The inspection of educational provision for children before compulsory school age

Nursery report on:
Cylch Meithrin Tudno

Registered Nursery Education Inspector: Mr Eifion R Morgan
Date of inspection: 16/17 June 2010.
Contract number: T/096/09N
Report on the inspection of nursery settings in the non-maintained sector

Name of nursery: Cylch Meithrin Tudno
Address: C/o Ysgol Tudno, Trinith Avenue, Llandudno
Post code: LL30 2SJ
Telephone: 077758 72387
Person responsible for day-to-day management: Ms Janet Jones
Position: Leader

About the inspection

This inspection took place as part of a national programme of inspections of the educational provision for children before compulsory school age in Wales. It was commissioned by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales.

The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings so that providers can improve the quality of education offered and help children achieve their full potential. Another purpose is to inform parents and the public about the quality of nursery education. A copy of the inspection report must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the nursery and should be available on request to other people.

Inspectors have used a five point scale to record all judgements. Grade definitions are:

Grade 1  good with outstanding features
Grade 2  good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3  good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4  some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5  many important shortcomings
1.0 Context of the setting

Context of the nursery setting

Cylch Meithrin Tudno is based in Ysgol Tudno primary school in Llandudno. The Cylch has sole use of three spacious rooms on the first floor of the school and benefits from being able to use the school grounds for outdoor play and other activities. The Cylch is long established and the leader has been in post for the last 22 years.

Children enter the building through the school yard and via a flight of stairs. The stairs lead to a large hallway providing access to the 3 rooms used by the Cylch. Toilets and hand washing facilities are also situated in the hallway. Notices are prominently displayed and provide parents and carers with useful information.

The main room used by the Cylch is suitably differentiated into activity areas. An adjacent room is well resourced with play equipment and sand and water play areas. This room is a good facility and enables children to engage in energetic physical activities without needing to go outside. The third room has a carpeted area and an adjacent area where children sit at snack time. There is a sink unit, fridge and work surface enabling children’s snacks to be prepared. There is a small office to one side of this room.

The Cylch is secured by a bolted gate at the top of the stairs. There is an exit through the school building in the event of an emergency.

The Cylch has use of the school’s Reception Class grassed area to the front of the school. This is a well resourced facility that suitably extends children’s learning experiences. The Cylch also uses one of the schoolyards for play activities. There are good facilities — the only drawback being that children cannot use them independently in that they have to be accompanied by adults down the stairs as a group. However, the Cylch is a secure environment for the children being within the school and no child can leave or adult enter unannounced. Children are always supervised when outside.

The Cylch is registered by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accommodate up to 26 children. Currently there are 22 children on role, 9 three year olds children, all of whom are funded. Children attend the Cylch a few months after their second birthday and begin the next stage of their schooling in the September following their third birthday. The Cylch operates from 8.50 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. on five mornings of the week during term time.

Staff comprise the leader and three assistants. Further valuable assistance is provided by the secretary of the management committee for 3 or 4 mornings each week on a voluntary basis. All staff are suitably qualified and experienced and have attended relevant training courses.

Children attending the Cylch come from the immediate area – a Community First area and regarded as socially deprived with pockets of deprivation. No child is Welsh speaking, two are learning English, whilst the remainder are from English speaking families. The Cylch welcomes children with additional learning needs but there are no
such children in attendance at the present. When necessary, the Cylch seeks help from the Local Authority specialist staff.

Parents and carers are welcomed into the Cylch. They bring their children into the Cylch each morning and practically all children are eager to get involved in the activities set out for them. The Cylch staff are very welcoming and available to speak with parents and carers if necessary.

The registered person is the chairman of the Management Committee and the leader is the Nominated Child Protection Officer. The Cylch is supported by the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and has adopted its policies. However, English is the main language of communication in the Cylch. The Cylch has also received support from the Early Years Partnership and Childcare Staff of the Local Authority.

The Cylch was inspected by the CSSIW in November 2009. It has not been inspected previously by Estyn.

2.0 Main findings of the report

2.1 The overall quality and standards of educational provision and whether or not the provision successfully promotes the goals for children’s learning

The quality and standards of educational provision have many shortcomings and are substantially below that required.

Estyn agrees with the judgement of the Foundation Phase Inspector that this setting is in need of focused improvement.

2.2 Standards achieved by children in the seven areas of learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Six areas of learning</th>
<th>Grade for under-fives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language, literacy and communication skills</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh language development</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of the world</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical development</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative development</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Inspection judgement on the quality of education provided by the setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of education</th>
<th>Grade for under-fives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of provision for children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of planning for children’s learning</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of teaching</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of assessment and recording of children’s progress, and reports for parents and carers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The contribution made by the setting to children’s well-being</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the leadership and management of the setting</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for action identified in the last inspection report</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.0 The standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning

Standards achieved by 3-4 year-olds.

3.1 Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity

**Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good features**

All children form good relationships with each other and with adults. Adults respect each child and children realise that they are valued. Many children show affection and are sensitive to each other’s needs. Children show concern for one another as was apparent when one child fell over during play.

