



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi Dros Addysg
A Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
For Education and Training in Wales

**THE INSPECTION OF EDUCATIONAL
PROVISION FOR CHILDREN BEFORE
COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE**

**NURSERY REPORT ON:
CYLCH MEITHRIN HILL STREET,
WREXHAM**

Registered Nursery Education Inspector: Jean Marshall

Date of inspection: 23 and 24 October 2006 (mornings)

Contract number: T/026/06N

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REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF NURSERY SETTINGS IN THE NON-MAINTAINED SECTOR

Name of nursery:	Cylch Meithrin Hill Street
Address:	13 Hill Street
	Wrexham
Post code:	LL11 1SN
Telephone:	07910 273112
Person responsible for day-to-day management:	Mrs Gail McGrane
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:

Very good	(Grade 1)	many good features, some of them outstanding;
Good	(Grade 2)	good features and no major shortcomings;
Satisfactory	(Grade 3)	good features outweigh shortcomings;
Unsatisfactory	(Grade 4)	some satisfactory work, but shortcomings in important areas;
Poor	(Grade 5)	many shortcomings

1.0 CONTEXT OF THE SETTING

Context of the nursery setting:

Cylch Meithrin Hill Street is a registered nursery which is part of the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (Welsh Nursery Schools Movement)'s provision. It meets in the mornings for four sessions a week in the autumn term, and five sessions a week during the spring and summer terms.

The nursery is located on the top floor of a building managed by the Youth Centre in Wrexham town centre. The room is adequate in size and offers the children a pleasant learning ethos and environment. There is no outdoor play area for the nursery.

The playgroup was established 30 years ago to provide early learning through the medium of Welsh for children in the Wrexham area. Despite the fact that the majority of children come from non- Welsh speaking homes, they proceed almost without exception to Welsh medium education at one of the local schools. The links with these schools and the arrangements for transferring to them are good.

During the inspection, there were eight children on roll, including four children under three years of age. At present no child in the nursery has a statement of special needs. Not one of the three year olds was eligible for Early Education Entitlement funding during this term because of the date on which their birthday falls.

The leader has been in post for 17 years and the assistant for one year. Both members of staff hold a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 3.

This is the first time for the nursery to be inspected under Estyn procedures. The location was inspected in March 2006 by the Care Standards Inspectorate in Wales.

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 general quality and standards of the educational provision for the children is appropriate to their needs, and they make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

2.2 Standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning

Six areas of Learning	Judgement for 3-4 year old children	Judgement for 4-5 year old children
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Grade 2	-
Personal and Social Development	Grade 1	-
Mathematical Development	Grade 2	-
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Grade 2	-
Physical Development	Grade 2	-
Creative Development	Grade 2	-

2.3 Inspection judgement on the quality of education provided by the setting

Quality of Education	Judgement for 3-4 year old children	Judgement for 4-5 year old children
Quality of planning for children's learning.	Grade 2	-
Quality of teaching.	Grade 2	-
Quality of assessment and recording of children's progress, and reports for parents and carers.	Grade 2	-
Quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community.	Grade 2	-

2.4 The quality of the leadership and management of the setting

The playgroup's leadership and management are good. The leader is experienced and has established effective systems and arrangements. She has established a good working relationship with the managing committee, the local partnership and the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and this has a positive impact on the provision.

2.5 The quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The quality of the provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The adults treat every child in a fair and courteous manner and encourage them to co-operate, share and help others.

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

This is the first time for the nursery to be inspected by Estyn.

3.0 THE STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN IN THE SIX AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by 3-4 year-olds

3.1 Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

Good features

The children listen attentively and respond correctly to simple instructions in Welsh although the majority are from homes where English is spoken as a first language.

When they talk about their experiences, they speak happily and fluently in their first language. The majority enunciate clearly and use a good range of vocabulary when chatting to their peers and to adults as they play. They have a good understanding of Welsh and increasingly use the language to greet, describe and respond to questions. They have memorised a good number of Welsh nursery rhymes and songs and the vast majority of the children sing the words correctly.

The children listen intently to a story read from a book and they respond eagerly to questions about the content. They understand how books work and remember the names of familiar characters in a story. They take turns to take the toy, *Heulwen Hwyaden* (a duck), home over the weekend and contribute well when they share the experiences and show pictures to the rest of the class on Monday.

