



*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 Llanfarian  
Ysgoldy'r Bont  
Llanfarian  
Aberystwyth  
SY23 4UE**

**Date of inspection: 12-13 July, 2011**

**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 school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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## Context

Cylch Meithrin Llanfarian was established in 1973 and is accommodated temporarily in Ysgoldy'r Bont in the centre of the village of Llanfarian, on the outskirts of the town of Aberystwyth. The setting will be moving in the near future to a demountable building at the local primary school. The children who attend the setting live in the village and the immediate area. The area is described as neither advantaged nor economically and socially disadvantaged. The setting operates as a member of Ceredigion Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. It is also a registered member of 'Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin'.

The setting caters for children between two and four years of age for four sessions a week during school terms. During the inspection, there were eight three year olds on the setting's register. English is the main language spoken in the homes of most children. At present, there are no children from minority ethnic backgrounds in the cohort. The setting admits children with additional learning needs and appropriate support arrangements are in place.

The setting is led by an experienced leader who holds appropriate qualifications in the education and care of young children. She is supported by an experienced full time practitioner. The setting was inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in June, 2010. In June 2011, the setting received the 'Cylch Rhagorol' certificate by Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. This is the first time the setting has been inspected by Estyn.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- the children are happy and enjoy the interesting learning experiences provided;
- the children make appropriate progress;
- the teaching is good overall;
- the children receive good care within an inclusive learning environment;
- the practitioners fulfil their responsibilities effectively;
- there is a very good relationship between the children and the practitioners.

### Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because of:

- the lead practitioner's effective leadership;
- the good team work;
- the staff's commitment to the children's educational and personal development;
- the appropriate planning to improve the setting further;
- the good support from parents and the management committee;
- the close collaboration with the primary school.

## Recommendations

In order to develop further, the setting needs to:

- A1 extend the children's communication skills and their information and communications technology skills further;
- A2 strengthen the planning to ensure balance and consistent progression in the learning across all areas;
- A3 make consistent use of assessment outcomes in the planning and in extending children's skills progressively;
- A4 develop the practitioners' knowledge of self-evaluation processes and skills.

### What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. The progress made will be monitored by the local authority.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### Standards: Good

The children's achievements on entry are broad and they make secure progress in their learning during their time in the setting.

Most children develop their thinking, communication and number skills consistently in their work across the areas of learning. Most children develop good listening skills through concentrating on stories read to them and the presentations made by the practitioners. They show a good understanding of the topic and of the Welsh vocabulary. Most children's speaking skills develop consistently with a minority demonstrating a secure grasp of a range of vocabulary. Nevertheless, the majority offer brief responses. Most children recognize their names in print and they have a developing knowledge of the main letters of the alphabet. They enjoy looking at and handling books. They use marking tools purposefully in a range of media, demonstrating a secure awareness of some of the purposes of writing.

Most children make confident use of basic number skills in their daily activities. They understand the terms big/small, full/empty in practical situations. They recognize basic two dimensional shapes and develop an appropriate understanding of the passage of time through their daily activities. The development of their information

and communications technology skills is more uneven. A minority make confident use of the mouse to move objects on the screen. The majority make appropriate use of listening centres, and enjoy listening to songs and stories, and of a camera and programmable toys.

Most children make effective use their thinking and problem solving skills in activities such as observing animals and creatures in the environment around them. The majority of children's personal and social skills develop well. Children use their physical and creative skills confidently in a variety of activities linked appropriately to the current theme.

**Wellbeing: Good**

Most children have positive attitudes to learning. They work productively on their tasks and enjoy the range of activities available. All the children have settled well in the setting and have formed good relationships with other children. They are happy and secure in the company of the adults and are ready to ask for help and support.

On the whole, most children behave well. They play readily with other children and demonstrate an increasing ability to share equipment and wait their turn. The older children work fairly independently and undertake new experiences confidently.

Children have a developing awareness of the importance of physical exercise and of eating healthily. Levels of attendance and punctuality are generally good. Children's social skills and awareness are developing effectively through the setting's good partnerships with the community.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Learning experiences: Adequate**

The practitioners provide a range of interesting activities across most areas of learning. Appropriate frameworks are used to plan the curricular provision. Longer term planning is based on a range of themes that are suitable for the age range. Short term planning gives appropriate attention to the skills to be developed within each learning area in the classroom. The planning of focussed tasks under the direction of the practitioners is less consistent. Overall, the planning lacks sufficient detail to ensure consistent balance, progression and continuity in the learning, including developing children's learning skills.

Practitioners use the indoor and outdoor environment fully to encourage children to experiment with new experiences. Visits, including those to the local farm and forest area, and the caring for the fish and plants in the setting enable the children to gain a good understanding of the need to treat the environment and living things with care. Daily routines ensure that children develop good habits about recycling and collecting any waste paper.

There is good attention to developing Welsh and consistent encouragement for children to use their Welsh communication skills in their learning and play. There is appropriate emphasis on promoting children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of Wales, such as celebrating St David's Day. There are also opportunities for children to learn about the festivals of other cultures, such as the festival of Divali, through suitable activities. Similar activities are beginning to promote the children's awareness of the wider world.

