



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Llanddoged
Ysgol Gynradd Llanddoged
Llanddoged
LL26 0BJ**

Date of inspection: June 2015

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 Llanddoged is a Welsh-medium nursery. The setting meets in the hall at Ysgol Llanddoged, near Llanrwst in Conwy. The setting was established in 1975, re-opened in June 2013 following a short period of closure, and re-joined the education scheme for three-year-old children in September 2014.

The setting offers nursery education for four mornings per week. There is space for 16 children at the setting, and there are currently 13 children on roll. Three and four-year-old children are catered for and, at the time of the inspection, five children were funded by the local authority.

Approximately half of the children come from Welsh-speaking homes. Currently, a very few children with additional learning needs attend the setting.

Three qualified and experienced members of staff work at the setting. The leader has been in post since June 2013.

The setting was inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in June 2014 and by Estyn in February 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is adequate because:

- It provides a good range of experiences across all areas of learning
- Beneficial use is made of visits and visitors to enhance children's experiences
- There is a welcoming and happy ethos at the setting, and an ethos of mutual respect
- The setting has a good supply of high quality learning resources

However:

- Practitioners do not provide well enough to extend the skills of more mature and more able children
- There are very few opportunities for children to learn about sustainability issues, such as recycling and composting food waste
- The provision for developing children's skills across all areas of learning in the outdoor area is underdeveloped

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader is committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning
- Practitioners work well together as a team
- The management committee offers valuable and effective support to the setting
- All practitioners welcome new ideas and respond positively to advice
- There is a good range of beneficial partnerships that contribute effectively to children's achievement and wellbeing

Recommendations

- R1 Provide sufficient challenge to ensure that every child reaches their full potential
- R2 Develop the use of the outdoor area in order to promote children's skills across all areas of learning
- R3 Ensure opportunities for children to learn how to save energy, recycle and reduce litter
- R4 Develop the self-evaluation process further in order to ensure continuous improvement
- R5 Improve practitioners' understanding of the principles of the Foundation Phase by visiting other settings and attending courses

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan, which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Standards and wellbeing

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Adequate

Learning experiences: Good

The setting provides a good range of experiences across all areas of learning. Practitioners place a valuable emphasis on play, and children develop by receiving a variety of first-hand experiences. For example, children enjoy learning about farming by milking an artificial cow in the classroom. As a result, many children are keen to try new things and are gaining enthusiasm towards learning more about the world around them.

Practitioners make beneficial use of visits and visitors to improve children's experiences further, such as visiting a local farm and inviting people from the area to talk about their work. There are valuable opportunities to develop children's musical skills through regular singing sessions with a member of the local community.

The setting gives children appropriate opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. All practitioners use the method of immersing children in Welsh and, as a result, nearly all pupils understand instructions and respond appropriately when conducting simple conversations. Children have regular opportunities to count and recognise numbers. For example, they count the number of children who are present each day and recognise numbers by choosing a number to represent the date. There are regular opportunities for children to take part in mark-making activities, for example writing their names in Mother's Day cards. Recently, the setting has succeeded in getting electronic tablets and, as a result, they provide appropriate opportunities to develop most pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

Practitioners work well together to plan for activities that are adult-led in addition to opportunities to enrich provision. On the whole, planning is based on developing specific skills and, from time to time, identifies what children need to do next. However, planning for children's independent play and for adult-led activities are not always challenging enough to support their learning. As a result, a few children lose interest and move from one activity to the next.

Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions by celebrating St David's Day, singing traditional Welsh songs and nursery rhymes, and through visits in the local area.

Teaching: Adequate

Practitioners work well as a team and they have a very good relationship with children and parents. They know the children well and manage their behaviour effectively and firmly. They have good practices for admitting new children, which ensure that these children settle quickly and feel happy and at home.

Practitioners' understanding of the principles of the Foundation Phase is developing appropriately. The indoor environment offers a range of relevant and interesting experiences that promote most children's knowledge and understanding. They use ICT resources creatively in order to engage and maintain children's interest, for example watching a film of cows on a local farm in order to help develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. However, practitioners do not provide well enough for extending the literacy and numeracy skills of more mature and more able children, and there is little provision in the outdoor area to develop children's skills across all areas of learning.

Practitioners are good at praising children's achievement and offering encouragement to complete tasks. They question frequently in order to assess children's knowledge. However, they do not always intervene appropriately in order to extend their understanding and offer a challenge.

Practitioners observe children regularly and use the information appropriately to plan the next stage in their development. Observations are recorded regularly in order to measure progress and, recently, the work of assessing children has been shared equally between each member of staff. However, although practitioners plan appropriately, provision does not always offer more able children enough of a challenge.

Care, support and guidance: Adequate

The setting has effective arrangements for teaching children to eat and drink healthily and encouraging them to exercise regularly. For example, they encourage children to enjoy eating fruit such as bananas, apples and strawberries, and offer appropriate opportunities to keep fit both indoors and outdoors.

Practitioners encourage children to take responsibility for their behaviour, share equipment and care for resources appropriately. However, practitioners do not always take advantage of opportunities to extend children's independence, for example during snack time. A beneficial range of learning experiences nurtures children's spiritual, moral and social development well. Children are given good opportunities to improve their understanding of the work of people who help us, as well as an opportunity to raise money for charity. The setting promotes children's cultural awareness appropriately by celebrating the Chinese New Year.

The setting's policy and procedures for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The setting provides appropriately for children with additional learning needs.

Practitioners use a range of effective strategies to meet individuals' needs, for example adopting sign language as a method of communication. However, they do not always record in enough detail when there are concerns about children's emotional development. The setting uses the services of specialist agencies to support practitioners to address specific needs effectively. There are suitable individual education plans in place for those that need them. These plans are reviewed regularly and are discussed with parents regularly.

There are very few opportunities for children to learn about sustainability issues, such as recycling and composting food waste.

Learning environment: Adequate

There is a welcoming and happy ethos at the setting, and an ethos of mutual respect. It is an inclusive community in which all children have equal access to all of the learning experiences that are provided. Practitioners consider and value children's diverse backgrounds and act appropriately in line with that information. Practitioners use positive behaviour strategies that contribute effectively to developing children's understanding of good behaviour.

The setting has a good supply of learning resources of a good quality. These resources are used effectively to support teaching and learning in the indoor area. However, the resources in the outdoor area to develop all areas of learning are limited. The setting is held in the hall of the local primary school and shares the outdoor play area. The building and grounds are safe and offer purposeful facilities. Practitioners set up the learning areas at the start of each session. Although they provide effectively for most areas of learning, they do not offer a play house, water or sand regularly. This limits the opportunities children have for imaginative play and to learn about capacity, measuring and weighing. There are attractive displays of the children's work, which support their learning and celebrate their efforts.

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

The leader is developing her management skills effectively and ensures a good range of learning experiences for children. She has worked closely and successfully with the local authority's link teacher since September 2014 to establish good practice in the Foundation Phase at the setting. She has a beneficial vision for creating an environment in which children are happy and safe, and enjoy learning. She ensures that practitioners understand their responsibilities and, although it is a new team, that they work together effectively. As a result, she has succeeded in creating an environment in which children and practitioners feel that they are valued.

The leader has forged a good relationship with parents and carers, and with the primary school, which contributes significantly towards the setting's welcoming ethos. However, she does not always convey high enough expectations in order to ensure that all children make the best progress during their time at the setting.

The management committee is keen to see the setting flourish and offer Welsh education of a high standard in the area. As a result, it offers the setting valuable and effective support. The registered person undertakes her responsibilities enthusiastically, for example by helping the leader set and achieve challenging targets for herself. This leads to improvements in the standards of provision and leadership.

The leader gives due attention to local and national priorities, and there is a suitable focus on developing children's literacy, numeracy and Welsh skills.

Improving quality: Adequate

Leaders develop an effective culture of self-evaluation, which means that they get to know the setting well. The current self-evaluation process is relatively new and has led to creating reports that identify the setting's strengths in a relevant and constructive way. Practitioners contribute their views appropriately through informal discussions and the leader regularly shares information about the process with the management committee.

The setting is increasingly confident in identifying priorities for improving provision and there is a suitable development plan in place that identifies appropriate actions. As a result, the setting has succeeded in improving the quality of planning and provision, for example by offering better opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills. However, they do not always specify the priorities that will have the biggest influence on the setting's progress. The process of self-evaluation and creating an improvement plan has not had enough time to have a significant effect on provision.

The registered person takes a leading role in supporting the setting in monitoring aspects of the provision that lead to improvement in standards and quality. For example, since September 2014, the leader has established robust planning and management systems.

Practitioners show a firm commitment to improving their own performance. They are willing to listen to new ideas, they have responded positively to support from the local authority's link teacher, and they make good use of inspections, for example by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a constructive and beneficial partnership with parents. Practitioners share information effectively with parents about what their children learn through daily contact, colourful newsletters and an attractive book of the children's work. Children benefit from parents' beneficial contribution to the setting's work, for example when learning how to plant vegetables in the school garden.

There is a good partnership between the setting and the local primary school, which shares the same site. There are robust systems in place that ensure a successful transition from the setting to the school. As a result, children are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

The setting engages well with the local community and invites people from the area to visit regularly. For example, children learn about the world of work through a visit from the postman and learn about wonder through a visit from the farmer and his lambs.

The constructive relationship that exists between the setting, the local authority link teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin support officer ensure the effective development of the setting.

Resource management: Good

The setting's resources are managed and used effectively. The setting has an appropriate staffing level that complies with the principles of the Foundation Phase and provides effectively for children's wellbeing and development. Practitioners are deployed well to make the best use of their experience. The setting has a good supply of resources and they are used appropriately.

The leader actively acquires new knowledge and skills in order to develop her managerial skills. As a result, she has implemented robust systems for planning and assessment, in addition to creating standardised risk assessments. However, practitioners have not been given sufficient opportunities to visit other settings in order to develop their understanding.

The leader and current members of the management committee have a clear understanding of the budget, and decisions on expenditure are prioritised according to the setting's needs. Considering the effective leadership, the appropriate use of funding and the good quality of learning experiences that are provided for children, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received was fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Sheila Birkhead	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

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
CSSIW	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) 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 partnership's 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 3 to 7 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 which 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 which 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.