



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Rhydyfelin
Holly Street
Rhydyfelin
Pontypridd
RCT
CF37 5DB**

Date of inspection: December 2015

by

**Mr Eifion R Morgan
Reporting Inspector**

for

**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 Rhydyfelin is located in the Rhydyfelin Integrated Children's Centre. This is a modern building that caters for young children of different ages and the Cylch occupies purpose built accommodation and has the use of an extensive, well furnished outside area.

The Cylch is administered by an Operations Manager who has oversight of several settings in the locality. Her assistant area manager is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the setting.

The setting's educational provision is the responsibility of the leader who has been in post since 2011. She is assisted by a deputy leader, four full time assistants and a part time assistant is employed for the afternoon session. All staff are suitably qualified and are experienced in working with young children,

The setting was established in 2011 and is registered by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to accommodate a maximum of 26 children at any one time. It operates for 5 days a week with a Welsh medium group every morning from 9 a.m. – 11.30 a.m. This group is registered by the Mudiad and has received a Cylch Rhagorol award in 2012. The afternoon session (12.15 – 2.45 p.m.) is an English medium setting. The setting is open for 42 weeks of the year.

Children start at the setting after their second birthday and move on to local schools when places become available. Currently there are 45 children on the register with approximately equal numbers registered for the morning and afternoon sessions. Fifteen three year olds attend and during the inspection six were present in the morning and seven in the afternoon session. None are currently funded.

Nearly all children come from the immediate locality and all children have English as their home language. At the time of the inspection, six children were regarded as having additional learning needs and five had one-to-one support. No child is from an ethnic background.

The setting was last inspected by the CSSIW in April 2015. It has not previously been inspected by Estyn.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's performance is good because:

- most children make good progress from their starting point during their time in the setting;
- children's Welsh language skills are developing well;
- learning experiences are of good quality and the setting has good accommodation and resources;
- the quality of relationships between staff and children is very good;
- effective arrangements are in place to encourage children to eat and drink healthily;
- the setting is a caring, supportive community where all children are treated well.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the setting staff are highly focused on ensuring that all children achieve the best standards possible;
- practitioners are committed to providing the best possible provision for the children.
- practitioners work very well as a team with a clear sense of purpose;
- the setting benefits from the good support and guidance provided by the local authority link teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin development officer;
- of the good partnerships with the parents.

Recommendations

R1. Clearly indicate in the planning how the next steps in children's learning are to be achieved.

R2. Provide parents with information as to what they can do to help their own children improve.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.'

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most children make good progress, bearing in mind their age and their additional learning needs. Many children recall previous learning well and their record books show that by the time children move to primary school they have well developed literacy and numeracy skills in relation to their starting point and stage of development.

Children's listening skills are very variable. At best, such as during the afternoon session, most children listen well to stories and instructions and respond appropriately, for example, naming their favourite songs. They join in enthusiastically and in one instance were sufficiently confident to sing on their own. The younger children's listening skills are underdeveloped and they are soon distracted when, for example, listening to a Welsh story.

Many children converse confidently in English, describing what they are doing. Children in the Welsh group have a developing understanding of the language, for example, they react quickly to instructions. Their ability to speak the language is limited to a few words and phrases. These children count in Welsh and know their basic colours.

A minority of children enjoy looking at books. These children handle books carefully and correctly. Many children handle small tools and writing implements confidently and a few understand the purpose of writing, such as making shopping lists. Children enjoy role play, such as dressing up in their favourite story character during "Book Day".

Most children count by rote to 10 and a few beyond that number. Many children are developing an appropriate mathematical vocabulary, such as grouping articles as large or small. Many children can also name two-dimensional shapes, including triangles, squares and circles, and can match shapes successfully, as when completing a puzzle.

Children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developing satisfactorily. Children use a range of digital equipment, such as i-pads, microphones, cameras and voice recorders. Children, with support, are able to control a programmable toy appropriately.

Most children have well developed physical skills. They ride bikes skilfully, displaying good balancing skills. These children show a good understanding of different ways of moving, including climbing, sliding and running. Their fine motor skills of cutting, gluing and painting are consistently good.

Most children show a worthwhile and pleasing knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They know that seeds planted in compost need regular watering.

They use a magnifying glass to look at insects and show good care for living things by replacing logs under which they found minibeasts.

Children's thinking and problem solving skills are overall, satisfactory. A few children show well developed skills of problem solving, such as finding answers to questions during a visit to the Welsh Folk Museum.

Children's Welsh language skills are developing effectively with those in the morning group showing a thorough understanding but, as yet, a limited speaking vocabulary. The afternoon English speaking group are developing a good understanding of the Welsh language and most partake confidently in Welsh songs.

