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a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Tregarth
Tregarth Community Centre
Tregarth
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 4AW**

Date of inspection: July 2015

by

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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 Tregarth is a setting in the village of Tregarth, near Bangor, in the Gwynedd local authority. It meets in the village's community centre. The setting is open for five mornings of the week. The setting has seven members of staff, who attend on different days during the week.

The setting is registered to take up to 24 children. It admits children from two to four years of age. At the time of the inspection, 21 children attended, nine of them funded by the local authority.

Nearly all the children are of white British origin and the minority speak Welsh as their first language. A few children have additional learning needs.

The leader began her post in September 2012 and she has recently re-started the role since April 2015. The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) in January 2014 and by Estyn in January 2010.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is adequate because of:

- many children's satisfactory standards in literacy and numeracy;
- the majority of children's unruly behaviour;
- the appropriate planning of learning experiences;
- the close relationship between adults and children and the good general care;
- the suitable teaching;
- the satisfactory assessment processes;
- the disorganised use of the building and outdoor area; and
- the issues of concern to do with health and safety.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are adequate because of the:

- satisfactory record of operating changes;
- appropriate self-evaluation and strategic planning systems;
- good partnerships that exist with external agencies; and
- the lack of robustness of the management committee in monitoring provision and improvements in children's standards.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve the children's standards of literacy and numeracy
- R2 Develop better strategies for managing children's behaviour and the noise levels in the building
- R3 Improve the quality of teaching to challenge children in accordance with their abilities
- R4 Ensure that regular assessments lead directly to the next steps in children's learning
- R5 Develop and enhance resources and experiences in the outdoor area
- R6 Develop the systems of the management committee, the leader and staff in order to embed the strategic planning and self-evaluation in the daily life of the setting
- R7 Address the issues relating to health and safety

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

The majority of children are making appropriate progress from their starting points by the end of their time at the setting. They make suitable improvements in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. The standards of the majority of children in literacy and numeracy are adequate. A minority of children discuss ideas with other children and adults sensibly. These children listen attentively to each other on the carpet when discussing stories and the weather together.

The majority of children discuss colours sensibly when using colourful equipment. The minority speak confidently and accurately about how they buy and sell fruit in the fruit shop. A few use money meaningfully when role-playing the fruiterer.

A minority of children sit quietly while listening to the introduction of a task. The majority of them join in over enthusiastically when discussing the tasks and they often ignore the instructions of adults. The minority respond well when singing songs and nursery rhymes. A minority are keen to answer questions about what they do and these children strive to finish the task set for them. Very few children choose to look at books independently and they hold books correctly and discuss the content confidently with each other and adults.

A few children make purposeful marks in their early writing. These few develop their early writing skills effectively by making marks and painting. They have a basic understanding of the purpose of writing and they make marks meaningfully. A very few children are beginning to form letters of the alphabet and numbers with support in relatively recognisable forms, when handling pencils and crayons.

A minority of children develop early numeracy skills well. They count objects to five quite accurately and a very few children recognise and name numbers to five correctly. A very few children use an appropriate range of mathematical language when playing together. For example, they describe various toys as 'small' and 'big' when playing with lorries and building blocks.

A minority of children use mathematics practically when comparing differences in shapes such as rectangle, square, circle and triangle. A few children group different objects by colour, size and shape accurately.

Nearly all children understand what to do when they receive instruction in Welsh, however, a minority use Welsh naturally without prompting. Many use information and communication technology (ICT) successfully and use computer programs purposefully.

Wellbeing: Adequate

Many children are happy and confident individuals. Many of them, in relation to their age, have a good understanding of how they can stay healthy. Nearly all of the children wash their hands thoroughly before eating fruit and drinking water and milk. They do this independently and effectively, which includes drying their hands with little encouragement. Many of the children have a good understanding that a healthy diet includes fruits and vegetables. They are not as aware that playing outside and running around the outdoor area keeps you fit.

A minority of children have a good attitude towards learning. They participate enthusiastically in all the experiences that are provided for them. The minority listen carefully to each other and to the adults. The minority are well behaved. These children are fully engaged in each activity and concentrate and persevere for appropriate periods. However, the majority do not focus on tasks and they are unruly when working with others. A minority of children make sensible decisions for themselves, for example when asking to use equipment in their turn.