They are aware of print within the room and in books and they are beginning to communicate appropriately on paper by colouring, drawing and making marks.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

3.2 Personal and Social Development

Good features

The children have a good relationship with other children and adults. They usually respond immediately to instructions and directions and they play together happily, waiting their turn patiently and adhering to simple rules. The vast majority of the children display self-discipline beyond their years.

The children show an outstanding level of independence. They are able to take their own coats off and put them on independently and they show good awareness of the need for personal hygiene. They select play activities confidently and share equipment and resources with ease. They persevere when trying to tackle new tasks and they can concentrate for extended periods of time. When encouraged, the children are very willing to help tidy up and put equipment away after different activities.

Each child in turn undertakes the role of *Helpwr Heddiw* (Today's Helper). They are very caring of each other when they distribute equipment and resources and when they share food during the snack period. The other children respond respectfully by asking for something and thanking the helper courteously. This is an outstanding feature.

By taking turns to feed the goldfish, the children come to understand that living creatures need to be treated with care and respect. They usually show respect towards other children and adults. They have a good understanding of the difference between good and bad and are very willing to apologise for any misconduct.

They respond positively to new linguistic and cultural experiences and understand and use a range of Welsh phrases and vocabulary.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

3.3 Mathematical Development

Good features

The children understand the difference between big and small, and long and short, and use simple mathematical language correctly in play when they discuss, describe and compare toys and other familiar objects. They count and compare length and totals with increasing accuracy in activities using laces.

They succeed well in arranging, matching and classifying familiar objects when they play dominoes and during role play in the play house. They develop an understanding of concepts such as size, volume and counting by playing experimentally in the water and sand troughs. They are beginning to recognise and name basic two dimensional shapes.

The children are able to recall a good range of number rhymes and they sing them enthusiastically. They count aloud up to five and the eldest children are able to count a small number of objects correctly.

By discussing regularly the days of the week and events over the weekend, the children start to develop an awareness of time and sequence. Through play activities, they come to understand that money has to be exchanged before buying goods in a shop.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

3.4 Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Good features

The children talk confidently about their friends, their families and their homes and some can name the house and street that they live in. They talk with ease about what they had for breakfast and express a liking for different foods. They are beginning to understand the daily routine and the meaning of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

The children discuss the weather every day and refer easily to any changes. They recognise and select symbols and simple key words correctly in order to record the weather on a chart. They understand well how to dress Teddy according to the requirements of the weather and they are aware of the need to wear warmer clothes themselves when the weather gets colder.

By visiting the park, the post office and the library during the summer term, the children become aware of and familiar with their immediate vicinity and beyond. They develop an awareness of some people's work in the community by dressing up and role play activities.

They plant daffodil bulbs, showing good awareness of how plants grow and how to care for them. They have a good knowledge of different parts of the body. They can build a picture of a child confidently by placing different parts in their proper places.

The children make choices and experiment confidently with a wide range of materials in order to create and make things.

Shortcomings

The children do not make sufficient use of the local environment throughout the year in order to develop their understanding and important skills.

3.5 Physical Development

Good features

The children hold small equipment such as crayons, paint brushes and scissors correctly and use them with increasing control. They display good hand eye co-ordination when they thread beads and when colouring between lines.

They select, place and arrange building blocks and small toys carefully and skilfully. They understand well how to push, roll, pull, shape and cut play dough in order to make simple models.

The children use an appropriate range of large play equipment indoors with care and safety. They move confidently showing good awareness of space when playing with bikes, cars and trucks. They use different parts of the body skilfully when pedalling, controlling and steering toys in different directions. They work together effectively showing good control when they make a seesaw move.

Shortcomings

As there is no safe outside play area, some of the children's physical skills, such as those involving running, are not sufficiently developed.

3.6 Creative Development

Good features

The children use a good range of different media well and on a regular basis when they print, draw, paint and make models. They are starting to experiment with colours and the occasional individual amongst the older pupils understands that colours can be mixed to create new shades. They select colour and equipment carefully when they make three dimensional models with play dough. They describe in simple terms the work that has been completed.

The children are able to recall and recite a number of simple songs and nursery rhymes and they sing them confidently and enthusiastically. They experiment with different musical instruments and are starting to maintain rhythm with background music and to accompany their singing. They participate confidently in simple, creative dance activities.

The children select appropriate clothes for role play and are beginning to show awareness of different characters when they play in the playhouse.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

4.0 THE QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

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

4.1 The quality of planning for children's learning

Good features

The short and long term plans for the nursery are thorough and are likely to promote the six areas of the desirable outcomes for learning. They are useful documents which provide staff with clear guidelines and ensure continuity and progression in the experiences. The provision is well structured and allows full access for every child.

A wide range of carefully planned experiences are offered to develop children's knowledge, understanding and skills in the six areas of learning. The provision is enriched by visits to the park, the post office and the library during the summer term.

The children whose background is non-Welsh are assimilated quickly and effectively into the playgroup's Welsh ethos.

Shortcomings

The plans do not provide for outdoor activities throughout the year.

4.2 The quality of teaching

Good features

The two members of staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the desirable outcomes for children's learning. They know the children well, pay each individual due attention, and differentiate tasks effectively according to the children's maturity and needs.

The sessions have been structured effectively and staff are successful in creating an appropriate and stimulating environment where children feel safe and confident. Within appropriate boundaries, children are allowed freedom to move around and to make choices and decisions for themselves.

In order to arouse the children's interest and to encourage them to participate in the activities, effective use is made of a good range of resources, including puppets, small toys and books.

Staff deal with any inappropriate behaviour sensitively and effectively, ensuring that every child is treated fairly.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

4.3 The quality of assessment and recording of children's progress and reports to parents and carers

Good features

An effective system has been established to assess and record the children's progress towards the desirable outcomes. Staff assess the children's progress on a daily basis by observing the children at their tasks and recording significant comments in an appropriate booklet. Good use is made of these comments to draw up a record of progress which provides a comprehensive picture of the children's attainment in the six areas of learning.

The arrangements for informing parents and carers about the progress their children make is very good. Staff take advantage of opportunities to ask questions and to share relevant information informally when the parents fetch their children from the playgroup. Recently, an effective system has been established to invite parents to a formal meeting to see examples of their children's work and to discuss their progress. The parents are given an annual report in booklet form which includes examples of their child's work as well as a record of his or her progress in the six areas of learning.

Shortcomings

The records do not always identify the next steps in the children's development and they do not have sufficient impact on the weekly planning.

4.4 The quality of relationships with parents, carers and the community

Good features

The nursery's links with parents and carers are very good. A letter is sent to parents twice every term, informing them of the activities that have been planned for the coming weeks and inviting them to help where relevant. The parents and carers make a substantial contribution to the children's progress by caring for them during visits to places outside the nursery.

During the summer term, appropriate use is made of the local environment by arranging relevant visits in order to promote the children's education. Library officers visit the playgroup to talk to the children during 'Book Week'.

Shortcomings

The playgroup does not make sufficient use of the contribution of members of the local community in order to enrich the quality of the provision.

5.0 THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of the leadership and management of the setting

Good features

The playgroup leader is experienced in her post and has established effective systems and procedures. She has a strong vision as regards values and expectations. Through regular discussions and close co-operation with the authority's early education link teacher, she evaluates the provision and plans for developments in the future.

The leader has a good working relationship with the management committee, the local partnership and the *Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin*. The playgroup leader and the assistant make full use of training opportunities offered by the Early Years team and this has had a positive impact on the provision.

The group has been successful in obtaining a lottery grant on two occasions and the money was used efficiently to buy furniture and resources.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

6.0 SPIRITUAL, MORAL SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for 3-4 year-olds

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

Good features

The daily life and procedures of the playgroup promote important values such as care, friendship, kindness and respect towards property. Staff treat every pupil fairly and courteously and encourage them to work together, share and help others.

The playgroup has established appropriate and effective procedures to present the Welsh language and the culture and traditions of Wales to the children.

The children's spiritual development is promoted by settling down quietly and singing a prayer at the end of sessions.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

7.0 PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

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

This is the first time for the nursery to be inspected by Estyn.

8.0 THE KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The key issues for action

The setting needs to:

- plan the provision of outdoor activities regularly throughout the year;
- develop the assessment procedure in order to identify the next steps in the children's development and ensure that this is reflected in the planning process;
- take full advantage of the contribution of members of the community to enrich the quality of the provision.

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 Estyn. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection.