



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

A report on

**Meithrinfa Twtlo
Yr Hen Ysgol
Pentrefoelas
Betws y Coed
Conwy
LL24 0HY**

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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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

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

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Context

Meithrinfa Twtlol is a Welsh-medium setting that meets in two buildings in Pentrefoelas, in Conwy local authority. The nursery is privately owned and provides care for children between 3 months and 4 years old, with an after-school service for children up to 12 years old. It is registered to admit up to 28 children per session and employs 14 staff.

The setting provides education for children between three and four years old between 9.15a.m. and 11.45a.m., 5 mornings a week. Five children receive early years education that is funded by the local authority. Welsh is the main language spoken at home by most children at the setting. There are currently no children with additional learning needs. Three qualified members of staff are responsible for teaching three-year-old children, including the manager, who has been in post since December 2016.

The setting was last inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in June 2017 and by Estyn in July 2014.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- nearly all children are very happy and feel safe there
- most children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding
- there is a delightful working relationship between practitioners and children
- most children listen appropriately to stories and respond skilfully
- most handle a range of small equipment and writing implements confidently
- most children's number skills are developing well for their age and ability
- nearly all children behave well
- broad and balanced learning experiences build successfully on previous learning
- practitioners provide rich learning experiences that engage nearly all children's interest successfully
- practitioners model the Welsh language well and consistently

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the owner, manager and practitioners are conscientious and support all of the setting's work very successfully
- everyone works together very happily as a team
- staff understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities well
- all staff are very willing to act on any ideas, advice and guidance
- the setting has robust quality assurance arrangements
- the setting works effectively with a range of external partners
- there is a very positive relationship between all staff and the children's parents
- there is successful co-operation between the setting and the local authority's link teacher
- performance management procedures are rigorous and support staff development effectively

Recommendations

R1 Plan more purposefully to develop children's skills during activities and experiences in the outdoor area

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

During sessions, most children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding.

Most children have sound literacy skills. Nearly all children listen well to stories and during circle time, and respond enthusiastically to discussions. They speak clearly and confidently with each other and adults, and use syntax, natural vocabulary and full sentences consistently. Nearly all children participate in Welsh nursery rhymes and songs and follow the appropriate actions. They find their names without assistance when completing the register themselves, and a minority recognise their peers' names successfully. Most children show an interest and enjoyment when discussing books and respond enthusiastically to group stories. They use previous learning skilfully when responding to practitioners' questions and refer to the main events in stories successfully, for example when talking about the hen's predicaments in the story 'Magi'n mynd am dro'. Most make marks effectively by using a variety of media such as paint, chalk, coloured pencils and chalk pencils. A few children are beginning to form familiar shapes and letters effectively when writing their names and creating pictures of themselves and their families.

Most children's number skills are developing well for their age and ability. They recite numbers to 10 successfully and match numbers with objects up to 10 correctly. Most children handle imaginary money appropriately when role-playing in the 'farm shop' in the outdoor area, and follow patterns when arranging teddies successfully according to size and colour. They recognise colours well and follow the order of the days of the week soundly. Most children use familiar two-dimensional shapes appropriately in order to build three-dimensional shapes, for example when using squares and rectangles to create a pen for the small world farm animals. Many use mathematical language correctly when discussing numeracy work, for example by using small, big and medium-sized when discussing the size of cows when matching pictures of farm animals. Most children's problem-solving skills are developing appropriately, for example when distributing eggs into boxes by matching the correct numbers.

Most children's ICT skills develop appropriately as they handle a tablet computer successfully. Many are beginning to use programmable toys soundly with support, for example when making a toy move across a simple map of the farm. Nearly all children show a sound awareness of the purpose of real equipment while role-playing, for example by using toys such as a mobile telephone and the till in the 'Twtlol Farm Shop' in the outdoor area.

Most children have well-developed physical skills. They control large equipment soundly while role-playing both indoors and outdoors, for example when using a tractor and a wheelbarrow as part of the farm theme. Most children build a stone wall from soft stones in the outdoor area, and show good physical skills and thinking skills. They use small equipment with robust control in a variety of different tasks,

such as paintbrushes, chalk and other materials in order to make a model of a hen from play dough, feathers and other materials.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children enjoy coming to the setting and are very happy there. They settle quickly and feel very comfortable in the caring and homely environment. Nearly all children behave very well, are considerate of others and polite. They learn to take turns, share and demonstrate good self-control. Most children are very willing to help tidy up when asked to do so, and treat all of the equipment that is available with respect and care. During snack time, nearly all show good social skills. They are grateful for the food and drink and treat others with respect during this time. Nearly all children take responsibility for their hygiene seriously by washing their hands before snack time and when brushing their teeth. They show a sound awareness of the importance of eating and drinking healthily by eating fruit and drinking water during snack time.

Nearly all children show good attitudes towards learning. They enjoy taking part in a range of activities, and many persevere and concentrate successfully for reasonable periods, for example when fishing for ducks in the water tub, and when listening to stories. Most develop as good independent learners by playing an active part in their learning and choosing activities confidently. By choosing their own books from the mobile library and undertaking 'helper of the day' duties by serving during snack time, children show maturity and effective independent learning skills.

Nearly all children enjoy investigating and playing in the outdoor area, particularly when role-playing in the mud kitchen and handling equipment such as a wheelbarrow. They make sensible choices about what they would like to do during free play and ask confidently for help from an adult, when necessary. Most show positive attitudes towards investigative learning as they discover for themselves, for example by mixing different paint colours in order to make a picture. Many children are beginning to develop a sound awareness of caring for the environment by recycling paper in the special 'Arthur Ailgylchu' bin and when taking clothes and other goods to the local recycling centre. They also learn how to care for plants in the garden in order to appreciate the nature around them.

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

By using a range of stimulating and interesting themes, practitioners plan a wide range of rich learning experiences that engage nearly all children's interest successfully. For example, the 'farm' theme takes advantages of children's experiences and interests successfully. The use of the learner's voice recently has enriched this well and encourages children to think for themselves. The recent use of the 'small scheme' for parents identifies learning activities well. As a result, parents are able to support their children's learning successfully.

Learning experiences meet the requirements of the foundation phase successfully. Practitioners discuss with each other regularly to contribute to planning in order to build skilfully on children's experiences and previous learning. The effective use of

evaluations of previous learning experiences, in addition to practitioners' observations, has recently ensured that planning responds to children's needs effectively. Practitioners plan interesting activities that stimulate nearly all children to discover for themselves. Plans identify clear learning objectives for focus activities and other experiences, in addition to the skills and vocabulary to be developed.

Practitioners plan effectively in order to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills, and ensure continuity and progression in these skills. They also plan beneficial opportunities to develop children's physical, thinking and creative skills through a range of purposeful learning experiences. For example, imaginative learning experiences, such as playing 'milking' by using a rubber glove as the cow's udder, develops children's fine motor skills well. Practitioners are beginning to plan beneficial opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) equipment daily, for example by supporting children to use a programmable toy successfully. However, they do not always plan in enough detail to make effective use of the outdoor area to develop all of these skills. The use of 'learning sacks' for parents to support learning at home reinforces these skills well, including ICT skills.

Practitioners ensure various opportunities to show respect for people from other cultural backgrounds, for example by celebrating the Chinese New Year each year. Practitioners promote children's Welshness very successfully by establishing a natural Welsh ethos within the setting. Children are also given beneficial opportunities to learn about Welsh traditions and celebrations, including St David's Day, with children from the local school.

The setting makes beneficial use of the community to enrich children's experiences. Visitors and visits are used appropriately to support children's learning experiences, such as visits by the police. Visits to the nearby woods and a local farm, for example, enrich learning effectively and stimulate children's interest and curiosity successfully.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a very sound understanding of the principles of the foundation phase and child development. They understand the importance of ensuring a successful balance between activities that are led by adults and those that are chosen by children. One of the setting's strengths is the way in which these practitioners work together effectively as a team and support each other well for the benefit of the children. This ensures that nearly all practitioners understand their responsibility in terms of implementing short-term plans effectively. Practitioners make sound use of a range of teaching methods and appropriate resources to guide learning. Activities maintain nearly all children's interest well and provide valuable opportunities for children to learn through play.

Practitioners model the Welsh language well and ensure rich opportunities to extend children's language regularly. This creates a natural Welsh atmosphere within the setting, in which nearly all children develop their language skills successfully. Practitioners talk to them regularly and provide plenty of opportunities for them to respond to open-ended questions. This also ensures that they develop children's thinking skills successfully, in addition to their communication skills.

The setting's arrangements for assessing children's progress are effective. Practitioners praise children orally regularly and question them skilfully during the session. They keep beneficial records of children's progress during the sessions and use them skilfully to plan the next steps in their learning. This ensures that practitioners know the children's needs well and take advantage of every opportunity to challenge them to achieve in line with their age and ability.

Parents receive valuable information about their children's progress during their time at the setting through regular discussions with practitioners and during particular days. The recent use of brief reports for parents provides a valuable summary of children's progress every fortnight. This ensures beneficial communication structures between the setting and the home, in addition to presenting up-to-date information about their children's development. The setting transfers appropriate information about children's progress as they transfer to the local schools.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Meithrinfa Twtlol has a caring, inclusive and familial atmosphere in which all children are respected. There are robust arrangements in place to promote children's moral, spiritual, social and cultural development effectively. Practitioners nurture values such as honesty, respect and fairness successfully through daily activities and routines. They take advantage of regular opportunities to promote children's self-confidence and develop their communication skills, for example by sharing their experiences and news during circle time. There are beneficial opportunities for all children to learn about the importance of caring for the environment by recycling paper and other goods.

The setting promotes the importance of eating healthily and keeping fit successfully. Snack time reinforces this well and provides a valuable opportunity for children to socialise with each other and take responsibility, for example by acting as 'helper of the day' to help set the table and collect plates and cups to be washed. Children also learn about healthy food by cooking healthy meals, for example preparing vegetables for the meal to celebrate the Chinese New Year and when planting and cooking vegetables from the garden. The setting makes beneficial use of external agencies to reinforce healthy living habits successfully, for example by taking part in a scheme to teach children about the importance of brushing their teeth.

The setting has robust processes to respond to the needs of children with additional learning needs, where necessary. Arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

Practitioners know the children well and ensure that they have equal access to all activities. The Welsh ethos is a strong element of all of the setting's life and work, and practitioners create an attractive and stimulating learning environment that promotes all of the children's skills successfully. Practitioners prepare colourful displays that include the children's work and celebrate their successes well. The outdoor and indoor learning areas include a good supply of purposeful resources that support the principles of the foundation phase successfully. These areas support independent learning effectively and include a good supply of 'real life' objects, such

as pebbles and soil. By adapting the learning environment regularly according to the different themes, practitioners create stimulating corners and learning areas that support learning successfully. They are planned carefully in order to promote children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills soundly. For example, the small world that is based on a farm, alongside the 'Twtlol farm shop', reinforce children's experiences of their visit to a local farm effectively.

The setting is secure and kept clean. Practitioners plan effectively in order to make the most of the resources that are available. Visitors and visits to local venues enrich children's learning experiences effectively. For example, children are given beneficial opportunities to go for a walk through the village in order to develop their awareness of their local area. Visitors, including parents and a police officer, share valuable information with children and enrich their learning experiences successfully.