All children are developing confidence, enabling them to play independently for sustained periods but to work in small groups at other times. Many children are beginning to take responsibility for their own hygiene, such as washing their hands before food whilst others do so with minimal prompting by adults.

Most children know that living things need to be treated with care as when looking after a pet.

All children show a sense of belonging to the Cylch and arrive in the mornings showing a sense of excitement in looking forward to the day’s activities. They are learning to share and take turns and most respond to reason.
Shortcomings

Most children’s knowledge of the traditions and cultures of Wales is underdeveloped.

3.2 Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 4: Some good features but shortcomings in important areas

Good features

A few children are able to respond during registration in Welsh and, with help, can count in the language. They know the names of the main external parts of their bodies. About half know basic colours in Welsh and very few, when prompted, sing Welsh songs and rhymes. Most children enjoy mark-making using chalk, crayons and pencils.

Shortcomings

All children’s knowledge of the Welsh language is minimal.

No child has sufficient grasp of the Welsh language to make themselves understood or to understand basic instructions. Their competence in the language does not enable them to appreciate stories in Welsh and only very few children recall any Welsh songs and rhymes. No child was seen, during the inspection, looking at a Welsh storybook.

3.3 Mathematical development

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

All children, to varying degrees, respond and join in with familiar number rhymes and songs and a few children can name their favourite ones. A few children show an interest in number and use a basic mathematical vocabulary, such as bigger/smaller, more than/less than and taller/shorter. A few children recognise and name numbers to 3. Most children join in rote counting to 10 as when counting the number of children present.

Most children can match shapes and a few can recreate a simple pattern. In their play many children sort different shapes into categories. In their role-play activities a few children are developing an awareness of the purpose of money.

Shortcomings

No child uses number naturally in their day-to-day activities. They do not recognise that some numbers have any significance or personal meaning, such as house numbers.
Most children’s ability to name basic two-dimensional shapes is limited, as is their ability to recognise these shapes in the classroom and outside.

Many children’s ability to recreate basic patterns, to sort and to match objects is limited.

3.4 Welsh language development

Not applicable

3.5 Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

Many children know the names of the main external parts of their bodies and the majority know the main uses of external body organs, such as ears, eyes and nose.

All children have looked at different materials in their play area and many know some of the uses of these materials.

All children know that seeds need to be provided with soil and water and need looking after if they are to grow. These children have looked for and found some soil animals and several children have used magnifying glasses to observe them.

All children are aware that pets need care and attention;

Shortcomings

Most children’s ability to talk about their home where they live, their locality and different places is very limited.

Most children’s knowledge and understanding of seasonal change and the effect on plants and animals is underdeveloped.

3.6 Physical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

All children have the confidence to use small and large equipment, both in their playroom and outside. Most children handle and use moveable toys competently and with reasonable control and balance.
Most children know different ways of moving including, for example, walking, running, jumping and hopping. Most children show good control and move confidently.

All children listen and respond to instruction and most are able to follow simple rules.

Most children handle small tools effectively as when using chalk and crayons in mark making, glue for sticking and scissors for cutting.

**Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.

### 3.7 Creative development

**Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good features**

All children experiment with a good range of materials in their activities. In their painting they have the freedom to choose and mix paints to create their own images that are attractively displayed around the room.

All children have experience of using soft malleable materials such as clay and playdoh to create their own designs by rolling, cutting and shaping and squeezing. Most children use junk materials for model making and use a range of different paper and materials in their three-dimensional designs.

Many children enjoy singing and particularly enjoy music and movement activities. In these instances children respond imaginatively and react well to suggestions.

All children have opportunities to engage in role-play activities and imaginative drama and this helps to develop their language.

**Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.
4.0 The quality of educational provision

The quality of educational provision for 3-4 year-olds.

4.1 The quality of provision for children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The day-to-day working of the Cylch clearly demonstrates the values and principles that underpin its work and provides children with a very good moral and social framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cylch displays a relaxed, friendly atmosphere where all children whatever their background are respected and individual staff give children a great deal of attention and affection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children work together very well, sharing and taking turns as necessary. They have a growing awareness of what is fair and most children accept such principles readily. Children’s attitudes are very good and socially the children are developing very well. They are appreciative of the help they get from the staff and are sufficiently confident to seek help when necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is respect for the diversity of beliefs and all children are actively involved showing complete equality of opportunity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shortcomings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient attention is given to introducing the Welsh language and the culture and traditions of Wales.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4.2 The quality of planning for children’s learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 4: Some good features but shortcomings in important areas.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The planning provides for equality of access and opportunities for all children, irrespective of their background or ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, the agreed thematic approach is further differentiated into activity areas matched to the Foundation Phase and follows the pattern set out by the Foundation Phase team of the Local Authority. These planning sheets also include space to include skill development and focus tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources are well used to support children’s learning.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Shortcomings

Planning records are recent and do not show continuity and progression appropriate to development of the Foundation Phase outcomes.

There is an imbalance in the planning across the six areas of learning in that the provision for developing the Welsh language and “Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig” is inadequate.

