work. They are encouraged to give their opinion on issues to improve the setting through regular questionnaires and discussions, which have improved community links and equipment in the outdoor area.

The setting's community links support children's learning successfully. This includes community fundraising events and beneficial support when bidding for sponsorship and relevant grants. The setting also supports local and national charities regularly. This nurtures children's tenderness and care for others successfully.

The setting works purposefully with external agencies, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. These organisations support practitioners' documentation and training effectively. Practitioners also work and liaise with a wide range of other partners that make an important contribution to improving provision. These include agencies that provide training in first aid, food hygiene courses and child protection.

Resource management: Good

Leaders strive regularly and succeed in improving all aspects of the setting's work. The diligent leader and dedicated management committee use purposeful practices to improve provision and children's outcomes successfully. These practices enable practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge effectively.

Leaders ensure that the setting has enough qualified practitioners and provide them with full training, such as for first aid and programmes to improve children's oracy. As a result, practitioners are used intelligently to target children's needs, and resources are allocated efficiently to support and challenge children.

Performance management procedures are robust and ensure interesting and engaging teaching, which leads to purposeful learning. The setting manages resources sensibly to support children's learning. For example, the setting makes effective use of the local area as a learning resource. Practitioners also make valuable use of the school hall for physical activities and concerts, and its planting areas to explore nature and plant growth purposefully.

The leader and management committee have a clear understanding of the budget and the challenges that are associated with it. They prioritise expenditure and use grants carefully by identifying sensible responsibilities and timescales. Parents and carers also contribute regularly towards funding the setting, by using the lunch club and supporting community fundraising activities. As a result, the setting ensures that the use of funding has a direct and purposeful effect on provision and children's outcomes.

The setting improves children's achievements through effective provision and successful leadership. As a result, 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