### **Teaching: Good**

Teaching is good overall. The practitioners have a developing knowledge of the Foundation Phase curriculum and they provide learning experiences that regularly engage the children's interests. They use an appropriate range of teaching methods and suitable resources to support the learning. The practitioners work well as a team and they offer children good support. They communicate effectively with children during story time and small group activities. They use accurate language and good questioning techniques which develop children's vocabulary. They participate energetically in the activities, such as role-play in the home corner and leading the singing sessions. Behaviour is managed effectively.

There are appropriate procedures in place to report on children's progress and development. The practitioners know the children well. They observe children constantly and record any significant developments in a notebook. Further observations are made appropriately on the development of children's skills across the areas of learning on a progress record sheet. Nevertheless, the information collected is not used sufficiently to plan the next stages in children's learning and to extend children's skills progressively, including the more able children. Parents/carers receive regular information, both informally and through reports, about their children's achievements, wellbeing and development.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. The induction arrangements ensure that children settle in well in the setting. Suitable arrangements are in place to support children with additional learning needs and there are appropriate communication links with relevant agencies.

Appropriate learning experiences promote children's personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Experiences, such as saying a prayer before eating their snack and the work on the Nativity story and thanksgiving, enrich children's spiritual development. There are regular opportunities for children to perform in concerts alongside pupils from the local primary school, participate in Urdd activities and to contribute to community events.

The setting fulfils safeguarding regulations and responsibilities. The staff have received appropriate training and are aware of the requirements. Regular risk assessments are undertaken of the site.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The setting is an inclusive community where every child receives equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. There is appropriate emphasis on celebrating diversity. The practitioners succeed in creating a warm and welcoming environment for children. The setting has sufficient practitioners with the relevant knowledge and experience to deliver the curriculum. There is a sufficient supply of resources that are used effectively to support the learning and teaching. There is suitable use of visits and of visitors from the community to enhance children's experiences.

The accommodation offers adequate facilities which are used fully by the practitioners. The small outdoor play area is used for a range of activities but it is not suitable for large play activities.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

The setting is led effectively by an experienced leader. The practitioners are aware of their different responsibilities and they work well as a team. They succeed in creating an organised and purposeful environment for the children. Daily routines operate smoothly. Appropriate policies, such as child protection and securing equal opportunities, are implemented.

The setting's management committee offer good quality support and guidance. Members take a keen interest in what is happening at the setting and they work hard to raise funds. Members regularly receive information from the lead practitioner and there is a close working relationship between the lead practitioner and the registered person.

The setting gives appropriate attention to national and local priorities including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum, promoting children's Welsh language skills and establishing effective links with the local primary school.

### **Improving quality: Adequate**

The practitioners have a general understanding of the setting's strengths and areas in need of improvement. They discuss regularly but there are no specific processes in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision. The self-evaluation report produced prior to the inspection by the lead practitioner and the local authority's link teacher is a good starting point. The improvement plan arising from this activity identifies appropriate areas for developing the setting's provision further. Questionnaires are used to seek the views of parents/carers, and aspects of the provision are discussed regularly with the local authority's link teacher and the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin officer.



There are appropriate processes in place to appraise the practitioners' work and to identify further professional development needs. The practitioners attend suitable courses on aspects of child development and care and use this training appropriately. This is reflected in their understanding of the principles of the Foundation Phase.

**Partnership working: Good**

The setting has clear aims and objectives which are shared by all the partnerships. There is a strong partnership between the setting and the parents/carers. This was confirmed in the conversations with them during the inspection and in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Practitioners are regularly available to meet parents/carers at the beginning and end of each session. Relevant information is provided to new parents, and parents/carers are invited to the concerts and events that are organised. Children take home samples of the work they produce to share with their parents/carers.

A constructive partnership has been established with the local primary school. Visits by school staff are organised and relevant information about children's development is transferred. Children have regular opportunities to take part in school activities, such as concerts and sports. Visits to the community and the opportunities to participate in community events make an important contribution to enriching the provision. The good partnership with the local authority link teacher and Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin officers leads to improvements in the setting's work.

**Resource management: Good**

Resources are managed and used appropriately overall. The setting is suitably staffed and regular training opportunities are provided. There are sufficient resources which are used effectively to promote the learning.

The lead practitioner and the registered person have a good understanding of the setting's budget and they prioritise spending according to need. Financial decisions are discussed by the committee and managed efficiently by the treasurer. Additional funds are raised through the hard work of the management team, parents, the practitioners and the community. Significant sums, including grants, have been raised to acquire and locate a demountable classroom on the primary school site. Overall, the setting provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

Seven questionnaires were received from parents with nearly all expressing very positive comments about the provision. They state that their children enjoy attending the setting. They believe that their children are prepared well for moving on to primary school. Nearly all feel that their children make good progress. They say that the staff are approachable and that their children have settled in well. They believe that the setting is well managed.

#### Responses to discussions with the children

The children are happy in the setting and join in the activities enthusiastically. They are happy to speak simply about their favourite activities.

## Appendix 2

Dorothy Morris

Reporting Inspector

### Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))