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

The owner, manager and practitioners are conscientious and support all of the setting's work very successfully. The vision and all objectives are shared successfully and place a firm emphasis on ensuring children's wellbeing and progress in a caring and Welsh environment. The owner and manager have high expectations of all staff and everyone works together very happily as a team in order to realise these objectives successfully. Nearly all understand their roles and responsibilities well and contribute effectively to all of the setting's work. They are respected and valued by the owner, in addition to the children and parents. This contributes to an industrious ethos in which children and practitioners feel that they are valued.

All staff meet regularly in order to discuss the setting's work, in addition to children's outcomes and progress. They share ideas for planning learning experiences regularly in order to ensure that they meet children's needs and interests. Indeed, all staff are very willing to act on any ideas, advice and guidelines in order to maintain and improve the quality of provision. Practitioners are given suitable opportunities for planning, preparation and assessment each week. The setting gives valuable attention to local and national priorities. They focus effectively on promoting children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, in addition to developing provision for health and wellbeing.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has robust arrangements to identify what it is doing well and what needs to be improved. The owner, leader and practitioners work together effectively in order to implement beneficial self-evaluation processes regularly. This includes seeking parents' views and comments about the setting through appropriate questionnaires. As a result, the self-evaluation report is a useful document that identifies the setting's strengths successfully, in terms of children's standards, provision and leadership. However, areas for improvement are not always identified clearly enough.

The improvement plan includes purposeful targets that contribute well to developing provision and improving children's outcomes. The plan identifies clear actions and appropriate success criteria in order to evaluate the effect of activities beneficially, in addition to identifying responsibilities, training and relevant costs. Staff evaluate progress against the criteria regularly and identify the effect of activities effectively. As a result of these robust self-evaluation processes, the setting has responded well to the recommendations from the previous inspection, and the effect of recent priorities is evident in provision and children's outcomes. The leader and practitioners work effectively with the county's advisory teacher and act promptly on any advice or recommendations. An example of this is the strategies to develop pupils' ICT skills, in addition to the new methods of including the children's voice in planning for learning experiences.

Partnership working: Good

The setting works effectively with a range of partners and agencies, who make a beneficial contribution towards raising children's standards and wellbeing. There is a very good relationship between all staff and the children's parents. The setting's open-door policy means that parents are given regular opportunities to meet the staff and discuss any concerns at a very early stage. They have received information more frequently recently about their children's progress through brief reports, in addition to details about the plans for the term. The setting has recently provided parents with valuable resources, which enable them to play an active part in their children's education. For example, ICT learning sacks help children to learn how to control a programmable toy, and the use of 'Ticw the teddy' encourages them to talk about what the character has been doing in their care over the weekend.

The robust partnership with the local authority's advisory teachers has a positive effect on the setting's provision and leadership. Practitioners also work appropriately with specialist agencies in order to promote children's health and wellbeing successfully.

Nearly all parents feel that their children are prepared well for the next step in their education at school. The setting has close links with the primary schools in the area, and children visit each other for special occasions, for example to celebrate World Book Day and St David's Day together.

The setting makes very beneficial use of the community to enrich children's experiences, in addition to visiting locations outside their area, for example by going for a walk in the local forest regularly, in addition to visiting an education centre to support children's learning. This makes a positive contribution towards enriching their learning experiences.

Resource management: Good

The setting has enough practitioners with appropriate qualifications and relevant experience of working with young children. The owner and manager ensure that all practitioners support learning skilfully by making the best use of their experience and expertise. Performance management procedures are rigorous and support staff development effectively. As a result, practitioners take advantage of beneficial opportunities to attend training in order to develop their understanding and learn new

methods of learning and teaching. For example, they have attended training on developing children's ICT skills, in addition to learning how to develop their physical skills through dance and movement.

The owner and manager manage resources efficiently and ensure that there is a good supply of learning equipment that responds to the requirements of the foundation phase effectively. The quality of the building, and the indoor and outdoor learning areas, are stimulating and support learning successfully.

The owner supports all of the setting's work well by ensuring appropriate expenditure in order to meet children's needs. As a result of effective provision, the diligent staff and purposeful leadership, 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