A minority of children relate well to each other and to adults and visitors. They are courteous and considerate of others' needs and share resources willingly. The minority show positive levels of motivation, engagement and focus.

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

Planning satisfies the philosophy of the Foundation Phase appropriately and achieves the outcomes that are identified in children's learning. The curriculum builds satisfactorily on children's previous and current knowledge and experiences. There are adequate opportunities available to all children to develop their skills across the curriculum inside the building.

The leader prepares the planning for the staff and they discuss the theme's activities daily. The curriculum is flexible and linked to children's interests. However, the planning does not have enough impact on raising the children's literacy and numeracy standards.

Specific activities and tasks are planned and suitably prepared. The children are free to choose their own tasks and activities. However, at times this process is unruly and chaotic. The learning objectives are appropriately planned. Suitable activities are provided for the children to begin to develop their basic and key skills in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. The provision for literacy and numeracy is not strong.

All adults communicate effectively with the children in Welsh. The provision for developing the children's ICT skills is good. Staff consistently direct children toward using technological equipment such as the computer and the shop's till. The children have appropriate opportunities to develop their thinking skills through interesting activities such as role playing in the shop, experimenting with sand, watering plants,

discussing the weather and studying a toad in the small nature pond.

Particular emphasis is placed on the traditions and celebrations of Wales, such as celebrating St David's Day and Saint Dwynwen's day. Good opportunities are provided for children to acquire knowledge and understanding of other cultures and traditions such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year. There are plenty of opportunities for children to develop a good understanding of the wider world and develop their awareness of global citizenship effectively.

Teaching: Adequate

Staff have a satisfactory practical knowledge of children's development and a clear understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. There is a close relationship between all staff and children. Staff have an active role in planning the curriculum and the best use is made of their expertise. However, staff do not set clear learning objectives at the start of every focus activity to ensure that individual children are challenged appropriately in line with their abilities. Therefore, the majority of children lose interest in the task and their behaviour worsens.

Staff co-operate effectively. All children are free to choose from activities that are led by adults or to work independently. However, at times, staff intervene too much and they do not allow the children to develop their independent skills successfully. They have to manage many children's behaviour regularly, which affects the quality of teaching.

Staff model language well to develop the children's thinking and communication skills. In the building, the staff try to provide an interesting environment. However, they do not ensure successfully that all children participate and learn effectively. The teaching in the outdoors is not stimulating.

Appropriate assessment procedures exist. The records of children's achievements are completed adequately. The assessments do not lead, in enough detail, to individual children's targets and the next stages in their education. Parents and carers are informed well about their children's achievements and the information is available to them at any time.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting ensures that children's daily care and health is good. Visitors and visits extend children's experiences effectively. The setting visits the community through trips around the village and the surrounding area. The use of the local area develops the children's knowledge and understanding of their community successfully.

The setting has good provision for ensuring children's spiritual, moral and cultural development. The provision for the social development of children is not as strong, which contributes to unruly behaviour. The children have good opportunities to say thank you. This is evident as they take turns appropriately when eating fruit and drinking around the dining table in the cafe. The setting has the appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. There are good opportunities for the children to recycle paper, plastic and food. The setting plants vegetables and

flowers in pots and sacks in the outdoor area, which begins to develop their understanding of sustainability appropriately.

The setting uses positive behaviour strategies. However, they do not always eliminate harassment and unacceptable behaviour. The staff are suitably qualified and they have appropriate experience. The ratio of adults to children is very favourable. Staff expertise is used appropriately in planning and in supervising activities. They are very careful in supervising the children who move from the inside to the outdoor area, because of the public space between the door and the gate of the outdoor area.

The doors are closed and only opened by a staff member. Nobody can enter and no child can leave unaccompanied. The staff take care when the children are collected and ensure that they are in the care of their parents or familiar carers. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children are generally good. The management committee was informed about an issue concerning health and safety, which needs urgent attention because it is a matter of concern. However, the staff monitor the care of the children with regard to this very carefully.

The leader is the additional learning needs co-ordinator. She is aware of the support available and is familiar with the procedures necessary to support children with special needs.

Learning environment: Adequate

Through daily activities and the attitude that is adopted by staff, the setting promotes a suitable ethos. Staff know children well and their individuality is recognised. All children have equal access to an appropriate curriculum.

The setting uses its resources successfully in the building to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and the needs of children. However, the building is very open and the noise levels are unacceptable. This significantly affects the challenging behaviour of a few children and the staff's quality of teaching. This is an important shortcoming because it contributes to an unruly environment.

The resources are accessible to the children, which promotes the children's sense of responsibility appropriately. The resources are shared effectively between the continuous activities and opportunities to enrich the learning.

The outdoor area is not used effectively. However, there are appropriate opportunities for children to grow plants in pots or sacks. This extends their understanding of how plants develop adequately.

The management committee was informed about an issue concerning health and safety that needs urgent attention.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?
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Adequate

Leadership: Adequate

The leader has recently re-started in her role. She is energetic and she works closely with the rest of the staff to create a suitable ethos, which encourages and values teamwork. The leader, led by the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin, has recently introduced a number of strategies to move the setting forward. However, the developments underway have not established themselves sufficiently to date to improve quality.

The training provided supports the professional development of the leader and the staff appropriately. By now the knowledge developed is being used purposefully and is starting to move the setting forward strategically. The leader has specific responsibilities to develop the setting as a learning community. At the moment, she shares the new practices adequately with the rest of the staff to improve their professional practice and the children's standards.

The staff contribute actively by sharing clear instructions with each other. They also accept advice from outside agencies in order to improve. During the inspection, there was a suitable ethos and appropriate vision to provide the best possible experiences for the children, although difficulties with the building and the outside area exist. The management committee play an inconsistent role in the life of the setting. They take good account of legislation and the relevant guidance meets the legal and financial requirements efficiently. However, they do not monitor the effect of the provision in detail to ensure improvements in the children's literacy and numeracy standards.

The self-evaluation systems and the development planning process is very new and is beginning to be monitored and directed better by the management committee. The support of the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin is effective and has supported the setting significantly over time.

The development plan is structured appropriately according to timescales and responsibilities; however, the plan has not had the appropriate time to affect the long-term strategy of the setting. The staffing changes and inconsistencies arising from this have hampered areas that need to improve. However, overall, the new processes that are now in place show positive improvements in a short time. The setting has given good account of national priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum.

Improving quality: Adequate

The self-evaluation process is new, however, the procedures have yet to lead to improving the quality of provision further. By now, the self-evaluation processes are more systematic and clear. The entire staff are more aware of the purpose and effect of effective self-evaluation. The managers and the leader are developing a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. They are now focused appropriately on developing the provision further and creating a focus on improving children's standards in literacy and numeracy.

The development plan, resulting from the recent self-evaluation, is beginning to have a positive effect to improve the setting further. The focus of the plan targets specific areas and is beginning to challenge the setting to improve.

The staff have been involved in a range of good training and development opportunities. These include working in partnership with the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin. Inconsistent progress has been made in response to the recommendations of the last inspection in relation to the children responding to their work and developing self-evaluation further. Recently, the management committee and the leader have begun to address more effectively the areas identified for improvement in the previous report.

Partnership working: Good

The parents and carers, in the questionnaire replies and during discussions, express their satisfaction with the setting. They appreciate the standards of care available. They value the open door policy and the opportunities to meet staff on a daily basis. By the time the children leave the setting, the parents feel that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. The links with the parents, the community in general, the Mudiad Meithrin and the local authority are good.

The support provided by the staff of the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin benefits the setting greatly. The advice and suggestions have helped in beginning to move the setting forward. They are therefore beginning to contribute purposefully to raising standards and improving provision.

Resource management: Adequate

The changes in staffing have caused inconsistencies in provision and leadership over the past few years. By now, the staffing, resources and funding are managed better. The staff's knowledge is developing through appropriate training to introduce a suitable curriculum. The expertise of the staff is used well and they work effectively alongside each other to try to improve children's achievements.

The setting has enough resources inside the building and they are used effectively to promote the aims of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The resources are accessible to the children, which encourages independence and it has a positive impact on their learning. The setting does not use outdoor area effectively.

The setting provides appropriate experiences that have been planned satisfactorily. The support of external agencies has ensured better consistency, appropriate standards and better provision recently. Although much has been achieved in recent months, the strategic planning and development priorities have not had the time to establish and impact sufficiently on the planning, assessment and provision.

Although progress has been seen recently in a number of areas, the setting provides adequate value for money at the moment.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

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

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Nicholas Jones	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 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.