Wellbeing: Good

All children enjoy coming to the setting and are soon engaged in activities set out for them. They know the setting's routines and what is expected of them.

Children behave well and respond quickly to practitioner's instructions and suggestions. Most children persevere for a reasonable amount of time when supported by an adult. Snack time is a worthwhile social activity. Children choose when to snack and act sensibly making choices as to what foods they wish to eat. They converse sensibly and are courteous and considerate of others.

Most children, when motivated, are eager participants, such as when playing outside. They know the importance of dressing properly and many make good efforts to put their own coats on. In these instances most children are happy to take turns, share and show worthwhile self-control.

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

Learning experiences are of a good quality and generally well matched to children's age and ability. Activities are based on a series of themes and staff plan collaboratively. There are opportunities for children to contribute ideas and this ensures their interests.

Planning ensures that children learn through play and there is a good balance between child-initiated activities and adult-led tasks. Planning is detailed and well focused on developing children's skills.

There are effective opportunities planned for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The regular and daily opportunities for children to listen to stories, talk about their experiences, such as during circle time, and to look at books, is having a positive impact on their progress. Children have worthwhile opportunities to use their mark making skills and to come to realise some of the purposes of writing. Overall, the planning is effective in developing children's language and communication skills.

Most activities include the use of number, such as during registration children count the number of children present. There are worthwhile opportunities for children to use their knowledge of shapes to look for shapes in the outside environment, such as looking at houses and the different shapes they see.

Role play activities in their toy shop and during snack time give children a good understanding of the use of money.

There are suitable opportunities for children to practice their basic ICT skills in their play. Relevant experiences are provided for children to use their investigative skills appropriately, such as during their outside play.

Welsh is the natural medium of the life and work of the setting during the morning sessions and nearly all the children have a developing understanding of the language. A majority of the children are acquiring some familiar Welsh words and phrases, such as when writing and recognising colour. Many children have a good knowledge of some Welsh songs and sing enthusiastically.

The afternoon session promotes children's early bilingual proficiency effectively. Practitioners use the Welsh language consistently and accurately and many children show a developing knowledge of the language.

All children learn about the traditions and celebrations of Wales through purposeful activities including celebrating St. David's Day when children dress appropriately, sample Welsh foods and make representative drawings.

Visits are used well to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of their own community, such as to the local shops and to the riverside. Visitors to the setting also extend children's learning experiences, such as visits by the police and nurse as examples of people that help them.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Phase philosophy. They have a good understanding of child development and make purposeful use of a wide range of teaching techniques. Practitioners use every opportunity to speak with the children so as to develop their language skills and to extend their social skills. Staff use questions well to develop children's thinking skills and to encourage them to work independently and to reflect on their learning.

There is an appropriate balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by the children. Activities are thoroughly planned with effective emphasis on skill development and the purposeful use of resources to support the learning. For example during snack time when children use their speaking skills to ask for their favourite foods. Staff manage children's behaviour very well using positive comments and praise to good effect. This ensures a harmonious learning environment with respect for each child and adult. Relationships are very good and children know how and when to seek help.

Practitioners know the children well and they assess and record their progress regularly and effectively. Assessment profiles provide practitioners with a useful record of what each child can do and this information is used well to underpin the planning of learning experiences. The next steps in children's learning are clearly identified and this information used to plan future activities. The planning, however, does not consistently show how such targets are to be achieved.

Parents receive regular information about their children's development through informal discussions and feedback at the end of term meetings. However, they are not consistently informed as to how they can help their child improve. There are suitable arrangements for the transfer of this information to the receiving primary schools.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. Induction procedures and the setting's open door policy ensure that children settle quickly in the setting. Staff are sensitive to children's needs and show a pleasing degree of affection when children find it difficult to settle. Children are encouraged appropriately to eat healthily and snack times are good social occasions. Children show that they are developing good personal hygiene habits including washing their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating. Practitioners practice positive behaviour strategies and this leads to a harmonious learning community.

Day-to-day activities successfully promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Visits to the locality, such as walks along the river, give children beneficial opportunities to appreciate the world around them and interaction between adults and children successfully promote values, such as care and respect, sharing and helping each other.

Children's awareness of the wider world is fostered appropriately by celebrating their own festivals and celebrations of other cultures, such as the festival of Divali and the Chinese New Year. Overall, learning experiences promote children's personal development very well and children learn about recycling and saving energy.

The setting is a safe community. No one can enter or leave unannounced and the extensive outside area is appropriately fenced. Risk assessments are completed appropriately. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Arrangements for supporting children with additional learning needs (ALN) are highly effective. The relevant staff have a clear understanding of the requirements of good practice and act accordingly. Good use is made of specialised agencies including, for example, speech therapists. All children identified with ALN have individual educational plans and parents are fully involved at each stage. Parents report complete satisfaction with the support their children receive.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is a caring, supportive community where all children are treated fairly and equally. Practitioners encourage children to respect and celebrate diversity through celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year and Divali, as well as Welsh festivals, such as St. David's Day.

The setting is generously staffed with suitably qualified and experienced practitioners. This ensures that the Foundation Phase curriculum is delivered successfully. The setting benefits from high quality accommodation and an extensive safe outside area. It is within the local authority Integrated Children's Centre and this provides the setting with safe, well maintained accommodation.

There is an ample supply of age appropriate resources of good quality and they are readily accessible to the children. Displays are of a high quality and suitably enhance the learning environment. The outdoor area is extensive and is immediately accessible and well used to support children's learning well.

Practitioners make effective use of relevant community resources to enhance the curriculum provision, for example, visits to the local shops and locality, together with visits from the local police and school nurse.

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

Leaders manage the setting well. The Operations Manager has oversight of the setting as well as several other settings in the locality. She is assisted by an assistant and the setting's activities are organised by a leader and assistant. Planning is done collaboratively with the other four full time staff and one part time practitioner fully involved in all day-to-day activities, including planning of the learning experiences. All staff have well defined roles and the setting operates a key worker system.

The staff are fully focused on ensuring that all children achieve high standards, particularly in developing their effective communications skills. Staff work together well as a team with a clear sense of purpose and successfully create an effective learning environment.

There are appropriate processes in place to manage the performance of all staff and to identify and support any training needs. Staff have taken advantage of opportunities for professional development and are eager to improve their performance when possible.

The management committee is fully supportive of the setting. It meets regularly and has approved the necessary policies. Overall, it ensures that the setting runs smoothly and efficiently.

The setting gives appropriate attention to implementing national and local priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum and recent modifications. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills, particularly the Welsh language.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners have a sound knowledge of the setting's strengths and have clearly identified the main areas they wish to develop. All practitioners work closely together sharing ideas and ways to improve. Children's progress is regularly reviewed and used constructively to underpin children's learning and to adapt aspects of the provision as required.

The self-evaluation report is based on a detailed review of provision. As a result the developmental planning identifies appropriate areas for improvement together with a timetable and specific responsibilities in order to achieve targets set. Targets, however, are not always sufficiently focused on improvements in children's standards of achievement.

The setting benefits greatly from the support of the local authority link teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin development officer.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a beneficial range of partnerships that improve the quality of provision and outcomes for the children.

There is a worthwhile and valuable partnership with parents. Parents value the care and concern shown by the staff and are pleased with the progress that their children make, particularly in their social development and in the acquisition of the Welsh language. In discussion parents commented positively on the care and support the setting gives children and their parents when children are identified as requiring additional learning needs. Practitioners are regularly available to talk with parents at the beginning and end of each session and this is valued by the parents.

The close working relationship with the local authority link teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin development officer is particularly worthwhile. The guidance and constructive advice provided has been beneficial in improving the provision and consequently children's outcomes.

Community partnerships with, for example, the police, provide valuable information for the children and an understanding of people who help them in the community.

There are informal partnerships with the local primary schools that support children's move to full time education appropriately.

Resource management: Good

The Operations Manager ensures that the setting has enough suitably qualified and experienced staff to support the children's learning and to enable them to achieve the Foundation Phase outcomes. The setting is suitably resourced to support the teaching. The outside provision is particularly noteworthy.

All practitioners access suitable training that keeps them up to date with current developments, such as the new guidelines to the Foundation Phase curriculum. This helps to improve the quality of teaching and learning experiences provided for the children.

The Manager and her staff have a sound understanding of the budget and spending is appropriately prioritised according to the setting's educational needs. In view of the outcomes achieved by children and the parent's satisfaction, the setting is judged to be giving good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Denotes the benchmark – this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r lleoliad yn gyffredinol.
		80%	20%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	14	13 93%	1 7%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	15	13 87%	2 13%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		81%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	16	13 81%	3 19%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		72%	27%	0%	0%		
Teaching is good.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		81%	19%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		84%	16%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	15	12 80%	3 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corf yn rheolaidd.
		76%	23%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		72%	27%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	16	13 81%	3 19%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		63%	30%	6%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		66%	31%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	16	13 81%	3 19%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol.
		74%	25%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	16	13 81%	3 19%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		64%	32%	4%	1%		
The setting is well run.	16	14 88%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael ei redeg yn dda.
		82%	17%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion R Morgan

Copies of the report

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

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 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 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)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation 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.