4.3 The quality of teaching

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

The teaching is well directed at providing opportunities for children to learn through play. All children are actively involved throughout the morning and staff are well aware of all children in their care.

Activities provide children with stimulating, challenging and exciting experiences and a very good feature of the teaching is the active involvement of the staff. There is a good balance between child-centred and adult-led activities. Adults know when and when not to intervene in children’s activities.

Adults use questioning well to extend and consolidate children’s learning and resources are well used.

Shortcomings

The teaching is not always managed and organised effectively to develop children’s knowledge, understanding and skills in the six areas of learning.

Staff do not always use their knowledge of children’s ability so as to focus on the next stage in children’s learning and to group children accordingly.

4.4 The quality of assessment and recording of children’s progress and reports to parents and carers

Grade 4: Some good features but shortcomings in important areas

Good features

The Cyllch staff know the children well and are sensitive to their needs. The very good relationships with parents and carers means that the staff are kept fully aware of any issues that affect individual children.

Each child has an individual record file that illustrates some of the activities undertaken and is made available to parents/care when the child leaves the Cyllch. Records are also annotated on children’s progress against the six areas of learning.
The Cylch reports that children with additional learning needs are diagnosed at an early stage and given the necessary support using outside agencies if necessary.

Parents and carers are aware of their child’s progress and achievement through informal contacts with the staff.

**Shortcomings**

Assessment records are incomplete and too general, and the information does not indicate clearly what individual children have achieved.

Assessment is not used constructively to support the teaching and in particular identifying the next steps in children’s learning.

Assessment is not used to set targets for improvement.

There is no recorded evidence of parents/carers contribution to the assessment of their children.

### 4.5 The quality of relationships with parents, carers and the community

**Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good features**

Links with parents and carers are very good. The returned parental questionnaire indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the Cylch. Parents reported on the safe, happy environment provided by the Cylch and the useful preparation the children get for school life. Parents spoke of the dedication of the staff and their approachability.

Parents wishing to register their children are able to visit the Cylch and receive a useful and informative information pack.

Parents are made aware of their child’s progress and achievement through regular informal discussion, either when bringing their child to the Cylch or when collecting their child.

The Cylch also makes information available to parents on the notice board in the corridor close to the entrance to the Cylch.

A good feature of the local links is with the local primary school, including being able to use the school’s facilities.

**Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.
4.6 The extent to which the setting contributes to children’s wellbeing

**Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings**

**Good features**

The well-being of all children is at the heart of all the Cylch’s activities. The day-to-day working of the Cylch is well focused on individual children, their needs and expectations. Good procedures are in place to ensure the well-being of all.

The Cylch is a safe and provides children with a homely, supportive environment. No child can leave unattended nor adult enter unannounced. During outside activities all the staff are in attendance. Good procedures are in place to receive children in the morning and ensuring that they are collected by an appropriate person.

The immediate school environment is frequently used and this broadens children’s experiences. Such close contacts also make the transition to the reception class much easier for the children.

Children’s physical well-being is given good emphasis through robust outside play and the use of the indoor facilities. Risk assessment procedures are undertaken regularly. The leader is the Child Protection Officer and all staff are aware of their responsibilities.

**Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings

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4.7 The quality of the leadership and management of the setting

**Grade 4: Some good features but shortcomings in important areas**

**Good features**

The day-to-day running of the Cylch is effective in promoting equality for all. Staff are well qualified and have attended relevant training courses. Resources are well used to support the learning and the accommodation is well used.

**Shortcomings**

There are no clear aims and objectives identified for improvement.

Self-evaluation is not undertaken routinely and consequently there are no detailed plans for future development nor targets set for improvement.

The leadership has not ensured that (i) curriculum planning provides continuity and progression in children’s learning;
(ii) assessment is used to support the teaching;

(iii) planning incorporates good opportunities to develop children’s competence in the Welsh language and to give sufficient emphasis to developing “Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig”;

(iv) there are strategies in place to evaluate the impact of staff development.

Overall, the leadership is insufficiently proactive in ensuring the quality of educational provision and this has implications on children’s standards of achievement.

4.8 The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for inspection identified in the last inspection report

Not applicable

5.0 Recommendations

The setting needs to:

1. The leadership needs to be more proactive in

(i) undertaking a self-evaluation of the Cylch and in establishing targets for future improvement;

(ii) ensuring that the planning for children’s learning provides for continuity and progression in learning and the promotion of the Foundation Phase outcomes for children’s learning in the six areas of learning;

(iii) ensuring that planning provides for sufficient opportunities to develop children’s competence in the Welsh language and to develop “Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig;

(iv) reviewing assessment procedures so that accurate records of individual children’s achievement and progress are available and that assessment results support the teaching by identifying the next steps in children’s learning.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days, or 45 working days if the plan needs to be translated to or from Welsh, showing how the issues identified above will be addressed. The action plan must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the setting. A copy of the action plan must be sent to the Chair of the Early Years and Childcare Partnership or Children and Young Peoples’ Partnership, as appropriate, and to the Local Authority. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection.